

# *THE EIGHT DEADLY SINS*

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Contemporary psychiatry is an open system of ideas. There have been many ages totally dominated by closed systems of ideas; points of any world are now.

The people of medieval and politically in terms of the philosophy of the Catholic Church. They understood themselves and interpreted life in terms of theology: faith in God, His Laws, and freedom to choose. Free will was central to the ethics of St Thomas Aquinas. Without freedom of will, it was argued, how could there be moral responsibility, or reason to blame, or praise? There was primacy of faith over reason, typified by St Augustine's "Do not try to understand in order that you believe; but believe in order that you may understand".

On the surface, our own age in the West seems to be only prepared to believe if it first understands – a primacy of reason over faith. Most of us accept the truths coming from science. We accept the scientific attitudes towards knowledge often totally, uncritically, passively; even fearfully. Few of us realise that scientific principles and methods cannot themselves be proved to be true – though they can sometimes be proved untrue. In other words, we have faith in science. Yet science can be felt reductionist. It diminishes the wholeness of life as we feel it in our everyday existence.

Contemporary scientific faith goes with a relative disbelief in the will, or in freedom of choice. We often borrow scientific terms from precisely defined situations and apply them across the board of life. Psychologically, we see ourselves as conditioned, persuaded, shaped, determined the concept of free will, our personalities can seem the product of hardly understood inter-actions between our unconscious infantile memories and 'they', 'them', authority, society, economic forces, historical processes. Our actual concept of what it is to be human, dramatically changed by Darwin, Freud, Pavlo, Mendel, Marx Einstein, is profoundly different from the medieval one. We may even believe

that human nature has changed, as though Adolf Hitler was not a Torquemada.

Yet values and faith survive beyond scientific systems. Psycho-logic and logic cannot be crudely reduced to equal terms. With, or without God, we are talking animals who believe, who feel moral responsibility for others and ourselves. Perhaps reason and faith need a conscious balance in which neither is dogmatically primary. To believe in Science is as rational – or irrational – as to believe in Thor, or Zeus, Vishnu or Jehova. Science brings no eternal truths, still less any certainty. At best it extends the probability of common sense. Yet science has entirely altered our material lives. With it we could banish darkness, hunger, heat or cold around the world. That we have suggests we are much less rational and humane than we like to think we are. We think we fear war, yet find no peace. We are, as Freud remarked, both more moral and less moral than we think we are.

A problem for psychiatrists is the need to know what is an ordinary human mind, so that we can recognise abnormality. This can be a difficult, elusive task. One common psychiatric definition of delusions, for example, seems to include the faiths by which we practise a psychiatric profession (e.g. a belief which is not true to fact, cannot be corrected by an appeal to the reason of the person entertaining it and is out of harmony with the person's education and surroundings). The search for a psychiatric diagnosis can sometimes resemble the deliberations of an ancient ecclesiastical court seeking to discover sin. Nevertheless, there has been progress in defining mental disorders themselves. This greatly helps diagnosis, treatment and research. Classifications begin a science.

Our aim is more modest. Our smaller classification takes its references from the deadly sins, to see how psychiatrists may have re-defined them. A sin, we can perhaps say, is also a psychological problem. Yet the opposite of a sin can be not virtue, but a problem too. The anorexic are as ill as the grossly obese. Self denial can be as wounding as greed.

The opposite of a truth may be another truth and not just a lie. G.K. Chesterton expressed this, when he joked that if a thing is worth doing, 'its worth doing badly'. This can seem as true as saying 'doing it well'. Freud remarked on how a therapist may face two possible contradictory, yet insightful, interpretations of, say, part of a patients dream. He said: where it is either or, it is both. That is to say each of two mutually contradictory ideas can seem true.

Using this kind of psycho-logic, sins can be looked at as themselves, with their contemporary psychological equivalents. However, it also interesting to see what their opposites are. These are seldom tranquil, innocent or problem-free.

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **THE EIGHT DEADLY SINS**

Despite the proverb, time does produce new things under the sun. We have novel pleasures, such as radio, or television. We have original anxieties, about bacterial warfare, or the bomb. We have the concept of history.

Our century has also been remarkable in trying to explain human nature in deep, yet non-moral terms, without reference to moral evil, to sin. The impact particularly of psychoanalysis went far beyond a concern with the understanding and treatment of mental illness. Freud's successors have widened the scope of amoral understanding further, some even dismissing the term 'mental illness' itself as being too moralising.

The will, as well as sin, seem to have slipped silently away. For all the assertions of psychoanalysts, that their work enlarges consciousness (making conscious that which had been unconscious) consciousness, too, has been dethroned, diminished. We have the paradox to face: that never has the human race had simultaneously such power in its grasp and such a sense of impotence in its mind.

But sin: what have we meant by the word? Certainly no unchanging fact of nature. In classical Greece, sin seems to have been understood rather in the way we understand a neurosis. Sin was seen as a failure on the part of a man to achieve his true self-expression and to preserve his due relation to the rest of the universe. Thus stated (a generalisation) sin sounds like an existential dilemma.

Socrates attributed the cause of such a state mainly to ignorance. It would not be impossible to re-phrase such a view, to assert that sin could therefore be put right by an educative process – say psychoanalysis. The individual would then know more about his unconsciousness, or his self-ness, how his early infantile fantasies mis-inform his present perceptions; or of the

limitations and finalities of his being-in-the-world. As the clichés of dynamic psychiatry put it: he or she would be able to resolve the conflicts within himself and between himself and others, conflicts which he had hardly understood, or been aware. His behaviour as a neurotic had indeed been from ignorance. His relief from his confessions would be called insights, though the word ‘confession’, like ‘abreaction’, or ‘catharsis’, is deemed passé in psychiatry.

Contemporary confessions of this kind have also become industrialised and have their involved ritual (which is extremely expensive, like everything else). The complexity of modern, dynamic theories of mind may not unfairly be compared to that famous medieval disputation: how many angels can dance on the head of a pin. There is, indeed, often a faintly repellent, quasi-religious aura affected by some practitioners.

The Christian, of course, shares his Old Testament with the Jew. The idea of sin in the bible is dramatically different from the classical Greek one. That is to say, sin is seen as the misuse of free will by created beings. Without free will there cannot be moral responsibility in any meaningful sense, as we remarked earlier.

The medieval theologian would define sin as purposeful disobedience of a creature to the known will of God. Sin would be seen as moral evil. The theologian would say that sin is caused by pride, self-centredness and disobedience. Peter Abelard (1079 – 1142) in his ethics, feeling that sin consisted wholly in contempt for the wishes of God, by emphasising the element of intention in a sinful act, explains to us the often-terrifying cruelty of the medieval church itself. By evaluating acts according to the intention behind them, the distinction between good and evil acts in themselves, is lost. The Inquisition could torture, could burn people to death. The intention of the church was held ecstatically, fanatically, to be pure. The intention of the heretic was held to be wilfully contemptuous of God. Such at one time were the theological values that made and unmade worlds and men. (Cluster-bombing by “our side” has the same kind of moral justification).

The emphasis on free will and responsibility accounts for what would otherwise seem an arbitrary, bewildering mixture of named sins, produced by the church academics of their day. The lists may often seem foolish to us. In addition, as later logicians, unsympathetic to religion, were delighted to point out, logic was poorly developed technically in those remote centuries. This means that medieval foolishness is easier for us to detect than is our own. Medieval illusions are more obvious to us than are our own. In other words, we can feel we stand on the shoulders of history and not only look back, but also down.

Yet they were humans too. And across the giant crimes of our own times, can our glance at history ever be complacent? No document has ever been found outlining Adolf Hitler's own version of the 'Final Solution'. It is not even probable that his hideous orders were committed to paper. If such a document had been found, would it have been any less cruel, illogical, raving and stupid than the infamous 'Malleus Maleficarum'? The Malleus Maleficarum, popularly known in its day as, 'The Hammer of Witchcraft', was a treatise a quarter of a million words long, written by two Priors. It outlines the views of that time on the nature of demonology and witchcraft, how to detect it, how to punish it. It is clear that many of the 'symptoms and signs' of witchcraft to be found in the book, we would now regard as evidence of neurotic, or psychotic disorders. This makes the savagery of its recommendations (torture, fire) even more appalling. As we know, the recommendations were carried out, backed by a Papal Bull, administered by the Inquisition; even as 'The Final Solution' released the Holocaust five hundred years later. Demonology, witchcraft, as heresies, invited moral sadism and destruction. Just as racism in our time pronounced death for whole groups of peoples – Armenians, Jews, Gypsies, Slavs, Homosexuals, Communist, so the fear and hatred of demonology and witchcraft could release moral sadism and mass homicide then. We can feel romantic and nostalgic about the past and those fine cathedrals. The feelings might cool in any realistic reconstruction of history.

Despair, presumption, impenitence, was seen as chosen states of sin. Obstinacy, envy of spiritual welfare, and resistance to divine truth known to be such – all offended against the Holy Spirit and were sins. Oddly variations on each theme can be found in some version in psychoanalytic literature, yet now the offence arises from early psychic trauma and the effects are described as acting against the self and others, rather than God.

‘God is dead’ has become another cliché of our time. Yet it is interesting that moral sadism, so often seen as inevitably associated with religions, can continue, when only religious fragments can be detected in the culture. Adolf Hitler, for example, considered abolishing the Roman Catholic Church. In the end he let things be for political, not religious reasons. His, own fanatical movement had enough faith to destroy on its own, helped to be sure by the anti-semitic and anti-communist attitudes of the end. The many millions of Stalin’s victims died in the name of a Godless regime in a similar way.

In medieval times sins were classified, rated as better, or worse, in debates reminiscent of war games. Indeed wars and genocide could emerge out of the millions of Latin words. Thus the morally vitiated state were said to find ourselves in at birth, because we descend from Adam, is our Original Sin. This depressing idea naturally produced dissidents and defections, people who would not accept it. They had to be put down. In addition, there were all the perils of Actual Sin – those evil acts of thoughts, or word, or deed – humans might choose to commit. Some of these acts are merely venial. They weaken the sinner’s union with God, but they do not add up deliberately to turning away from God. They are, therefore, pardonable. Material sins are acts which are wrong in themselves, but which were not known to be wrong by the sinner, who was therefore not culpable. Formal sins, on the other hand, were known to be wrong and therefore personal guilt was involved in committing them.

It is in deliberately turning away from God and committing a sin, in full knowledge of its sinfulness, with full consent of one’s will, that one commits a mortal sin. A mortal sin cuts off the sinner from God’s sanctifying grace.



Such a mortal, deadly sin is wholly in contempt of the wishes of God. It is self-consciously such. Human will, intention, consciousness and knowledge are all involved.

Such sins are deadly not only in themselves, but because they easily lead to further sins. The act, in other words, as evil motivations, or as final causes in the Aristotelian sense used by St Thomas Aquinas. Indeed, the classical descriptions of Original Sin and the Deadly Sins are to be found in the works of Aquinas.

There are traditionally seven deadly sins. These, we may remember, are Pride, or Vain Glory; Covetousness, or Avarice; Lust as illicit, or inordinate desire; Envy; Gluttony, which usually included Drunkenness; Anger; Sloth. St Gregory the Great also identified seven, but had tristitia (Sadness, or grief) in place of accidie (sloth).

John Cassian (360-435) counted eight “chief hindrances to a monk’s perfection”, having both Sloth and Dejection in his list. This too, was an important list, influencing other church leaders, including St Benedict. It is the list I wish to expand on for its reflections on how humans can seem to fail themselves. Eight Deadly Sins, thought to entail spiritual death, parallel many of those ‘problems’ as we call them, which still cause a kind of psychic crippling, or even psychic death. The word ‘psyche’ however, has mutated into meanings often remote from ‘soul’ or ‘spirit’.

We cannot ignore the intellectual passion of the past. Indeed, a further reason for listing just a few of the virtues and vices identified by medieval theologians, is because they were not values simply imposed on the society of their day by an entirely in feeling, merciless church. Rather, these were sometime the passionate concerns of society: sources of creativity: plays, art, poetry, music, relationships. These were values that, if ignored, could bring persecution, true, but also ecstasy and certainty. How grim the faces in our streets, free of all this!

Values may be called metaphysical assertions, which do not lend themselves to 'modified verification principles'. Values may be literally sense-less, in the traditional terms of British Empiricism. It could be conceded that we cannot verify the truth or falsehood of assertions about values 'by an appeal to sense-experience'. But, we are as-if animals. We often act as if our beliefs are more important than even elegantly established, austere truths. Human style is another kind of truth, a truth about our natures: style is the man.

One may lament the narrowing down of the concerns of modern philosophy. We have been often let without answers to heart-felt questions. Or – worse – answers that can assert that the very questions we ask about ourselves, are meaningless. Yet we still care about right or wrong, fair or un-fair, the psychological more than the logical.

Into a structureless field of feeling in our era rush the cranks, the liars, the amateurs, the neo-mystics, the "mindless" behaviourists, or the "illogical" psychoanalysts. The churches remain half empty in a largely post-Christian era, while instant-cults rise and fall. Psychobabble can over-take theology (and common sense).

Since the seventeenth century, there has been little new added to theology of sin. It is thought that, perhaps because of the liberal optimism of the nineteenth century, sin was virtually eliminated from popular religious teaching. As we have said, an amoral approach to understanding has characterised our century. This, in a way, leaves us with all our Humanist traditions like a Disney animal character, which has impetuously leapt over the edge of a precipice and has yet to look down to see his dilemma. How can he remain in mid air, with nothing to support him?

In other words, why should we be nice now to one another, or moral and humane, as Humanist suggest we should be? Where is the solid ground to keep Humanist arguments in the air? Their values derive selectively from the Judeo-Christian tradition, of course. But the Humanist rejects this basis themselves. As T.S. Elliott said, 'even disillusion is an illusion if we rest in it'.

And new illusions arise and remain. Being here, can we choose and act without illusion, without the moral cowardice of mechanically reciting what we do not believe in; knowing our mortality and that dust has long gathered over the certainties and illusions of the past?

For all that, such is the inertia in every culture, without consciousness of the origins of ideas, moral ideas remain with their own functional autonomy (as Gordon Allport might say). They still produce guilt and conflict. They can still feel true. Surely it is a self-evident good also that we recognise wickedness, but strange that it can sometimes attract us and some of us so strongly.

The psychology of sin will be seen to be very different from the theology of sin. It seems to me that understanding shows itself generally as more moral than bare moral judgements. Yet at the same time there has been a tendency to “hospitalise crime”, to make every anti-social aberration not only explicable, but forgivable. I can only say that I personally would not take on an Adolph Hitler, or a Joseph Stalin for psychotherapy.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **PRIDE – VAIN GLORY AND THE SELF:**

St Thomas Aquinas saw pride as the beginning of sin, even as the beginning of all sin.

Pride may be defined as having an overweening opinion of one's own qualities and merits. It can refer to an arrogant bearing. It is often personified. In that sense it becomes proverbial, as in, 'pride comes before fall'. However, there can be a reasonable, normal, level of pride. In this sense, the word refers to confidence in oneself appropriate to one's position in life, in society, in a family, in relation to one's actual gifts and qualities. This could be called reasonable self-esteem. In medieval times there was a misunderstanding of the opposite of pride. Indeed, humbleness and even self-neglect could be seen as praise-worthy. The holy flea?

Many psychiatric patients suffer from not too much pride, but have far too little. Many people are too shy and afraid. They do not value themselves enough. They are too easily put down. They are too anxious or depressed, when their actual life-situation should contradict how they feel. Yet they do not notice this.

Valinglory, the themes of pride and vanity are still alive with us as problems aspects of being. Yet, as so often, there is a range, with too much at one end, too little at the other. The middle way remains hand to reach.

A reasonable level of self-respect, of self-esteem, of pride in one's appearance, of self-confidence – these are all virtues, surely? To be sure, it is difficult to define what is a reasonable level (the old problem in psychology). Yet we feel there is a level appropriate for a particular individual.

We notice a reasonable level approvingly. What is more, we recognise a range in these traits, a varying intensity, from overwhelming excess at one

end, down to a striking deficiency at another. That is to say, we intuit that another person is less sure of himself or herself, than we think they ought to be, considering their gifts, or talents. Again, there are other people we consider conceited, over-bearing, and arrogant, above themselves; they have false pride.

All of us have a feeling, even a judgement, about one another, a kind of assessment, which is embedded in language. 'He takes himself too seriously.' 'She doesn't put enough value on herself.' 'Who does he think he is?' Who indeed! The word 'self' comes up again and again. The interesting thing is that non-professional person is just like the psychiatrist in feeling there is a real self, a reasonable self, and a self potentially able to be in accord with whoever the person "really" is. A person one encounter can also be, somehow, a distortion, a travesty, of which they "really are. (This of course leaves us with the eternal problem of: what is real?) How do such selves evolve?

In our early childhood we had to learn to perceive the real world and who we are. We had to become aware of events and people in the environment as separate from events within ourselves. As adults we are so familiar with things in the external world being arranged as meaningful objects, outside us, in space and time, we can hardly imagine it was not always so for us. As adults, we unconsciously link our immediate sensory perceptions to ideas and memories already in our minds, and in doing so give meaning to our experiences. The infant and young child, lacking an extensive past, is much less able to see the world as we do. There are two aspects to the growth of a child's perceptual ability.

One is perceptual capacity, which depends on the organic maturation of the central nervous system and of the sense organs such as sight, or touch and so on. The others perceptual learning, in which knowledge is built up about things in the world – including oneself – through the endless experiences of our childhood. The perceptual learning aspect will obviously be linked to intelligence.

The ability to perceive particular things therefore depends on the mental age (cleverness) of the child, as well as on his chronological age. When it came to thinking about intelligence a generation ago, the emphasis, in the United Kingdom at any rate, was on heredity. There is a livelier appreciation now of the effects of the environment upon the growth of self-confidence and ability in the child. Perception is part of intelligence and is also the link between our inner and outer world – the inner world of thoughts, feelings, impulses and ideas and the outer world of things and people, to which we relate. It follows that while of course it matters what little world is perceived and how much stimulation, or neglect, an infant receives, this is not merely passively recorded by his perceptual systems, but undoubtedly contributes to the growth of his personality, of his intelligence and sense of self. It affects how he feels – secure or insecure. A striking superiority of the nervous system over the conventional computer resides in the organic system's ability to be modified profoundly by use. Communication and information theory may help us by analogy to understand some perceptual and neuropsychological problems. However, we cannot ignore the effect of feelings on learning and knowing. The un-loved can become unloveable. The rejected can emotionally withdraw; selves can diminish and be afraid.

Psychoanalysis has for a long time acknowledged the distortions that can be imposed on the self by emotional factors. It has, however, tended to underrate, or even ignore, the effects of the actual continuing environment until fairly recently. Lack of intellectual stimulation itself of course can be destructive, leading to low levels of aspiration in the child. Too cerebral an approach by parents, with all feeling split off, can augment schizoid traits in the child, leading gradually to a child who is a stranger to his own real feeling state. Such a child might remain bright, but he may well show ego-constriction have severe limits set to the areas in which he can exhibit his intellect, or which he dare explore. He – or she – becomes less than the self that could be. All these and other features of the home environment can undermine a normal level of self-assertion.

I am in no way using the research evidence as some kind of condemnation of any group. Rather, I have been moved by my experience as a child psychiatrist by the terrible waste of potential. The vast majority of gifted children are in what was once called the working class (children whose intelligence is in the top one percent of the population). They have largely been neglected educationally, grossly lacking in nursery school education, going to poor infant and primary schools and so on.

It is interesting to compare older texts on mental handicap with more contemporary ones. These latter are more socially orientated. Emotional and environmental factors loom larger and larger as we approach the present day, in the assessment of causation, even where organic factors are present. Here one may link contemporary views as to the cause of mental handicap in childhood with well-established observations with regard to Senile Dementia. In Senile Dementia it has long been known that the degree of organic brain pathology does not parallel the degree of intellectual and emotional dilapidation. A sympathetic, supportive environment can keep a person functioning, who in fact has quite a severe degree of brain damage. This seems true of children too. A poor environment, on the other hand, maximises the effects of any organic impairment both in children and in the elderly. It is interesting that whereas in Senile Dementia, acute and chronic confusional state are seen, in brain-damaged children, the clinician sees from time to time a psychotic like picture as a response on the part of the child to emotional stress. Unlike other child psychotics, this type of child quite quickly responds to improved environmental conditions. He needs a simple, unstressful learning situation in which to develop. He tends to have delirium more easily, when physically ill, than other children. It is difficult to assess his intelligence formally, and the result of testing shows areas of both high and low functioning. First childhood and second show many similarities.

Wastage of ability at the lower levels of intelligence leads almost inevitably to the queue for a special school. There is now massive evidence however that a very considerable wastage also goes on with potentially more gifted children, due to the kinds of physical and emotional environments in which

they grow up – and to the different types of class attitudes towards education to which they are exposed. It has been shown quite unequivocally that ordinary children from good homes and schools improve in their performance between 8 and 11 years, whereas children from poor homes and schools deteriorate. The problem goes quite beyond the influence of the primary school itself. It is likely that in the preschool years the mental development of many children is stunted by the intellectual and emotional poverty of their surroundings. The main way of tackling such a problem would be via good nursery schools, which aim to give small children self confidence and the stimulus lacking in their homes.

We need to know much more about the impact of the family on the early processes of learning and on the acquisition of learning incentives before children reach school. It is now clear that the predictability of the IQ at any given age has been called into question. We no longer fixedly think of intelligence as 'general innate cognitive ability'. The IQ does not appear to be constant. Some of our compulsory education is disastrous for some children, committing them to schools as destructive and stultifying from the educational angle, as their own bookless homes. It would be nice to avoid value judgements such as some of the above statements appear to be. However, our educationalists are often committed to expensive programmes of education based on value judgements, which entirely lack the kind of evidence amassed to support reliable conclusions. Certainly, culturally depressed areas can be easily defined. Teachers in these areas should surely be more highly paid. There is a huge turnover of teachers in infant and primary schools in London, for example. In the poorer areas of London – some schools have teacher – turnover figures of more than 60 per cent per annum. This is very upsetting to the young child. It disturbs in many cases what is essentially a 'transference situation', leading many children into giving up trying to trust and learn from the 'untrustworthy' teacher-figure/parent-figure, who so often disappears after a few weeks.

Apart from misguided, indifferent or accidental mishandling of children, there are limitations imposed by a supposedly 'normal' social and family



background on the child's personal and intellectual growth. The condition of mental handicap occurs much more frequently in social strata at the bottom of any social scale, than it does at the top of the scale. The use of intelligence tests over the last 50 years has made this fact abundantly clear. As we have acknowledged, earlier accounts attributed the class differences to differing heredity. It was assumed that class differences reflected the genetic composition of each class. Twin studies seemed to support the concept.

In this view, high grade mental handicap was merely the tail end of a normal distribution curve, a curve, to be sure, skewed somewhat, since few traumas make children brighter, but illness and accident may make them duller. Gradually social and cultural factors came to be seen as important too. As an example, it was shown that blacks living in northern states of the USA are brighter than poor whites living in the south, leave alone also being brighter than southern blacks with whom they share the same genetic background. In the U.K., A.D.B. and Anne Clarke showed how the handicapped who have experienced much family deprivation could respond to special training and gain in confidence and intelligence, even through their twenties. They suggested that family deprivation retarded intellectual growth. Their evidence showed that the worst deprivations could cause the most retardation. It was equally important that the Clarke's showed the reversibility of deprivation effects by special training.

There are two classes of mental handicap. In one, there are clearly important physical defects, metabolic, or neurological. As we have said, most of the severely handicapped belong to the first organic group. About 75 percent of all cases of mental handicap, however, belong to the second non-organic group. This majority have a high grade of handicap, and as we have already seen, belong to the lower socio-economic classes. A study of this second group has been carried out to see if the families in it could be classified by their culture – their system of values and attitudes, their way of life. It has been found possible to define two broad cultural categories among these families, one of whom showed no signs of 'evaluation with the middle class', in particular with its values of achievements through education and aspiration.

The second category comprised the families who did show signs of evaluation with middle-class values, or showed aspiration towards them. A type of handicap was found in the families who showed no sign of middle-class evaluation. It seems that high-grade handicap without brain damage is specific to this group. The evidence is very suggestive that cultural factors contribute importantly to the handicap. As with the Clarke's experiments, it was found that adults from this group did not have irremediable damage, since their adult intelligence test scores tended to increase beyond their childhood ones. The culture producing such individuals handicapped them in the areas of verbal skills and thinking – that is, in the academic abilities tested by intelligence tests and required for academic success. How could such individuals have much pride?

Incidentally, it was noted, as it has been before, that boys are ascertained as mentally handicapped more often than girls are. Children of higher social class are more often kept within ordinary educational systems. Less have special schooling. Lower-class children were more often excluded from often ascertained than children from intact homes. This latter feature was particularly striking in the adolescent group who, if they showed any behaviour disorder in adolescence, tended to end up in schools for the handicapped.

The study we have been quoting speaks encouragingly of the results of special training and schooling. It emphasises the need for prolonged schooling, because of the continued rise in ability that can follow. It also pleads for helping vulnerable families, pointing out how poorly adapted the modern, nuclear family is to bear the extra strain of a handicapped individual.

We can speak then of cultural deprivation and by this refer to the group of factors some of which we have just considered. These factors seem to go against a child realising his full personal and intellectual potential. It is valid for social anthropologists to avoid saying one culture is groups in a culture who have been demonstrated to function worse than the general population. There is, surely an obligation on us to seek causal factors, especially ones we are capable of changing. We are only slowly learning about the issues

connected with social change. Social and educational failure can be felt as an extreme humiliation, damaging self-esteem in the individual facing them, as well as in the family producing such an individual. We need not apologise, then, for rebiting the attempts at social diagnosis, and remedies where we can. It has been fashionable to romanticize about the working class in some sociological circles. It is salutary to note studies, which describe particular working-class sub-cultures possessing an almost implacable hostility towards education. It has been suggested that many high-grade handicapped children can be seen as casualties of such a culture.

The first possible emotional deprivation is maternal. The literature on maternal deprivation is huge. The earlier emphasis on the production of delinquents and affectionless psychopaths by emotional deprivation has rather altered. We must acknowledge, however, the intellectual results of such deprivation. Due to the lack of verbal and other stimulation, maternally deprived children frequently suffer intellectually as well as emotionally. All reasonable measures to keep preschool children with their mothers through social and other crises have a contribution to make to the quality of lives, to self-esteem.

It is surprising how long we have had to wait for studies of language related to culture, considering how long 'English' has been a subject in schools and universities. It is also interesting to see how much convergence there is in several disciplines through such studies – sociology, education, psychology, psychiatry and child development generally. While much worthwhile has been published on communication and information theory, and on non-verbal communication, there has been an obsessive interest in the unconscious mind and non-verbal problems of human interaction. Thus was a necessary obsession, for a time. The importance of these factors had only been noted as a semantic problem over the past 70 years. Yet, just as existential psychiatry can still find new things to describe which are directly available to us for examination in our consciousness, so there have been new things to say about language. 'Speech is the major means through which the social structure becomes part of individual experience'. It is a link, that is to say,

between cultural factors and the end result in a personality, bringing to it cultural enrichment or impoverishment. Luria has shown the importance of the impelling, or starting and planning function of speech for behaviour. 'Language marks out what is relevant, affectively, cognitively and socially, and experience is transformed by that which is made relevant'. Studies of the language development of institutionalised children show them to be severely retarded in vocabulary, complexity of sentence construction and type and power of abstraction. Bernstein, whom we have just quoted, has examined middle-class and working-class language. He has demonstrated how the latter is extremely weak in syntax, in formal construction and in its ability to express and for the individual to know generalisations, or abstract concepts. Language has an influence on the development of a child as a person, his perception, and his relations with other people, his ethical development and on his intellectual growth. A child deprived of verbal communication can be left impoverished not only verbally, but evening the use of non-linguistic symbols – even, say, in his ability to recall past visual experiences. This in turn can leave him with a poor imagination, and little ability to fantasise. Thus the language environment of children is of immense importance for the growth of their intelligence and personality. As Freud put it: The Ego wears an auditory lobe.

Bernstein has compared and contrasted two linguistic forms of English. One he calls an elaborated code, the other, a restricted code. With the former, a person can be verbally explicit. He can communicate his individual, unique experiences. A restricted code inhibits these functions and restricts the verbal signalling of individual differences. Bernstein believes that 30 percent of our labour force is limited to a restricted code and have no other. Middle-class children, on the other hand, in becoming socialised, learn both codes. The restricted code arises, he says, because the original relation between mother and child exerted little pressure on the child to make his experiences relatively explicit in a verbally differentiated way.

Speech, language and total mental development – self-hood – go together. Cultural deprivation undoubtedly produces many of its main effects through

the kind of language environment, which envelops the child. A poor language environment seems clearly responsible for a very large part of a great loss of potentially usable intellect across the whole board of intelligence. Operating against the lower levels of potential, language alone can thus drag down to subnormal levels, individuals who might otherwise have gone through normal schools and jobs. Our remarks earlier about nursery schools and so on, appear relevant again, now in the context of teaching a worthwhile language, which would produce social, emotional and intellectual change. Such factors facilitate the emergence of full self-hood in greatest measure.

There are several convincing researches, which show the importance of interactions within the family in relation to self-growth. I have been talking of social factors, because I feel these have often been, until recent times, neglected. Let us turn to more direct psychological influences.

Learning inhibitions in individual children have been found as symptoms, which seem to be embedded in the total family situation. Authors have commented on the resistance to therapy of the individual latency (pre-adolescent) child, for example, and noted how the dynamic interaction of the whole family has to be understood, before this individual resistance can be put in proper perspective. Children can be found who show learning inhibitions as their major complaint. They can be, as far as any contemporary tests of physical status can judge, healthy and 'normal' organically. The results of intelligence testing can indicate normal intelligence. Yet these children can be several years retarded in academic achievement. These are children who do not seem to have suffered from either cultural or maternal deprivation. Their backwardness is however, also, psychogenic rather than constitutional. Many of the researches are psychoanalytically orientated. A common theme is connected with the primitive nature of the Oedipal problems underlying the inhibitions. These children have sadistic fantasies attaching to the identifications they have with their parents. And, as we so paradoxically say in psychiatry, they are unconsciously aware of unconscious parental prohibitions with regards to learning.

An example of a family-orientated research is one called, 'Fathers of sons with primary neurotic learning inhibitions.' The authors studied a number of boys who had severe learning difficulties. They were of at least normal intelligence and came from homes without gross social pathology. The major complaint was their being at least two years behind their chronological age in one major learning sphere. They had no physical impairment. The fathers tended to regard themselves as failure. Ones who were in fact successful, thought their success due to luck rather than to their own gifts. There were two patterns commonly found in the families. In one the father was passive and dependent on the mother, who held the position of leadership and authority. In the other the father defended himself against feelings of inadequacy by adopting an ineffectual aggressive pattern and it was the mother who was submissive and helpless. She saw her husband (and maleness) as powerful and potentially destructive. Both types of family seemed to confuse hostility with constructive self-assertion. They seemed to assume, also, that if one marital partner was dominant, the other had to be submissive.

Where the fathers were passive and dependent, the mothers tended to be very competitive with men and to fear males. They had married men who saw themselves as ineffectual, so that such wives could be in a position of superiority, and are able to deny their own dependency needs. They tended to infantilise both their husbands and their sons. The fathers saw their sons as dangerous rivals for the mothers' love and both mothers and fathers saw masculine achievement as dangerous. The parents unconsciously undercut their sons' attempts to learn.

In the other families, in which the mothers seemed helpless and afraid of the fathers, there were strong elements of sado-masochism. The wives had carried out "counter-phobic manoeuvres", marrying men who were the very embodiments of the qualities that frightened them. Learning difficulties here were related to the infantilising behaviour of the mothers. Their view was that male assertion was dangerous. The need of the fathers was that the sons

incompetent in the face of their parents, who demanded high performances. The boys could not identify with the competent aspects of their fathers.

Another interesting study was one in which the term anti-achievement was used in reference to poor academic work by children or adolescents. Their intelligence would, again, indicate a potential for better performance. Again there was a learning inhibition. In this group of boys an impairment of the super ego (conscience) was posited to account for their poor achievement. The study emphasised a dysfunction of the processes of taking in, inhibition, from the psycho-dynamic angle, was thought to arise from the disruptive entrance of instinctual needs and conflicts into what should be the conflict-free areas of cognitive function. The problem was a defect in the ability produce, or master events internally and in the environment. The basic objective of the 'masochistic defence' used by these children was the maintenance of an inflexible bond, with a withholding, omnipotent, but potentially protective figure. Anti-achievers contrived to keep this kind of tortured relation with their parents in reality and also with the incorporated images of the oral period. There seemed to be a suspension of specific tasks of the normal super ego, so that without experiencing much guilt, the anti-achiever could evade his social and educational obligations, upset his parents, and sometimes become caught up in aggressive behaviour. There was also an impairment in the ego function of reality testing. The anti-achiever greatly underestimated the self-defeating features of his behaviour. The impairments in super ego and ego functions enabled the underachiever to overcome two great barriers to his acting out his unconscious impulses through anti-achievement. On the one hand he had first to hurt and defeat his parents, teachers – and therapists – without being overcome by guilt. On the other, he had to hurt himself without being stopped by the pain of this.

Perhaps all psychiatry, in a sense, can be seen as a technique to understand and to deal with psychogenic retardation. Quite early writings of Freud dealt with the success or failure of individuals in life. Yet it remains a surprise for many patients to discover that they can fear success even more than failure, and therefore have been spending their lives avoiding success. Melanie Klein

has dealt at length with the intellectual losses that can attend the process of repression, and how emotional factors can restrict ability, leave the enquiring mind forever superficial, or finally lead it not to enquire at all. All these mechanisms relate to achieving or losing self-esteem.

Every psychotherapist is familiar with how much brighter as a personality a really successful patient can be after treatment. Some of this increased brightness can even be measured sometimes by intelligence testing.

The subtle descriptions of particular intra-psychic dynamics do not lend themselves easily to summarising, but I would like to acknowledge them. They are both valid in themselves and can also underwrite conceptually much current research in the inter-personal, inter-action field.

The infant's ability – and need – to relate to another person is every bit as 'real' as his egocentricity. An uninterested mother affects his relating ability, and by her self-preoccupation fails to reward the child's endeavours and sense of self. This lack of appreciation of his liveliness can lead to intellectual apathy, or a neurotic over-compensation. The relatively rejecting, ambivalent, or constantly hostile mother can make the world seem too dangerous to explore. The depressed mother speaks little to her child and creates about him a featureless, joyless world, hardly worth knowing. Children with such mothers have presented caring services with severe problems. The child can seem almost autistic in the acuteness of his emotional withdrawal, and severely mentally handicapped. As Leo Kanner has said of Child Psychiatry generally, much classifying of child personality can be done by the assessment of parental attitudes alone.

We have touched on some of the environmental factors, which seem to have effects on the evolution of self-hood. We have mentioned studies of family interaction. The latter often assume a certain psychoanalytic view of the structure of mind. Whereas it is possible to produce some hard data concerning environmental factors, this is less easily done through clinical studies. Nevertheless, a systematic clinical examination of small populations



is better than a mere guess, given that we know the possible bias and theoretical assumptions of the observers.

It is, of course, legitimate to hypothesise about mental structures in the individual. It is legitimate, in other words, to try to imagine what kind of human mind the child has that gives him his strengths and vulnerabilities. Psychiatry has not been short of hypotheses. On the contrary, as surround the clinician, as often bewildering, as helpful. Psychoanalysis, for example, is not a unitary theory of mind. To say 'analytically oriented' is not a precise statement. Psychiatry has only recently found agreed definitions, but no definitive description of mind, satisfactory to its own discipline, to the physiologist, the psychologist, the neurologist, and so on. Why are some of us so different when we have gifts? Why do we lack confidence, when we could do so much more?

From good theories, good practices can arise, opportunities for further experiments and conceptualising. Psychogenic retardation of the self is a common condition. The evidence suggests it is.

We require a theory of the self, or a combination of theories, which might be more helpful to us than older ones, in seeing how it is that the environment acts as it does on the intellect and self. Such a combination of theories might also suggest to us what parental and educational practices are to be preferred.

The ego – 'The Life Space' as Lewin called it - is the point at which a person meets the situation. It grows in childhood through a series of successfully resolved crises, each of which disturbs a temporary equilibrium, but which leads to psychic re-organisation at a higher level.

The 'total' self is always an 'object' to the ego meaning self-consciousness. On the one side we have the literature of psychoanalysis, which has concerned itself with the ego-of-conflict. This describes that mainly conscious part of the self, which is at a focus, and is also a compromise between the

unconscious, the super ego (conscience) and the environment. This ego-of-conflict thus has a synthesising function. This is the 'classical; psychoanalytic view of the self, very concerned with unconscious fantasies, and the classifying of these fantasies under the title of 'mental mechanisms'. But there is, also, a conflict-free part of the ego, a part developed from the emerging natural endowment of the individual, composed of native competences, such as the ability to walk, to talk, to solve problems. We do not teach children to walk, for example. The ability simply develops. From the conflict-free ego arise capacities of thought, perception, intention, comprehension of objects, motor development, and all those things that have been called the 'executive function' of the ego' (and which, in other language, is described by Gesell, Piaget, etc., in their child development studies).

Certain environmental minima are required in order for potential capacities to emerge. Here we link to the ideas of the ethologists with their descriptions of sensitive, critical periods of learning. The ego-born-of-conflict, and the conflict-free ego, of course, interact one with another. It is worth having them as separate descriptive terms. An example of the interaction of these two "aspects" of the self, is found in the regressions of traumatically hospitalised preschool children, who may stop speaking, walking, who lose bladder control and so on. The normally conflict-free part of the self, if this should happen at the time when the child was about to master, or had only just mastered a skill, in disrupting the skill, the event will tend to lead to a vulnerability in that area. Much will depend on the quality of the child's care before, during and after the event, with regard to his recovery from it. It is worth remarking that some children seem constitutionally fragile. Tiny early mishaps mark them severely. Other children seem incredibly robust. We do not yet know how to identify each group. Commonsense and humourness urge the highest standards of care for all. Individuals also vary in other native endowments and in their innate energies. These variations will contribute to striking differences between individuals responding to stress.

We have no satisfactory general theory to account for human drives. We still need one. We can see children acting to reduce tension, to avoid pain, to

pursue pleasure, and so on. When small, they are very conservative, liking regularity, reliable figures about them, and rituals at bedtime.

We also see them demanding a kind of complexity from life, of disliking boredom. They want to initiate actions and sometimes even fear passivity and dependency. Some of these aspects of personality appear linked to ego-identity, when the 'individual successfully aligns his basic drives and his endowments with the opportunities of his situations'. This feeling of self-ness appears when there is a harmony achieved by the individual, a confidence that he has an ability to maintain an inner sameness and continuity, matched to a sameness and continuity of his meaning for others. The child who learns to know and master himself and the world has a sense of himself as one who is capable of handling a predictable environment. As a child increases his skills and drives, the culture demands more and more of him. He needs to adapt at various crisis points, such as weaning, toilet training and so on. Each time he solves a problem, he is better able to solve the next one. His self-esteem will be stronger. This is what is really meant by 'ego-growth through crisis resolution'. If he fails to resolve a crisis, the reverse will be true. His ego will remain weak and less able to resolve the next problem. It is essentially in a social situation that this development goes on, at first as an interaction between the child and his mother, and then via complicated identifications by the child with both parents. It is here, in the first five or six years of life, that environmental upsets and distortions can operate most destructively. And we are, of course, not discussing – for once – the standard neuroses, the obsessions, hysteria, or anxiety states. We are discussing the evolution of self, its vulnerability, how it can be diminished.

It is in the classical writings of psychoanalysts that one notes the terms inhibitions, repression and so on. They have pointed out how the mechanism of repression drags down into the unconscious a great number of other ideas and tendencies associated with particular complexes. This dissociates these ideas from the free being handled with reality. 'If natural curiosity and the impulse to enquire into unknown as well as previously surmised facts and phenomena is opposed, then the more profound enquiries (in which the child

is unconsciously afraid that he might meet with forbidden, sinful things) are also repressed along with it. Simultaneously, however, all impulses to investigate deeper questions in general become also inhibited. Thus Melanie Klein. She goes on to discuss how development may be influenced by an 'injury to the instinct for knowledge, and hence also the development of the reality sense... Here then is another way of looking at injuries to the self and to self-esteem.

We can complicate our views of the ego still further if we wish to get a closer feel of the vulnerability of the child as an evolving individual. The ego can be seen to have feeling encounters with the cultural and interpersonal situation. The child – like the adult – is guided in this encounter by what Paul Federn calls 'ego feeling'. By this is meant a feeling, or sense of the self which accompanies the state of ego identity. In the small child this may be mere narcissism. As the child becomes socialised and learns to value being identified as himself, he is more able to become a different self in relation to another person. He partly adapts to his human environment and creative act of relating to another. The very small child can only do so with maternal help, through, or within his relationship with his mother. Only later is it possible with others. Too great a dysfunction between himself and 'society' produces ego-diffusion. This is subjectively felt, in ordinary terms, as unhappiness. Freud, Klein and Winnicott describe failures here, when the child feels insecure, in terms of his projected aggression. In his frustration, the child experiences persecutory anxiety, feeling threatened by the feelings he has referred out of himself and into others. R.D. Laing would describe the experience of insecurity as a felt struggle to maintain a sense of identity.

Ego feeling, the experience of the self felt as self, brings with it a sense of the boundaries of the self, physically and mentally. It is feeling at the ego boundary. Objects often experienced at this boundary become part of the self. This is one way of looking at learning. Our selves do not end with our skin. Our life space extends beyond our bodies.

We vary in the intensity of our self-feeling. In crisis, some only too easily feel alienated, emptied or depersonalised. Repeated, or severe crises make the boundaries of the ego between the inner and outer worlds seem too dangerous to explore, to learn about, or even to see clearly. Thus is personality restriction and denial of reality augmented. Here reasonable pride and self-esteem are lost.

Through role taking the boy becomes boy-like, the girl, girl-like, and again, each assignment has its complexities, as parents relive, or fantasise through their children. Gradually the child manages the idea of a 'generalised other', someone who is not father, or mother. The child can take on increasingly more roles, another to father, another to siblings. After each growth-crisis successfully managed, his self is enhanced and his roles diversity. He eventually achieves a hierarchy of roles with different 'ego sets', so that he can swiftly switch from being a brother, a son, an infant in class, a grandchild, and so on, yet all the time feeling he is only one person his life.

These switches are social skills carrying perceptual, cognitive attributes with them. Disruption of learning these skills may underly many other learning failures, lowering self-esteem.

None of these selves we become, as adults are static. Even our every day selves seem to need regular recognition and acknowledgement from others to be sustained. Solitary confinement can break all but the most resilient. Brainwashing can break even many of these. We wither as selves when treated as objects.

Our multiple identities, which subjectively feel one person, one self to ourselves, include our memories of being a child, which can help us relate to children. Included too, is the incorporation of our parents, so that we know how to be parents to some extent when we become parents ourselves. And we can become, as adults, parental to our parents when they grow old, thus reversing our historical roles.

I have accented distortions in learning and intellectual growth in looking at the evolution of self, because I wanted to link fragile self-esteem systems, as Harry Stack Sullivan called them, to the current interest in cognitive therapy. This assumes that we may have learned false, self defeating strategies in our earlier lives, a kind of pessimism perhaps, which can lead us into avoiding, or mishandling the very relationships that could bring happiness. A.T. Beck, one of the pioneers in this approach, calls one works 'cognitive therapy and the emotional disorders'. Part of the approach is to make a person realise how negative his approach to his problems may be. After all the emphasis on 'the unconscious' from psychoanalysis, consciousness has been rediscovered, strangely enough.

The key works of John Bowlby have been addressed to early childhood and the development of ideas about how children attach to their mothers and families. Though an analyst, he does not believe in reducing all childhood experience to mere fantasy. He believes that the actual characteristics of a family, quality of mothering, real life events, have deep effects.

Bowlby, a pioneer of family psychiatry, defines with elegant simplicity the main tasks of parenting. These are: to provide a child with a secure base and to encourage the child to explore from it. Bowlby sees children who have had these chances growing up to be secure people, self reliant, trusting, and helpful towards others. He reduces the jargon. He says this is what psychoanalytic literature means by saying a person has a strong ego, what Eric Erikson described as showing 'basic trust', what Fairbairn meant by 'matured dependence', or Melanie Klein meant by 'having introjected a good object'. The commonest cause of anger in the child, Bowlby says, is the frustration of the child's desire for love and care.

The anxious, insecure, immature, or over-dependent person appears to have had pathogenic parenting. His, or her parents have been unresponsive, or even disparaging and rejecting. There may have been several periods of traumatic separations in early childhood. Threats to abandon a child – 'I'll put you in a home' or stop loving you – are equally destructive, when used as a

method to control, or discipline. Clearly, so is the use of threats of suicide, or homicide thrown out to create fear and emotional blackmail as between parents when they quarrel. To induce guilt in the child by saying its behaviour is responsible for parental illness, or death can be devastating. To reverse roles prematurely, to expect the child to comfort and console an adult, to be parental to its own parent, undermines the possibility of normal emotional growth in the child. Other distortions of self-hood can arise from trying to induce guilt in the child. "If it wasn't for you...".

All these different ways of mis-parenting produce children and adults showing 'anxious attachments'. Here are the origins of the un-certain self, the divided self (as R.D Laing calls it). Here is the individual whose parents aroused anger in their child, yet inhibited its expression. Such an individual longs for love, yet brings back their repressed hostilities, when falling into intimate relationships. They become thus, in their turn, difficult lovers, husbands, mothers, fathers, or patients.

Of course, it would be foolish to make all these very brief life-description sound mechanical, like fate, with failure inevitable. There do seem to be invulnerable children, intact survivors of every, and almost any disaster. One may, for example remember Chekov, who remarked, "in my childhood I had no childhood." Yet what a glittering man he became, in spite of, because of..... Temperament is a very real, largely given, constitutional fact. There are individuals who are born in turning, exquisitely sensitive, to whom slight environmental insults are almost overwhelming. They show these characteristics throughout their lives. And equally, there are emotionally robust babies, who became sturdy toddlers, running into school in the end with scarcely a backward glance. The work of Stella Chess on temperament makes it seem foolish that many researches on children have not allowed for differing temperaments to account for different reactions to the same circumstance.

For all that, there is pathogenic parenting, producing insecure children. There are people suffering from what Seligman has called 'learned helplessness',

people who feel they cannot get hold of their lives, who have too much fear, who go easily into despair and loneliness. They have no problem with excess pride, but with infinite feelings of worthlessness.

A variation in response may be built up in some individuals, even though the under-lying emotional stresses are much the same. This is the case where, for example, there is a highly developed level of denial – a denial of true feeling. There is such a fear of rejection and the pain of it, that close relationships are reflexly shunned and all forms of inter-dependence avoided. There is a 'compulsive self-reliance', as though the person was quite different from most of us, unable to accept love, or caring from another and acting as though he or she did not want, or need these things. Of course, they do. But love and caring are associated with the excessive terrors that went as the price of them in a helpless childhood. Yet on the surface one might see a macho-male, say, ruthless in relationships, like an essentially neurotic solitary cowboy riding towards the sunset.

An alternative is the 'compulsive care-giver', as Bowlby calls it. Here, a person controls his, or her relationships by being always the person who gives. It can be hard or impossible for him to receive. Again, this is autobiographical, for giving was the only acceptable role for him in childhood, his own main being self-care.

Compulsive self-reliance and compulsive care giving are both example of what Winnicott called the development of a false self. Each is a vulnerable personality, beset by deep emotional conflicts and much more vulnerable to the inevitable stresses of life, because such individuals are so out of touch with their true feelings and with others. As important, such alienation from their own feelings distorts their interpersonal relations. They look for long lost figures in their own children and their partners, who do not resemble, or deserve such identifications. They bring back anger and resentment against people to whom it does not belong. They have depressions, psychosomatic illness and episodes of anxiety. They wonder why.



Bowlby uses essentially the language of cognitive psychology rather than the older psychoanalytic terminologies in looking at the human situation.

Whichever language is used by psychiatry, that of existential psychiatry, transactional analysis, behaviour therapy, or psychoanalysis, and all their derivatives and alternatives, no moral judgment is implied. Psychiatry does not seek sin. It does not judge – even if its descriptions sound like a ‘vocabulary of denigration’. It is, for example, assumed that pathogenic parents themselves were mis-parented and that we are dealing with long cycles of involuntarily learned behaviour, going unconsciously from generation to generation without choice, or real insight. Each damaged generation can damage the next.

Yet the patient and his family will have had their quarrels and conflicts acted out within their own moral system of judgement. One, or other member will be seen as aggressor; one, or other will feel himself, or herself a victim. Sides will be taken on complex, largely hidden emotional grounds, yet consciously felt and labelled in terms of right and wrong, fair or unfair, good or bad. Many studies of families containing a schizophrenic member have noted how, for example, even after a formal diagnosis has been made, in particular families, while some of its members will accept this diagnosis, or have seen earlier that an individual member is mad, one or other member will continue to see him or her as bad.

This often presents the psychiatrist with a problem on first meeting with an individual, or a family. Many ordinary individuals will bring their moral attitudes into the consulting room and both fear and expect to be judged in terms of good and bad, expect to be blamed and to be held responsible for their problems, as though they had chosen them deliberately. Here, then, we can meet the ghosts of the deadly sins. Sometimes it has to be said in so many words “we are not looking for who is blame”. The style of the psychiatric interview establishes the non-judgemental technique with the patient and in this way, usually reassures and therefore usually leads to the level of openness and frankness without which no therapeutic work can be done.

Naturally, some patients can remain defensive for many interviews. This problem in establishing rapport is, I feel, rather importantly different from transference; where the individual patient takes up an attitude as though he, or she were a child again and relates to the psychiatrist as though he or she were a parent. Particularly in family psychiatry, where interpersonal problems are often much more in focus than intra-psychic ones, the non-judgemental approach seems to have been made explicit. (This can set aside guilt and shame in an interesting way, as though there is more voluntary control over them than we might imagine.)

It may seem odd to have had so much to say about low self-esteem, to review some of the apparent causes of inferiority feelings in a chapter headed *Pride – Vain Glory and the Self*. But, as said earlier, the opposite of a problem can be another problem, even a commoner problem.

Despite the Women's Liberation Movement, in our Western culture women are still often far less confident than men in many situations. Probably greater male physical strength set up a dominance-submission axis in the remote past, beyond the logic of male strength being protective of women. Male dominated religious institutions backed up the idea of female inferiority. It is curious how major religions can have illogical problems with sexuality. A celibate priest-hood arose centuries after the death of Christ. There are no intellectual reasons to justify feminine submission to men. Indeed, for example, women in general score higher than men in tests of verbal ability. Perhaps this superiority in language also leads to greater sensitivity and vulnerability when words are used, or thrown at them in anger, or with sarcasm.

There still remains the need for wider and deeper "cultural permission" - social change - for genuine equalities to be felt and felt to be true. There is still the awful weight of history, with all its errors and long established related conventions to contend with, even in our more quick-witted age. Culture itself, with all its traditions, generates mutual collusions between men and woman. Culture itself can cause low self-esteem in classes, black people, people with

special sexual identities – and women. So many guiding myths about our natures can seem part of our reality and so become part of it.

To find the equivalent of excessive pride in psychiatry – an ‘overweening opinion of one’s own qualities and merits’, is to find again an amoral account. Perhaps the simplest and best known is Alfred Adler’s in terms, as he saw it, of the individual’s ‘will to power’ on the one hand and an over-compensation for feelings of inferiority on the other. The little man who is unpleasantly over-self-assertive is a familiar example, or the plain girl wearing showy clothes. (Much has been made of the allegation that Adolf Hitler had only one testicle). Demosthenes overcame his stammer to become the greatest orator in Greece. One hardly needs to be a specialist to notice these kinds of reactions, which may be irritating, alarming, and sometimes even touching.

It is in the more serious psychological disturbances, however, that one meets closer approximations to ‘Pride as overweening opinions of self’. Among the major mental illnesses, there is mania. This condition is characterised by three basic symptoms: an elated, yet unstable mood, a flight of ideas and great restlessness. The elation of mood can reach the level of ecstasy. The patient can be irritable, suspicious, and so over-talkative, that logic breaks down into a stream of free associations, even incoherence. Mania is part of the manic-depressive syndrome, so that there is a periodic alternation of mood into either mania or depression.

Hypomania is a relatively low level variety of mania and, untreated, can be sometimes quite chronic. The hypomania individual is full of ideas. He can be relentlessly witty, full of puns and plays on words. Despite the wit, he can be irritable and domineering, taking charge of conversations, showing insensitivity to other opinions. He feels fitter than he has ever felt. Nothing seems too difficult for him. He feels only fools could disagree with him. He is intolerant of criticism. Over-driven, his usual controls may break down – so that he might drink wildly, or chase women – whether they welcome this or not. He may well feel (wrongly) that he is immensely wealthy and float endless bouncing cheques and vastly over-extend his credit on his credit

cards. He frequently feels compelled to challenge any and every authority – the Crown, the Police, the Prime Minister. He feels superior to any expert, or public figure and tirelessly scribbles letters of complaint. Yet for all this, he is not disoriented for time and place. He has no insight at all. He does not feel ill. He feels superior to everyone. Yet all the time he is restless.

While I have written ‘he’ so often, this was to avoid the tedium of repeating ‘he or she’. In fact, the incidence of this condition is higher in females. There are deep psychoanalytic accounts of mania (and depression) of importance in understanding our minds and vulnerabilities. Yet it would be impossible to get such an over-lively patient onto a couch. Even if one could, he would try to take charge of the situation. At any time, he might become acutely manic, full of suspicion, disorientated, with clouded consciousness, deluded and hallucinated. Equally, he might suddenly fall into a dangerous, profound depression.

It is to be hoped that the medieval church would have seen the acutely manic as crazy. The hypo-manic could, however, have been seen as ‘full of sin’.

Our age, after the centuries of error, see the manic-depressive as ill. We recognise a clearer genetic loading in such patients than in many other psychiatric illnesses. Our very effective treatments are physical ones and we assume, since this work, that there is a physical basis for the illness. In our best practice, we do not, for all this, ignore the patient as a person. Psychodynamic ideas, almost all derived from psychoanalysis, inform our better therapeutic communities in their helping patients. These ideas let us know what patients feel, to which events they are vulnerable, how we may strengthen psychic defences as the individual recovers. It is ironic, perhaps, to see more humane morality in this, in our often-cruel age, than in the moralising practices of yester-year.

The other psychiatric illness, which could lead to the sin of pride – as perceived by another age – is schizophrenia. It involves a profound disruption of mind, a special death of the self. Thinking becomes disordered, feeling

inappropriate, or blunted, physical coordination odd, volition weirdly felt to be altered. Delusions and auditory hallucinations are characteristic. The delusions may be religious. While their unalterable rigidity may seem grotesque to us, they might be blasphemous, or obscene and therefore very dangerous in another age.

The voices that Joan of Arc said she heard were held by her enemies to be proof that she was a witch. We cannot say this incredible figure was schizophrenic. We can say she should not have burned.

When one skims through the *Malleus Maleficarum* one sees described quite clearly almost all the psychiatric conditions that we now see in our age as illnesses, as we have said earlier. The megalomanic delusions of mania, or schizophrenia – ‘I am Christ’, ‘In my ecstasy I am born again’, ‘I am a healer’, ‘I am a healer’, ‘I am a millionaire’, ‘a famous pop singer’, or whatever, can come across to us as pathetic. The sometimes huge delusions of the paranoid, so invariably go with an Adlerian over-compensation for inferiority feelings. How strange to think that any age saw any of this as sinful.

These terribly painful, terrifying illnesses can sometimes lead to violence against the self, or against another. The paranoid, lacking any insight, may believe a particular person was persecuting them, or class of persons, projecting their own heightened aggressivity into them, becoming wildly alarmed with persecutory anxiety, seeking to destroy the victim of their own projections.

It has been an on-going struggle for psychiatric services to overcome the prejudices of the public against psychiatric patients. The prejudices seem to be based on fear. On the one hand, there is the uniformed fear that to be a psychiatric patient is therefore to be unpredictable and dangerous; on the other hand, there seems often to be a fear of one-self, a fear of understanding how close we all are to what Freud called the ‘Primary Process’ – our deepest psychic lives at the level of dreams and unconscious fantasises. It can seem sometimes as though the mere witnessing of madness tightens up our

defences, make us resolutely, crudely, stupidly say to ourselves, 'I am not like that. That is something else. Take it away (so that I can feel safe, unthreatened, intact).

Yet we are better about this than we were, more generous bit by bit. The margins have blurred a little, through the effects of a cascade of paperbacks and reasonable media people talking about how vulnerable any one of us is. We have all been wounded by ordinary life. Given the courage to see how this has shaped our selves, we can find the courage to help the shattered.

There are other irrational sources of pride, which are infinitely more dangerous than psychiatric ones. We will look at them when we consider anger.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **ANGER:**

“While anger is not a principal emotion, it does have a distinctive note as a movement of appetite. For it involves assailing the good of another under the pretext of righteousness, that is, of just vengeance. That is what makes it differ from other capital vices; thus Thomas Aquinas. This qualification is one of the more terrifying truths, which should not be forgotten by any age. Anger can give rise to lasting hatred, which can cool and be thought to justify vengeance, even cold murder.

The largest relevant seeming contemporary literature is not concerned with the emotion of anger as such, but rather with angry behaviour, ‘assailing’, with aggression. There is a cascade of impressive works by Konrad Lorenz, Robert Ardrey, Antony Storr and many others, with aggression somewhere in the title of one of their books. Taken together, there seems to me to be a curious, grim satisfaction which each has in common in trying to explain “man’s unique capacity for cruelty”. The collective noun ‘man’, however, is used in an unusual way. Any and every individual hideous event in history is laid at the door of a generalised concept of man. Almost every sadistic monster is somehow held to provide an insight into all human nature everywhere. Even the term ‘man’ has to include ‘woman’. There are no differences between any of us, man, woman or child: a contemporary version of original sin?

Many of the works have been strongly influenced by the writings of Konrad Lorenz and other ethologists, these very interesting students of animal behaviour. It is not to be denied that such studies can generate important ideas and hypothetical models about our nature. Studies on rhesus monkey infants deprived of maternal care strikingly parallel observations on deprived human infants. The idea that there are special periods in the infancy of an animal in which, for a limited time, it can learn important skills – a bird to peck,

a child to control its bladder, to learn to speak, as examples, have all helped our understanding of our own species.

It is, however, one thing to acknowledge Darwin, to accept our relationship in an evolutionary sense, to other animals, past and present. It is quite different to overlook irreconcilable differences. Arthur Koestler in his "Ghost in the Machine" was gloomy enough about human nature. He was, nevertheless, contemptuous of "rato-morphic psychology": the arguments derived from observations of lower animals applied crudely to man. The rat (a favourite laboratory animal) is vastly distant from man in behavioural and physical terms. Thalidomide, one may remember, was a safe drug when tested on the standard test animal used in its day. Yet it was a tragic drug in its action on human fetuses. Interesting discoveries, organic or behavioural, made on other species can generate dangerous illusions if uncritically applied to man. Yet most of the texts on human aggression make extensive references to zoos and jungles. Is it our nature to be 'red in tooth and claw'?

Of course there have been horrible crimes committed which can cause us to think about human nature. The Bulger case for example, where two small boys killed an even younger child. The Dunblane massacre of sixteen small children and their teacher. The serial killers reported not only in Britain, but in many countries. Yet, as far as one can tell, there were unusual personality features in all these individuals involved in these crimes. Some were mad, in particular, paranoid schizophrenics with delusions of being persecuted, failures in community care had left some known dangerous individuals free to murder.

Darwin held that the female is the deadlier of a species. With humans, however, it is the male who is responsible for the vast majority of murders and violent crimes. Contemporary females in Western countries have become, to be sure, more self-assertive and aggressive, but this is at a trivial level compared to males.



Much more important, however, is how destructive humans can be to their own species, much more so than other animals. In other gregarious species there is usually a leader of the pack. These animals achieve leadership by a very interesting kind of contest with their rivals for leadership. They do not fight to the death, even where, as with wolves, for example, their teeth could be deadly. The fight is a virtual. At a certain point, one of the fighting pair seems to realise it has lost the battle. It then submits, crouching head down, eyes averted. This posture almost always inhibits the victor from fighting on. A brute version of morality and election.

Some humans, on the other hand, can go on being cruel and murderous to other human beings, even when they have them helplessly at their mercy. Perhaps even particularly, when the victims are helpless: Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, slaves, prisoners of war, in the Second World War; Somalis, Bosnian minorities etc, etc, etc, now.

Yet are human beings all the same? In fact we vary in intellect, emotionality, personality, height, weight, in eye and skin colour. Our genes and our personal histories vary from one person to another. In particular some of us are more aggressive than others. Some of us have fragile, or even negligible consciences.

And so there are and will be human monsters emerging from the variations that make up mankind (just as there are saints). There have been and will be individual human sadists: the Yorkshire Ripper, the Moors murderers; even doctors and nurses have killed for some awful personal gratification. Serial killers get a large press. Perhaps vicarious gratification in reading about obscene crimes leads to – or stops – some acts by some individuals. There are those in marginal emotional adjustment, for whom the frisson of print, or T.V. presentation is enough to lead to a dreadful act in a dark street, or evening a sun-lit park. The tabloids thrive on such lurid stuff. There is a public appetite for it. Do we enjoy, along with morbid curiosity, our righteous indignation? We live in vulgar times and perhaps always have. Perhaps, again, we should be grateful that “our conscience both makes cowards of us

all". Whatever our cruel fantasies, we are not all viobators, and draw back. That is, our monsters are few, unless our society begins to fall apart, as in lost wars, economic disasters, or homicidal dictatorships.

In those conditions, where law and order break down, many more conscienceless monsters seem to emerge, who lack the sense of shame, or guilt that restrains most of us. Doubtless these looters, rapists, killers, were hidden previously, almost perhaps mostly harmlessly in the general population. They are those who, lacking an internal policeman (guilt, shame) had been kept in check by the forces of a coherent society, an external conscience, so to say. Police forces, or martial law can represent this external conscience, to keep in order those who are less human than the rest. That is, if the forces are not corrupt.

Aristotle remarked that man is a political animal. I think he was probably wrong here. It seems to me that politics, in a national, professional sense, belongs to a special section of human activity – quite different from office politics, the politics of the workplace, or the family. The national or regional politician – to which surely Aristotle referred – is a special brand of us, who can exploit the fact only few of us are obsessed with power in his or her special way, for all the sibling rivalries we experienced in our childhoods.

We like to assume that we are mostly rational. The politician tries to appeal to the irrational, emotional, unconceptualising side of us, masking all this in emotive names: tradition, freedom, democracy and so on. The clashes between political parties have all the disadvantages of the confrontational system in our courts of law. The truth is rarely found, or expressed. Rather, the game is winners and losers, prosecution and defence.

Yet, of course, dictatorships are far, far worse, if all knowledge is politicised, without any opposing ideas, knowledge itself becomes under attack. There is no chance of a neutral, objective history, economics, science, or .

There is only Marxist thinking, Socialist planning, or Conservative, Maoist, or whatever. An attempt is made to distort reality, to confine imagination, in a way to create a synthetic madness, in that only a partial view of the totality of reality is allowed. By the word 'totality', one does not mean any unitary, monolithic experience, but rather an expression of all the valuable differences we each possess and need to express and have recognised. All simple, single theories of how the human world works are really naïve delusions. This goes, too, for simple views of human nature.

The doom-merchants, remarking on human nature, make statements such as: there is the question why between 1820 and 1945, some 59,000,000 human beings were killed by other human beings in wars. This ghastly statistic has been advanced to prove the evil, angry nature of man (and woman). Yet in psychology and psychiatry we seek for many factors that have come together to account for the kind of person that we meet. A mere political or even moral viewpoint would not seem explanatory.

In looking at the ethnic groups, however, that have engaged in wars, political power and motivation seem to be the chief causes of conflict. Since war and peace mark fluctuations in the relations between nations, some other explanation than "aggression id innate" is required to account for wars: exploration of the causes of altering relationship between states, or ethnic groups.

There are, of course, some psychological aspects – the psychology of the politicians involved on either side: a Tsar, a Kaiser, a Fuhrer, and a President. No referendum is carried out seeking support for a declaration of war. And in modern times, men and women are conscripted, many going unwillingly into armed forces. In remoter times, armies – licentious soldiery – were made up minorities of the population, often feared and often despised by their own people. The navy had to press-gang men in order to have enough manpower to run their brutal ships of the past. Even in our day, refugees out number the armies fighting in their lands.

Reliable history books are not psychology textbooks. Such histories discuss many factors – economic, historical, territorial, religious and so on, as causes of war. Nationalism, so often confused, mythological, artificially bolstered and inflamed by propaganda comes in, sometimes as a lethal version of racism, Anthony D. Smith in his “The Ethnic Origins of Nations” remarks how, in a world of very uneven political and economic resources, we must expect continued inter-ethnic conflicts, especially in background areas, where for one reason or another, political recognition of powerful ethnic sentiments has been withheld. People fall back for comfort and inspiration on ethnic ties, symbols, memories, and myths that guided their historically separated, repressed populations.

To return to conscripted armies: young men are taken from peaceful towns and villages. They are then taught how to fight. They are put in groups – platoons and battalions, where they make friends and develop personal and regimental loyalties. No matter how well trained they are, their first experience of combat will be fearful and traumatic – much more conveyed by the poet Wilfred Owen (the Pity of War) in the first World War, than by Rupert Brooke in that war, who praised the challenge of war to a man and idealised it. He was a fine poet let it be said. But despite being in uniform, he had seen no military action that might have given him a more mature vision. He died from a medical disease, not from wounds, before he could see it all as it is. Tolstoy had written about what war is really like (all wars are the same) long since in his ‘War and Peace’; not perhaps on Brookes’ reading list.

As Konrad Lorenz remarks: the most violent form of fighting behaviour is motivated by fear. How better to generate fear than to arrange for armed young men closely to confront one another? Danger is too near to run away – and anyway, if you desert you face being shot by your own commanders. The critical space between you and your enemy, whom you have no knowledge of as a person, is too full of life and death, with all the excitement and fear of losing, or winning: lethal gambling.

The social ties, cleverly promoted by the military, re-creates the tribal feelings of pre-literate societies, subsistence economies, where defending or gaining territory could indeed be a question of survival. The feelings involved are similar: the context is so often very different. And why invoke a Freudian death instinct, when so many men have not chosen to be in the killing fields, but were sent and then had to fight for their lives? War memorials, dare one say it, often re-write what happens. Young men did not willingly give their lives for their country (or tribe) but risked them and lost.

Yet there is also what Konrad Lorenz calls “militant enthusiasm”. He refers by this to the powerful wish of many young people to have an aim, to be a member of a group, fighting – perhaps literally – for common ideals. The wish to belong to such a group may be so strong, it can overpower any consideration of the actual ideals espoused. The binding ethos may be, indeed, amoral, even criminal, as in street gangs.

The leaders of such gangs are usually modestly brighter than their followers and equally unable to worry over what crimes they may commit. Indeed, they may be excited by and delight in them. They are not revolting against stern father figures in any Freudian sense. Their fathers are more usually weak and ineffectual and some of the outrageous behaviour can be seen as a primitive cry for control by society, as internal control is so absent. Such groups seem to have a lowered consciousness and rationality. The football hooligans feel completely righteous, as they commit their atrocities. There are none of the inhibitions that wild animals have, which stops them attacking a passive rival of its’ own kind.

Widespread poverty, social distress from broken homes, drug addiction and hunger promote such gangs. There are many cities in the world in which it can be very dangerous just to walk down the street even by day.

Then again, the whole level of violence is raised when modern weapons are involved. It is so easy to pull a trigger, fire a missile, or release a bomb from an aircraft. In particular, such weapons put a distance between the aggressor

and his victim. The artificial weapons man now possesses are much worse than if we had ferocious teeth and claws. We may now not hear our victim scream, or even see him, or his family as we destroy them. War films always leave out moaning and screaming. The shot man soundlessly drops. The big guns are muted, in no way representing the incredible volume and intensity of sound of a real battlefield. Such films are really social lies and even dangerous, should they glorify war and make it seem a great adventure. There are very seldom-moral wars. Aspects of the Second World War can be seen as moral necessities. Racism and genocide had to be halted. Yet even here, it was political ineptitude that let an evil regime arise and grow, until only a ludicrous justification for a declaration of war against the aggressive power of Germany was made, very, very late in the day.

Given a charismatic leader, militant enthusiasm can be artificially fostered and directed by propaganda based on lies and half lies and traditional and historical prejudices. Thus arises fanaticism.

It seems that it is in groups, in essentially tribal situations, influenced by such factors briefly considered above, that men can become red in tooth and claw. Even then one must again remark that in wars the majority of men are not volunteers. They have been conscripted, put into groups and trained to wound or kill.

In the world as it is, countries need to defend themselves. In a "civilised" war there can be chivalry. Prisoners can be taken and cared for, not slaughtered, as they were in remote times. The Nazis armies, however, allowed three and a half million Russian prisoners of war to die of cold and starvation. This in our century.

Terror bombing of civilian populations became a policy on both sides in that war. Yet it is interesting and important to remember this was never openly, officially admitted at the time. It was always claimed that the time. It was always claimed that the targets were military ones. It would seem that the political and military leaders, while cruel and ruthless themselves, feared there

would be a public out-cry if the truth were told. That is to say, most people were assumed to be more moral and humane. Ironically, the terror bombing itself is widely regarded as a failure in purely military terms. Indeed, for example, the bombing of Dresden has been called a war crime. All this suggests that the idea of open government, a much greater freedom of information, having guidance from the moral majority, could actually improve the moral stature of governments. There seems to be in fact, in many respects, a moral majority among the ruled, but not among the rulers. It is important to remember that even in Nazi Germany, an open policy of killing the mentally ill and handicapped was greeted by a huge public outcry. After that, the Final Solution – the policy of the murder of the Jews, Slavs and so on became a state secret. As Brecht said: pity the country that calls for strong leadership.

Perhaps some wisdom may be eventually discovered from the work of individual and group psychotherapy. This wisdom might lie in discovering more clearly how individuals can maintain their individuality and mentality in groups under severe stress. This may be a mere pious hope. Yet D.W. Winnicott, the child psychiatrist, in speaking of the 'capacity to be alone' made it plain that he meant: the capacity to continue to be your true self in the presence of other people. The idea of a true self is what C.G. Jung meant, when he talks of man's search for wholeness, a balance between the conscious and unconscious aspects of his psyche. Achieving this he called individuation – the full experience of the archetype of the self. To be lost in a crowd can be a kind of unnoticed death of the mature self.

The Holocaust was the greatest single crime against humanity of our century. There have been thousands of books written about it, many attempts to explain it. How could a country of high culture such as Germany regress into such barbarism? There are at least two studies that have tried to approach the problem by examining the natures of some of the perpetrators – not the politicians, but the actual killers and their motives.

The first book published was by Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men*.

I once had 600 psychotic patients and not one of them tried to kill me. I would talk to each patient in a small room, alone, with the door closed. They were mad enough to know their own unconscious; they could tell me a lot about themselves; but they could not defend themselves against disreputable parts of themselves as you and I can. They were infinitely naked to themselves and to the world.

Those were the bad old days. Most of my patients – these chaotic, humans who fragment and yet are still people – were humiliated and frustrated by being certified, by restriction, poor food, appalling quarters. They did not attack me, even though they could have identified me with the harsh authority, which kept them there – or even, in some more remote way, with whomever it was that had made them ill.

So what is the evil within ourselves that we have to come to terms with? It is a psychoanalytic view that the psychotic patient knows his own unconscious, and that his unconscious is the same as ours. This is a view I hold. At the same time, man seems to be viewed by many orthodox psychoanalysts as innately the most aggressive animal that has yet evolved. Must we agree that 'we shall be freed from fear of each other only when we recognise, and abate, our own destructive impulses'? My work with schizophrenic patients has not made me think of destructive impulses like this. In particular, I object to the indictment of all humanity, either in terms of original sin, or in aggressive propensity; and I object in spite of the apparently overwhelming evidence in favour of the indictment. As I see it, this evidence consists of the terrible acts of a few people, on the one side, and the flood of words and fantasies culled by psychiatry and history on the other. That is, studies of some abnormal people, or reflections on the myths agreed upon by historians.

My 600 psychotics were riddled by raw nightmares, even despair. They were not, in my reality, dangerous to be with. They were neither evil, nor planning to set up a Belsen; they did not in my reality want to send an I.C.B.M. on to open towns, or to fix the price of bread. One cannot blame the schizophrenic



for Hiroshima. He, or she I think, is neither aggressive nor evil enough, even if integrated enough. Yet nowadays it seems to be fashionable to take a pessimistic view of man's nature. This view, while it may be explicable, I believe to be wrong. It is not merely incorrect, I think, but it also muddles reflection and creative thinking on our natures. If we believe we have the answer to a question we will not go on searching, as we must.

Along with this pessimism goes a curious feeling that we are longer wholly responsible for what happens to us. The Empire is over, good riddance. All politicians are corrupt, so why bother. War is inevitable so don't think about it. In these remarks I am thinking of the attitudes of the huge uncommitted section of our population, rather than the committed, those in fact who are more completely human – not so much those who are right or wrong, as ones who care.

If I should sound an intellectual snob, I do not mean to. A mental health snob perhaps. A healthy democracy needs to offer equal opportunities for all who can seize them. But we cling to the idea of some other kinds of equality and at monstrous cost – including the cost of truth and maturity. All people are different, not equal, by every test that has ever been devised.

This pessimism, this apathy, amounts in fact to symptoms of a depressive illness. We cannot change we are intrinsically bad. We just are like that. One might comment that this kind of irresponsibility amounts to total responsibility. We are like that. The ghost of self-lacerating melancholia wrings its hands. Omnipotent, it destroys the world! Yet, like the Nazi Storm Troopers, it was acting on orders.

A realistic generalisation about human psychology must not only square with the individual confessing on the couch. It must also fit in somewhere with social illness. If hypotheses about man's nature describe him as innately aggressive, having evil within, this must show up as an objective fact somehow. Let us leave out the tabloid sensation, the extravagant war cruelty

– all the unusual circumstances which are so often called on to proving our wickedness.

Let us look at ourselves in Britain in an average peace time year. In such a year there are about 140 murders; there are 5,000 suicides. These figures are remarkable, for they are fairly steady from year to year. They describe a stable aspect of our population. Compare 140 murders with 5,000 suicides – either is ‘an unequivocal repudiation of social values’.

It seems to me that the figures show that our population is more depressed than homicidal. If I believed that the suicide used the same kind of aggression that lies behind murder, that aggression could have just the same meaning, even when it had a different direction, I would perhaps believe that curing depression in the population might tend to make the murder rate rise. I would give up psychiatry and, as the treatment of depressive illness improved in the hands of my ex-colleagues, I would take up judo, and carry a gun to defend myself.

My clinical experience has indeed made me search for the anger in my suicidal patients, but co-existing with their angry feelings are others, which also must be dealt with. When they have been treated, I have seen the energy of this anger and these other feelings transmute themselves and move the patient from being transfixed in a few fixed qualities of feeling back into a complexity of drives, engaged in life again. The outcome is not the revitalising of a predator.

I sometimes conjure with the thought that the ‘top people’ in the United States almost invariably have their psychiatrist. At the same time, the generation of refugee European psychiatrists who went to the States had their own private reasons to rate aggression in humans highly – biographical reasons, if you like, rather than scientific ones. How many American psychiatrists end an account of a programme of treatment for a patient with some expression such as ‘then he was able freely to express his aggression and go out there and compete’. How well the savage view of man fits into the mythology of the

frontiersman! Can the present aggressive tough line of the young-middle-aged American executive not be explained partly by the kind of psychiatrist he visits?

A realistic psychiatry must square with the social phenomena, which can be counted. It follows that in generalising about the effects of angry violence in the press, on television, and so on, we may have been over-concerning ourselves with the vacuous youth on the street with his flick-knife, a pimply Oedipus in marginal emotional adjustment, no prince, the offspring in fact usually of a weak, or absent father. It may be that, in denying our own depressive feelings, we have denied the huge fact of the 'living and partly living' – those among us so depressed that the next realistic murder play on television, the next disaster headline in the national press, may contain the last straw of violence that they can deal with, except they die. On the figures, which is more likely? Suicide or murder, 5,000 or 140?

I do not underestimate the effects of the unique qualities of electronic mass media in producing minor violence. The social acceptance in a family setting of brutality – the approval that is historically new in a domestic scene – ten, twenty, thirty, or more million people experiencing the same blow in the face. It seems feeble-minded to me to see this as anything more than a social evil. Yet I feel we still have to explain gross aggression as we find it. I am trying to say that we must explain gross aggression in whom we find it. I am saying that we do not find aggression in the 'tiger' sense in our whole population. It has been too easy to broaden the sense of the word 'aggression' to cover too many events – a child attacking its mother's breasts on the one side, the Düsseldorf murderer on the other. Each description is real enough. But the terms must not be made common. Once, after all, we explained everything by saying God or gods. Nowadays, we explain many acts we make as a product of our 'aggression'.

Naturally, we have the problem of explaining the murderer himself, just as need to know the psycho-dynamics of the street gang, and, diminishing again, the bashiness of small boys. Psychoanalysis tells us much these things. Let

me be clear: I only object to the use of the explanations in such a way that they wrongly indict us all. Optimism can be compatible with the large body of knowledge known as psychoanalysis. It is compatible with our other knowledge of life. Optimism is creative.

I suggest that we need many levels of abstraction in moving from the individual on the couch to the peoples of the moving world. Think again about real violence – the barbarism you and I still live among. What of war, the concentration camps, the H-bomb? Surely we need to discover many different social mechanisms in our western society to account for these things? We live in a post-Marxist era, and so we must include economic and historical considerations in our explanations of human behaviour. And other contributions might include pure chance, accident, and mistaken judgement. Determinants are not always psychological, not always even known. As Issac Babel said of communism, in one of his stories: ‘The trouble is we try to explain everything’ (by communism)

Descriptions of the Great Plague can remind us of how morality and common humanity could fail in the face of a big enough disaster. The Black Death – bubonic plague – had a similar effect in many other European countries. Yet in ordinary times, given half a chance, man is patient, he acquires skills; he lives mostly peacefully, patiently, and constructively. Only modern organising techniques have made war total. I would submit that in total war only the victim is total: the total population. The true aggressors remain as usual – not nations or peoples, but a few unusual personalities; not even geniuses – just the Eichmann behind the rows of clerks, and other ranks, and conscripts, and obscure humble folk, an Eichmann with a few colleagues of like mind.

How is it, that the more moral can sometimes permit themselves to be led by the less? I see the problem in terms of anxiety. I believe anxiety is more basic, more primary, and quantitatively more important than anger and aggression in a normal population. What is more, I believe a ‘good enough’ population – as Winnicott might call it – does exist. In other words, we have overdone the idea that there is no normal range of personality. No

psychiatrist, after all, takes on every patient for treatment, nor thinks about those he has not taken on as untreatable.

Let us examine the nearly normal person in this sense then of 'normal enough'. When he is under real stress he becomes anxious. He seeks reassurance from someone who is, ideally, less anxious than himself. If the stress is physical illness, his physician, who has seen it all before, will be calm. If the stress is predominantly emotional, his psychiatrist, conditioned (if I may use the word) to evaluating fantasies, seeing them as real in the deterministic sense, will also not be anxious. The physician will reassure; the psychiatrist will use anxiety creatively and will offer understanding.

In severe social stress affecting populations – plagues, wars, and revolutions – it is reasonable to suppose that most of the population will experience realistic, objective anxiety. To whom can they turn for reassurance? What are the properties of a person who can reassure us in such times? He would have to lack the kind of anxiety that most of the population would be feeling. He would seem to be full of conviction, apparently under entire self-control, knowing what to do. Such a person we clinically describe as a psychopathic personality, abnormally lacking in appropriate anxiety (and in fact usually irresponsible in responsible positions).

It follows from what I have said that if we wish to keep a high standard of national morality and mental health, we cannot ignore the total situation: food, housing, employment, educational standards, career opportunities, and so on, all areas of potential stress. A stressed population makes bad choices of leadership, both at the personal and political level. As Brecht said "Pity the country that calls for strong leadership".

A scientific, critical examination of the idea that human beings are "inescapably killers" is to be found in Ashley Montagu's 'The Nature of Human Aggression'. Montagu looks rationally at what is relevant to whom nature in conjecturing about, say, the territoriality of some fish, or the class divisions between rhesus monkeys. He takes many of them into truer biological

perspective. Montagu sees no human behaviour as genetically determined. He sees humans, in all common sense, as being capable of any kind of behaviour. Humans are of course capable of aggression, but also of “kindness, cruelty, sensitiveness, nobility, cowardice, playfulness.....of course, there is some genetic contribution, but behaviour is determined largely by the experience he has undergone during his life in interaction with those genes. Certainly this is in accord with the psychiatric approach used by any trained psychiatrist. Faced by all the fascinating, odd symptoms that any individual may declare, the psychiatrist relentlessly ferrets out a psychosocial history to make the symptoms understandable. There is individual temperament to allow for. This is indeed the genetic contribution. Nevertheless, what happened to any of us in our earlier lives has left its mark. We have reacted simply, or in complex ways to the quality of our earlier nurturing, to the predominant moods of our mothering, to the chance traumas and bereavements that hit our families, to the securities and insecurities lapping around our beginnings.

As for anger, which is surely the beginning of aggression, what of that? In our Neo-Freudian, Para-Freudian, Post-Freudian era, what can we say?

Freud, the pessimist, conceived the idea of the Death Instinct. It is highly relevant that he derived this notion, when considering the repeated nightmares of the shell-shocked in the First World War. His earlier view, as he outlined in his ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’ was that the dream was a wish-fulfilment. Given a skilful understanding of a dream, it is possible to see it as the fulfilment of a desire, usually sexual. This could not be true for the horrific, repeated dreams Freud encountered in the soldiers of the First World War. True to his clinical experience, and prepared to drop an hypothesis that did not work, Freud became involved in developing a different account, trying to grasp an idea of a ‘repetition compulsion’, a desire, as he saw it, of the patient to return to an earlier state of pre-existence; a matter of Life – Eros, and Death – Thanatos. Once again there was a generalisation from very particular horrific events and responses to them, as though all mankind had been shell-shocked.

Ian Suttie, in his, 'The Origins of Love and Hate', challenged the idea, as Montagu has, that man has a primary instinct for destruction. Suttie, a psychoanalyst, saw aggressivity much more as a secondary response, as a response to emotional frustration (Suttie also believed there were non sexual forms of love, such as the maternal one).

There can, of course, be no dispute that humans experience anger. Babies hold their breath, when overwhelmed by angry feelings. They can cry passionately from rage and impatience, when hungry. And of course, there are the temper tantrums shown by toddlers. Infants can scream and spit, wet or soil "in the service of anger, hate or revenge". In the special psychic world of early childhood, the infant can, indeed, feel omnipotently destructive of his world. He can also smile and love. Our concern indeed is with 'the growth of one thing out of another', as D.W. Winnicott put it (in his book, 'The Child, the Family and the Outside World'). Infants do have fantasies of magical destruction (of breasts, of mother, of therefore the world) and side by side, with magical creation (of these same things). 'Good enough' mothering helps the infant to accept the objective world – to mature from the infant's subjective world, in which the mother is a mere extension of his will, as part of his 'me', self-feeling, into the two person situation, myself and another. In this transition there is normally also a bringing together of love and hate. Both feelings coexist and influence each other. Ambivalence is a word in common usage – a valuable addition to language.

It is possible for all this to miscarry. It is possible for there to be a residue of 'unfused' infantile destruction in an individual. Moderation of aggression is always linked to the establishment of a clear distinction between what is the self and what is not. As R.D. Laing put it "If you do not recognise my identity, I become destructive."

There has been an enormous amount of research on how human infants bond to their mothers and also on those children who had disrupted bonding, or even, sadly enough, no chance to bond at all. John Bowlby, interestingly enough, became concerned with the problem, when he was struck by how

many young delinquents had histories of maternal deprivation, no chance 'to build up confidence in the availability of attachment figures, during the period of about 6 months to five years of age'. His paperback, 'Child Care and the Growth of Love' was very influential.

It has been borne in on us that small children can use the essentially normal bonding process to attach pathological parental figures. (It could be argued whether this is 'bonding' or identification. These are merely alternative words.) It can be 'Child Care and the Growth of Hate' for some children. Some delinquents come from criminal families. Levels of anger and aggression can be very high in some families. This will seem normal to them.

As an example of mishandled anger, we may look at two different ways of parental handling of temper tantrums. Pre-schoolers often show tantrums as a normal problem from about eighteen months of age to about four years. This behaviour is related to emotional frustration on the one hand (I do not want to get dressed, I want another ice-cream, or whatever) and the only gradual development of self-control over strong feelings, or being able to tolerate frustration. There are marked individual differences in frustration – tolerance, some children having a "very short fuse". Tantrums are also related to speech acquisition, children with delayed speech often being more explosive. (The delay may be due to some developmental lag, deafness, or an impoverished language environment).

There are many parents who wisely try to put into words why things are as they are (You'll be sick if you have any more sweets, and so on. Such parents will let the child howl himself out. It is possible to hear the cry of the affected child change from the angry scream of the child who feels at first he is omnipotent and right – indignant, reddening with hot displeasure – a child having a tantrum. But, then the tantrum has the child, as his uncontrolled anger overwhelms his being – psyche and soma – and his cry changes. His clenched fists, his heels drumming on the floor, his contorted, crimson face streaming with angry tears – none of it has won anything. And the power of ugly feelings is like madness in miniature, like being out of his mind. The cry



becomes piteous, miserable, without anger; the infant now fears his own experience. If a parent tried to pick up the child earlier, it would have fought. Now it can be picked up and consoled and it can respond gratefully. There are many ways in which parents help their children to bring together love and hate. This is just one of them: words and comforting.

On the other hand there are other parents, who try to beat anger out of their child. For all sorts of biographical reasons such parents respond with anger to the child's anger.

Research shows that the first method – timed words and comforting – produce very different results from the second, punishment. The first method is not only more humane. The child handled in this way has a lower frequency and a lower intensity of tantrums. The beaten child produces more frequent and more violent tantrums and such children can be left with savage tempers. They can become the violent teenagers. Indeed, physical punishment of children of any age tends to produce angry, aggressive adults.

Long-term studies on emotionally deprived children show that the characteristic legacy is a child showing an abnormally high level of aggressivity and a tendency to steal. Emotional deprivation commonly occurred in Children's Homes, which is why fostering and adoption is, rightly, the preferred way to care for 'lost' children now. But of course, children can be emotionally deprived by a poor quality of fostering, or adoption. And of course, they can be deprived of adequate, sensitive emotional care by their own parents. There can be long-term behavioural effects.

Humans learn to be parents through being parented. Good parenting, then, is not only 'good' in helping children to mature emotionally and intellectually to their full potential. This pattern is culturally transmitted, so that when these children grow up and become parents, they will know what to do emotionally with their children (even if Baby Books are bought for guidance and practical advice and Health Visitors are very welcome). There is, then, a cycle of parenting down the generations, evolving, with different emphases in different

eras, but with an unchanging core of commitment and caring, of love, sensible control and encouragement.

There is inevitably a cycle of deprivation also. The grossly emotionally deprived are often bewildered by their own parenthood. Individuals, who have been uncared-for, can find it hard appropriately to care. A few individuals are incredibly invulnerable, and emerge as intact personalities. Otherwise, very difficult problems can arise for the children of these parents. One is Non-Accidental Injury; the other is Failure to Thrive.

Non-Accidental Injury – physical abuse of children (the Battered Child Syndrome as it had been called) produces injuries that require medical treatment. The victim is usually an infant, defenceless and non-verbal. The injuries would horrify the lay observer: any kind of fractures of bones, cigarettes burns, impossible bruising. Many of the injuries are characteristic in that only another human could inflict them – no fall could do this, no uncertain tottering over an unseen edge on the part of a small child. The explanations of the responsible adult will be vague, uncertain, contradictory, confused. The helpless try to talk about the helpless. Over 90 per cent of abusing parents are neither criminal, nor insane.

Injuring parents have hurt their children in anger, provoked by what they perceive as the misbehaviour of their child. They are behaving as their own parents behaved. They were physically abused as children. As a 'repetition compulsion', they correct their children in the way they were themselves corrected. Their belief is that aggression is what teaches children about authority. They have no idea of the power of love and of how a child wants to please. Such parents have poor control over their anger. They are often socially isolated, often depressed, with unhelpful agencies, as though willingly wedded to failure, misery and despair. Often, a woman has hoped to verify her psychosexual identity by having a child. Yet she has immaturely believed a baby would be like a doll, to cuddle, to play with for a while and then put down. How dare such a fantasy wake in the night crying, or have colic or – in the end, be itself. Not an extension of herself. Not a solution to her un-

lovedness. Not a doll. Or for a man – was this the proof of his sperm, this sleeplessness, this continuity, and this work?

At higher risk from child abuse are premature babies, handicapped infants, the self-assertive, baby, and the bright child. In marginal emotional coping, the nerve snaps in such parenting with eviction, loss of a job, a death, and an illness. Anger and anxiety erupt. The cry of an infant in such a setting seems to be unbearable, as though the parent moves back into memory, as though the child reverberates with some remote time in the parental past, when a mother, or father was small and defenceless and cried desperately and no one came. The cry shrills through the mind, it is unbearable, and it is pain and despair. It is stopped by squeezing until ribs fracture, by a first, by a pillow, by anything that can stop the pain. It is impossible to tell whether the crying is inside, or outside. I only know I must stop it and I am hardly conscious how I now act. Child physical abuse can result in death. (Infanticide was punishable in the past by death, at one time by fire).

“Failure to Thrive” is often included as part of a spectrum, a continuum of child physical abuse. The child is grossly underweight and malnourished. Most of the mothers feel unloved and deprived themselves. They feel overwhelmed by maternity, depressed, lonely and are without the social skills that could find help in their community. In modern times, within inner cities, of course, communities in the authentic old, village-sense hardly exist anymore. Such mothers were, perhaps, angry once upon a time, when they were small and crying out for help and love. Yet they lost hope of it. It did not come. Their angry crying turned into a bleak hopelessness – but with a longing. Such women will go to with men for cuddling, with wanting-to-be-wanted. They are rarely able to achieve an orgasm. Their deepest wish is beyond sex. They wish to be recognised, known, and cherished, as a person, as an identity, not just the easy girl next door, but here, here, here. A self.

Curiously, child physical abuse is easier (yet it is not easy) to deal with, than failure to thrive. The frozen, fearful, devastated feelings of a mother who can be blocked in adequately feeding her infant is a formidable challenge to her

would-be therapist. Feeding an infant is so deep a need for most mothers. It is what their breasts are for, surely? It is what will make the child grow and prosper. It will pacify the brat, who is not wet, or windy, or teething. The lost anger in these loser-mothers is hard to find in psychotherapy. Hope to be valued and wanted, as a person is difficult to rekindle, yet it can be done.

Usually unless mothers 'room-in', infants and young children do not do well emotionally in hospital. A failure-to-thrive child, however, blossoms among the nurses, the rattling trolleys and the peculiar noises of the health industry. Their weight goes up.

This, then, is the other side of anger, when anger is over, when self-assertion has died in the mother and her child does better among strangers than with its own kin.

Bowlby's work originated – his work on 'Child Care and the Growth of Love' – in trying to find the causes of delinquency. As an analyst, he looked into the histories of the young people that interested him. His work was conducted in the era when the term 'psychopath' was perhaps taken more seriously than it seems to be now. A mature person may be defined as someone who shows a realistic grasp of his environment, a sense of conviction about his identity, an ability to cope with his practical tasks and an ability to establish deep mutual relationships with other people. Few of these criteria are met by the psychopath (or socio-path). These are the individuals without conscience, those who have 'character defects' in psychoanalytic classifications: those who are all things to all people. Centuries have seen them for ghastly years triumphant in dictatorships.

In the ordinary way, events catch up with the psychopath. Their cheques bounce, their easy lies become obvious, their partners become bitter about unfulfilled promises. Violence is expressed without guilt. Such individuals are irritable, explosive, and impulsive. They are inarticulate about feelings, immature emotionally and can be violent, angry criminals and child abusers. Such is the human condition, there is also 'assortative mating', in which like

marries, or co-habits with like. Such deprived people can each be looking for the impossible: he as an adult for the mothering he missed, in her, she as an adult, for the fathering she longs for in him. Each is unfulfilled and cannot have any consummation in this. What is most desired is least to be found in the inadequacy of the other. Thus, is found one of the many different causes of anger and violence in marriages. The yelling, the crying for the impossible, for the unattainable, to late, with a bewildered partner who is confused, not understanding, suffering too. Each might say: "you are not talking to me". Each is talking about their past hungers and needs, but without insight, in the wrong time, with immense and utterly futile emotion. Such power of mislabelled feeling (mother/father, why did you not love me, know that I wanted to love you) throws up the violent feelings of the frustrated toddler, but with the power of the adult. No one is mad. Yet deeper meanings and perceptions of personal worth whiteness are destroyed, as though nothing was real except the past and its angers. Tragically, the past is not past. The feelings of the past have time present by the throat.

There are wider fields where even harsher examples are to be found of anger 'assailing the good of another under the pretext of righteousness'. These examples are generated by the fact we are a gregarious species. We live in groups, communities, and nations. Our new media praise the special virtues of our nation – as do the media of other nations praise theirs. Certainly, psychological studies of smaller groups suggest they are held together not only by we-feeling, but also by an anti-them feeling. Teams are built up to compete against other teams. Team or town, or regiment, if ambitious, build on these feelings. Political theories are built on them. But what if a charismatic, fanatical leader takes over?

A paranoid psychotic may kill someone he delusionally believes threatens him (having projected his own aggression into them). A fanatical political leader may tap into a nation's feelings and try to destroy other nations.

A fanatic has been described as a person filled with excessive and mistaken enthusiasm, especially in religion. Such a person has an irrational devotion to

a belief or theory. He is highly emotional. George Bernard Shaw was not being cynical when he said: more people have died for principles than for the lack of them. Shaw was being merely mindful of how certain ages have been literally turned into bloody nightmares by fanatics and their followers, driven by ideas that might seem crazy to us. A fanatic, however, is rarely in fact mad, though to be sure a few mad people are fanatics. Perhaps in psychiatric classifications of the future, some kinds of fanaticism, the kinds that have proved so dangerous to the societies in which they have arisen, will be called madness. Social madness has filled so many graves.

We distinguish between the odd beliefs of a fanatic and that of a mad person rather artificially, because it is often so difficult to do so. We say the mistaken beliefs – the delusions – of some insane people are not true to fact, cannot be corrected by an appeal to the reason of the person entertaining them, and the delusions are out of harmony with the person's education and surroundings. In contrast, we can understand a good deal about a fanatic in terms of his personal history, education and surroundings. His response to reason, however, is usually either nil, or merely provokes him to further excesses. Faith and knowledge are, for most of us, fundamentally different. Religious, or not (and few of us in the West are, anymore) we must all believe in something, even if this belief is no more than one in other human beings. The fanatic is more dominated by his beliefs than by any real knowledge, or facts. His beliefs seem facts to him, the only facts really worth knowing. We others try to balance what we know with what we believe in.

Fanatics seem to have appeared abruptly down the ages. Yet on further study, the suddenness of their emergence can be seen as an illusion. The zealot, the visionary, the charismatic leader, be he Martin Luther, a fundamentalist Christian Evangelist, like Wesley, a Stalin, or an Adolf Hitler, is a particular kind of person. But just as important as this: he must live in a particular period of history, or he will be ignored as a mere crank. So striking are the absurdities and horrors perpetrated by extreme fanatical movements, there have often been too much recording of the effects without enough consideration of the causes. But first a word about the effects.

A visionary leader, thrown up at a particular time of social stress, has been able to generate an almost incredible emotional intensity of belief in his anxious followers. It is no exaggeration to describe the effect sometimes as an epidemic, in which groups, crowds or almost entire nations explode into irrational behaviour, capable of destroying not merely a primitive, but even a once civilised community. For example, because Adolf Hitler believed that the Russians were sub-human ("Untermensch") the German Military High Command did not consider it was obliged to feed Russian prisoners of war. At least 3½ million Russian prisoners therefore died from freezing and starvation. Coupled with all the other inhumanities of the Nazis in the last World War, which included murdering some six million Jews, the ultimate end was the moral degeneration of Germany itself, as well as military defeat at the hands of an incensed world. I choose a relatively recent example from history first, to show that fanaticism is not confined to backward peoples in remote times. It can affect industrialised, modern and educated, advanced nations. I also do not draw a distinction between 'religious' and 'non-religious' fanaticism, since there is little to choose between them in their irrationality, or evening their barbarity: one thinks of the inquisition and so on.

Associated with religious conversion, or within a period of intense religious belief, many curious events have been described. Thus, following the terrible plagues of the Middle Ages, there broke out a psychological epidemic called the Dancing Mania. Masses of dancers would dance endlessly, out of touch with reality, or with one another, at times screaming out as though possessed. Other groups of people at that time, in frantic response to their terror of the plague, formed up as columns of flagellants. They flogged themselves, as they went from place to place. We can only guess at this distance in time at what simple minded fanatic led these people. In the so called New England Revivals of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, in response to a fanatical preacher, Jonathan Edwards, helped by an equally intense and emotional colleague of John Wesley, huge crowds were brought to gibbering states of terror, wringing their hands and sobbing, some even going into coma. In 1801, in Kentucky, a Calvinist preacher, the Rev. James McGready, had a crowd of twenty thousand people crawling on all fours, barking, and rolling about the ground

howling, or going off into trances. Thus, a fanatic is a particular kind of person. He can show his powers by affecting whole communities. Perhaps (in the Middle Ages) only Peter the Hermit was a real fanatic in his crusade. Yet forty thousand people followed him across Europe, burning, raping, killing, under a magical sky, which each believed bore special omens, beckoning them on to the Holy City, and justifying any atrocity. All were fanatical in this.

Can a fanatic change his personality and lose his fanaticism? This is an interesting question. Undoubtedly the followers of a fanatic can change and lose their acquired fanaticism, particularly if general circumstances markedly change for the better. The "hard core" fanatic we have said is a special kind of person. While he may burst into history like a clap of thunder, he has seized an opportunity to express a personality that is really continuously the same. Or rather, it is explicable in terms of psychological phases of an underlying basic, unchanging, abnormal personality. Religious and political fanatics are often of similar personalities in this. They may be eccentric, enthusiastic, apparently intuitive, and sometimes highly intelligent. Yet they are as much victims of their own fanaticism as any one else. The most they can do is to exchange one subject for another. The fanatical communist becomes the equally fanatical anti-communist. The lapsed catholic becomes the deeply convinced atheist. With what fanaticism some individuals fight for peace! In a war, they could be candidates for a V.C.

What causes fanaticism? Faith of a more easily understandable intensity than that of fanaticism seems linked in many cases to an inner conflict, to a desire for the relief of guilt and anxiety. It is important to say that religion is not merely, or only this. Nevertheless, small children generally only attend church as part of a family habit. Most religious conversions, in an emotionally felt sense, happen in adolescence, during the crisis of identity of becoming adult. That is, a time of trying to come to terms with newfound sexual feelings and the guilt and anxiety these may provoke. Not surprisingly therefore, much religious symbolism is obviously erotic. As a person matures, he often becomes less religious. Again, age counts in the depressive illnesses associated perhaps with declining sexual powers. Essentially religious ideas



reappear, as strong, if sick convictions. A depressed person feels sinful, wicked, and guilty. Strong sexual and aggressive drives can also be sublimated, transformed into socially valuable forms, other than religion. This is increasingly the case. It accounts for new leaders of new mass movements. Examples are the Anti-Apartheid Movement, or CND. While young people can be very intellectual, their main motives are emotional. Few people are ever convinced of anything by their intellect alone. (This does not mean they are wrong).

Napoleon, Mussolini, Stalin and Hitler were all small men physically. They might seem ideal examples of Adler's idea of individuals over-compensating for inferiority feelings. Thus the constitution may partly contribute to despotism. Heredity as such hardly seems to, except in despotic dynasties, which is a different kind of "inheritance". Most fanatics arise almost at random. They have tended to be "middle-class" in Western religious movements. Aldous Huxley, and William Sargant have argued that through brain washing, propaganda, and especially by ritual and in groups, almost anyone can become fanatical. Sargant modifies this, in that he sees the outgoing, suggestible, excitable, easy-to-hypnotise extravert is especially prone. The introvert is harder to reach. Yet none of these factors explain enough by themselves.

Modern psychology expects to know a great deal about an individual's his family and social setting before claiming to know him. It can be important also to remember how, in families, we expect sons to be unconsciously hostile towards their fathers. If this hostility is marked, it may spill over into aggressive feelings towards not only his authority, but to all stands for, and towards all authority. In this way, a new generation can reject the previous one, creating a "generation gap". This "alternation of generations", as Freud called it, applied to Freud himself. Of a basically orthodox Jewish background, he became an atheist. Yet Jung could recall vividly how Freud said to him "My dear Jung, promise me never to abandon the sexual theory (of psychoanalysis). .....You see, we must make a dogma of it, an unshakeable bulwark". Jung remarks "He said that to me with great emotion,

in the tone of a father saying “And promise me this one thing, my dear son: that you will go to church every Sunday”. Here, then, is a rare case of creative fanaticism, involving a genius, someone who was right in so many of his opinions, for what appear to be unconsciously the wrong reasons, exchanging, it seems, one faith for another.

There does not seem to be on particular personality type that is prone to become fanatical. It is rather the predominance of one or two mental mechanisms in a personality – a person’s habitual ways of dealing with his anger, his anxieties and inner conflicts. Both John and Charles Wesley, founders of the Methodist Religion, for examples, experienced severe mental depressions. John, previously a poor preacher, suddenly became able to move a multitude. It seems obvious from accounts of him, that he had become mildly manic. That is to say, he had become morbidly elated and less in touch with reality. He then began to use, as all fanatics have used, the mental mechanism of splitting. That is to say, he saw all events basically as split into black and white, right or wrong, belonging to heaven – or to hell, with no shades between. All fanatics have had to have something to love and something to hate. Wesley hated sin and the devil and loved God. Adolf Hitler hated Jews, Gypsies and Slavs, and claimed to love Nordic Teutons. It is not enough with any of these figures to reduce them to mere mad men, or neurotics. As we have said, they were rarely if ever mad. Beyond their over-compensations, their sublimations, their splitting of the world into “goodies and baddies”, there is a dramatic quality to their speaking, or acting, or writing, a larger-than-life-ness, and an apparent certitude that can overpower. We are concerned with mob or crowd psychology here. One can only speak of half of the psychology of fanaticism if one speaks of fanatics as individuals, divorced from their disturbed period and audience. Thus divorced, they may seem odd, obsessed, opinionated, one-track minded, self centred, somewhat hysterical, ruthless. They have highly ambivalent (loving and hating) relationships with ideas and with people. Napoleon cared not a jot for foreign troops who died fighting against him. Robespierre, in the French Revolution, gloried in the blood shed in the name of Liberty, Equality and Brotherhood. Ideas were more important than lives. A cynic remarked of Lenin: He loved

humanity and hated people. This abstract way of loving – of loving an idea – is so characteristic of the fanatic. It is a form of self-love, or rather, a falling in love with the kind of person one would like to be – with an “ideal self”. By falling in love with an idea, a person with underlying conflicts can consciously ignore them, and feel completed, healed, and triumphant. But, as we have said, the idea is a two edged sword. If we fight for God, as the Spanish Inquisition did, we fight against the devil. So we burn people alive in God’s name. To fall in love with certain ideas instead of a person, seems therefore to bring with it the inevitability of simultaneously “falling in hate” in Theodore Reik’s phrase.

As Martin Luther felt his heart swell, “with righteous indignation and hatred” for the Pope, he could say with warmth and vehemence, “Holy by Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done”. This ‘schizoid’, or ‘split’ thinking can produce a revolutionary, a visionary, a scientist, and a politician. Arthur Koestler suggests there was a mistake made by evolution, in building the brain of man, in terms of how our ‘old brain’, nearer the beast, remains linked to the newer, more human part. This, he says, gives the physical basis for a paranoid streak in man. He does not begin to explain why women are rarely fanatics. There have been few Joan of Arcs.

Fanatics are leaders by nature. A frightened, angry, imperilled population will follow them, if the leader matches the styles of the crisis – religious, political, or military. True fanatics often consume one another if they can. Many leaders of the French Revolution were slaughtered by their colleagues. Hitler murdered his Brown Shirts, Stalin most of his Bolshevik friends. Early Protestants truly hated the Papists (a mutual feeling).

It is hard to say which is most to be feared – the evil fanatic who leaps to powers, or the social upheaval – war, revolution, pestilence or famine – that helps him leap.

The Holocaust is perhaps the best-detailed, documented event in history of where a criminal, racist leader obtained power. There is a huge literature on

it. It remains almost impossible to grasp the sheer, terrifying scale of it, whether through the writings of Elie Wiesel, the Noble Peace Prize winner, or of the historian Martin Gilbert. Yet there was a dreadful simplicity in what has been called the banality of that evil.

The schizoid mechanism: splitting all experience into black and white, good and evil, them or us; the projecting of all personal hostile feelings into another and his psychic denial of his doing this, was the basic psychological force behind this tragedy. At the end of the chapter on pride, I remark on irrational sources of pride, which are infinitely more dangerous than psychotic ones. This is what I meant. There is the proud S.S. officer in his elegant, dramatic uniform, a Super-man, almost dizzy with his inflated dreams derived from Nietzsche. He is in a situation where Dostoyevsky would have said 'if God is dead, then everything becomes possible'. The superiority of the officer is sustained through an infinite denigration of his victims. They are degenerate, ugly, cunning. They are dishonest, dangerous, corrupting and plan to seize the world. Yet almost all these attributes are his own, and his victims in the real world are innocent. His very perception of them, however, is altered. It must be, or else we cannot understand how he can murder unarmed men, women and children. He is not a savage out of the past, but a savage in our own century. We cannot, however, allow him the privilege of belonging to a primitive culture, which could be justified by an anthropologist, who can analyse the necessity of his group killing to survive. Nor can we offer an psychiatric classification, which might exonerate him on the grounds of diminished responsibility. He is too proud and self satisfied for us to accept his excuse that he was acting on orders. Besides, we believe in individuals accepting personal responsibility for their actions. He shows his anger when he screams, "Get out" to the emaciated victims who arrive in long trains at extermination camps. They are starving. He is over-fed. He has dehumanised them. He will steal everything they possess, from their money, to their jewellery, to their clothes and underclothes, to the hair of women, even to pubic hair. And as a comment on our high-tech century, even murder was now on a production line, with processes and chemicals and quotas. Industrialised murder with profit motive.

A huge number of bureaucrats were required to run the system. Trains had to be scheduled, Cyclon B gas to be ordered and produced, gas ovens to be built – a huge enterprise. Mongol hordes could never have achieved this.

The heart (if that is the word) of many bureaucratic systems is the obsessional neurotic. An interesting study has asserted that such neurotics lose any sense of the varying importance of very different things. Everything, all data, is reduced, like a computer does, to binary numbers, to zero, or one, smoothed out, each item given, unemotionally, just one value: Jew, or Gypsy, or Slav, equal zero; our race: Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer: one black and white.

We may agree that here, with racism, we were indeed dealing truly with sin. The Nazis were not suitable candidates for psychotherapy. Rightly, the Nuremberg Trials judged this anger sinful, criminal.

Yet one must leave as a chapter end one or two points. Social disorder risks fanatical leaders emerging. The human – alas – is less moral than other gregarious animals and can go on to destroy a defeated submissive foe. And the very groups that can constitute a good community, when perverted, can be far less moral than an individual.

Strong leader emerging out of disordered communities – or nations – may be neither very intelligent, nor moral. The frequent mere cunning and mendacity of such leaders has little to do with intelligence, or wisdom. The one-party states such leaders so frequently set up are characterised by corruption and greed – another deadly sin of course. Put plainly, such men are wicked. Out of their ranks emerge the psychopaths, those without conscience, who intimidate by violence the passive majority, which only wishes to survive.

Sociology, psychology, politics and criminology meet in this moral chaos. It is so easy to say, looking at the detritus of history, that we stand on the

shoulders of all that. Would that we did. We seem to learn, as the saying goes, nothing from history.

It is also easy to say that societies should have supra-ordinate goals of a moral kind; most societies have. Anger should be controlled, or sublimated. Aggressive drives should be displaced to help worthwhile projects. One is challenged by the ancient demand: know thyself. Yet we can be bewildered by what this challenge means. We overlook studies of mutual aid, so often preferring a glorification of leadership, manly virtues and patriotism, as though we were still in subsistence economics, needing desperately to defend our soil and ourselves from human predators.

We have yet to produce societies in which enough individuals in them feel truly empowered, as though their votes mattered, their opinions influenced anything.

Reference was made earlier to the modest level of homicide compared to suicide in the UK. Family doctors diagnose two million cases of depression each year. Depressive symptoms, short of an actual illness are very much more common. It would appear that the low self-esteem and low level of self-assertion associated with depressive features are hugely more important as social, psychological – and moral – problems in our kind of society than anger and aggression.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### SADNESS AS DEPRESSION:

It may seem strange to us that sadness can have been seen as sinful, unless the idea of free will is firmly applied to an entirely different concept of mind than we now have. We no longer feel that all our mind consists of is consciousness. The modern psyche – the soul – is more elusive for us. We have had to acknowledge an unconscious aspect of ourselves that certainly in mind-like and behavioural in its effects and which can accompany the most powerful feelings. In particular, we do not believe that we can choose what we feel, consciously, (or unconsciously, as we paradoxically say).

Yet suicide, the result one might think of as the most unwanted, unbearable sadness and passionate despair, was until comparatively recent times considered not only a sin, but also a crime. The body of a suicide could not be buried in hallowed ground even in Protestant England. Yet sadness, or depression had been recognised as an abnormal state for over two thousand years. The frequent connection between depression and the risk of suicide, which seems so obvious to us, nevertheless escaped the classifiers of sin. We have learnt to recognise, furthermore, a difference between the depressed, attempting to end their lives, and the schizophrenics obeying hallucinated voices urging them to kill themselves, and the younger, usually female teenagers, whose suicidal attempt is less truly aimed at self destruction, which we now recognise as a cry for help, in a family, or social situation they are desperate about. Ironically it would be the survivor of the suicidal gesture in the past who would then become the victim of the church, helped on the way to a death that they had not really sought. Seeing depression as a psychiatric problem has been more humane and moral than seeing it as a sin.

The suicidal gesture of a young person is called Para-suicide, to distinguish it from the serious intend of the older person. Para-suicide is nevertheless as dangerous event, as the call for help may go dangerously wrong – as when a

young individual takes an overdose of pills. He or she might only intend to influence and frighten others. But so often, he or she knows very little about the pills they take. Some medications have delayed actions, so that by the time other people react to the crisis, it might be too late to save a life.

In depression both biological and environmental factors can play a part in additions to the unique social history of an individual. Thus the physical, emotional and intellectual changes of adolescence can leave some young people feeling confused and downcast. A genetic component can be seen in some adult cases, where there are family histories of depression in various members. Childbirth can not only leave a mother suffering from post-baby blues, but can lead to quite severe depressions sometimes. Interestingly the lonely isolated mother, who is often the victim of this mood, is greatly helped by supportive visits of a Health Visitor, or a Community Psychiatric Nurse. Bereavement, divorce, even moving house can depress. There is a response by us to light. The dark days of winter clearly affect some people badly – enough for their condition to have been given a name: S.A.D. – Seasonal Affective Disorder. Exposing the sufferer to episodes of bright light can successfully treat it. Perhaps the gloom of some people from Northern countries can be accounted for by their long dark winters.

There is also, for some people, an anniversary reaction – an episode of sadness around the date of an emotional loss. It can be puzzling for them unless they remember what a date means, even ages after the loss.

I hope it is obvious, that in looking at depression from a medical point of view, we are not considering the ordinary ups and downs of our feelings, fairly easily understood as responses to actual events in our every day life, with some of us more sensitive than others, more down cast – but not ill. For we are talking about the event when sadness is an illness, not a passing mood. When friends, or relations say: “pull yourself together” they are wasting their words. If there is free will, it does not seem able to rescue us from dark, deepest and strongest emotions, which are un-chosen, unwanted. We may call all this spiritual sloth in vain.



The final absurdity in trying to see depression as always a moral problem comes from noticing that physical illness particularly those caused by a virus can cause depression, flu, or glandular fever, for example.

It is not in our current thinking that psychological symptoms arise out of the blue in an individual, with not context. That context is made up of the individual's past – memories true, or false, conscious and unconscious, elaborated, or crushingly simple. The past, as has been said, is not past, but can inform or present often like a current fact. And in our actual present – as we perceive it – there are of course for some of us, unpleasant relationships, disappointments even bad luck, which mingle with memory.

She had made a serious suicide attempt. Fortunately she knew little anatomy, so the wound to her throat, while ugly, was not fatal. However, the large quantity of tablets she had also taken meant a busy night for the doctor on call at her local hospital. A married woman in her early thirties, she had lost her father when she was two years old. Her mother had to work to keep a home together. So there was a series of childminders, none very concerned and an icy Aunt, who sometimes coped with her. The patient became a withdrawn child, not very good at playing with other children, or by herself. Despite a good intellectual potential, she did badly at school, where she was thought to be dull.

She married at seventeen, not so much for love, or to leave home, as to find and found a home – for herself. She married a man much older than herself, half knowing that she was still, seeking her dead father. Her children were her joy. She tried to give them all she had never had herself. Most parents try to do this, but not in the deep, over-determined way this kind of good woman does.

Her joy was Sophie, her youngest of the three. It was a question of compatibility. Sophie seemed, even when tiny, to know how she felt. She always felt she knew what the child felt. She was Sophie, Sophie was her.

Her husband, of course, was a brute. He had to be, to explain how she could not feel she could survive the death of Sophie. How banal – the little three year old ran into the road to retrieve a ball and was hit by a car.

The other two children – Simon and John – were human beings too, and upset, but in a sad, normal way. They could not know that Sophie had been the key to their mother's existence. Miscarried mourning can be a suicide.

The classification of emotional problems is imperfect and has been subjected to a range of criticism.

Thomas Szasz is among several, who have challenged the validity of psychiatric classifications of individuals. His 'The Myth of Mental Illness' left, as it were, no patients – only the malignant classifications of various social institutions that individuals fall victims to. His 'The Manufacture of Madness' has a sub-title 'A comparative study of the Inquisition and the mental health movement'. Here, the persecution, as he views it, of the psychiatric patient is likened to the persecution of the witch in history. Szasz sees institutional psychiatry as fulfilling "a basic human need – to validate itself as good (normal) by invalidating the other as evil (mentally ill)". Michel Foucault in his flawed study of 'Madness and Civilization' sets the tension as between reason and unreason, rather than good and evil, but again, talking of the rise of confining institutions in seventeenth century France, remarks: "a sensibility was born which had to draw a line and laid a corner stone, and which chose – only to banish". Of course the past was often barbaric. But the above views seem scarcely to consider that there are in fact unnaturally unhappy desperate people, who in our age can be helped.

Laing, Szasz, Foucault, Irving Goffman and several other writers have made their critical attacks on academic and institutional psychiatry from several different directions – existentialist, the legal, the socio-economic, the historical, the literary. None of these perspectives seem to be without value. All contribute paradoxically, to a clearer idea of what constitutes a psychiatric

patient. All also modify the rigid 'medical model' concept which has been so often dominant in psychiatry, as though an emotional, or intellectual disturbance in a person could be seen quite objectively, as 'in' the patient in the same way as a case of pneumonia, or gout is viewed by a physician. In other words, to put it perhaps too simply, there is indeed a social definition of the patient to which the patient responds, to which he may fall victim, which may be wildly anti-healing, alienating, destructive.

It is not trivial, for the critics to have made their attacks on establishments and institutions. We have learned that some of the features once described as characteristic of patients only appeared when you locked them up, and went away when you freed them. There are good descriptions now, too, of the apathy and emotional dilapidation caused by enforced long-term idleness in a hospital – the Institutional Neurosis.

Having said that, some contemporary psychiatric text books still either leave out reference to the problems of the social definitions (which change to some degree as our society does) or only mention the names of the authors, who try to reach some truth beyond crude stereotyping, unfairly to dismiss them. There seems to be a dreadful pull to sound like a proper doctor, talking about 'respectable' diseases in the way one's consultant did in student days, dealing with physical illnesses.

What kinds of sadness as an illness do we acknowledge in our century? In our imperfect classifying we have given up thinking of nostalgia as a disease, though it appeared in medical textbooks for two centuries. We reduce it to our classifications of 'anxiety state', or 'reactive depression', as though the territorial attachments we made to where we were born and grew up were relatively unimportant, our memories of other precious times and other special places were somehow trivial, almost sentimental nonsense. In this, I believe the textbook writers are quite wrong. Almost any worker with refugees, or immigrants can indeed find anxiety, or depression in some of his, or her clients. These states can be described as reactive to a new life situation, the challenge of adaptation to a new culture and often worsened material

circumstances. But these feelings can be coloured by a homesickness that can last a lifetime, a feature simply not prominent in other cases of anxiety, or 'reactive depression'. Pining for the "lost object", an analytic way of describing depression refers to a lost loved one as an object. But what of lost town, a village, a society?

Our current scientific classifications for Sadness are subsumed under 'The Affective Disorders'. The prominent member of these is the Manic-Depressive Disorder. In it the basic upset is one of mood. There is a swing from pathological cheerfulness (how enviable!) to profound sadness and despair. The basic characteristics are disturbance of feeling, a periodicity in this, swinging from joy to wretchedness and downcastness. The fact is that if this should all lift, the personality is left quite unimpaired. All this is quite beyond any of our ordinary, everyday ups and downs; and at first blush, unrelated to any of the chance insults and humiliations that any of our human lives can bring. Many creative people have strong swings of mood: periods of intense creativity, then days, weeks or even years of barren time.

In mania the patient (for he, or she, has become one) is omnipotent, triumphant, beyond reason, unable to cope with everyday life. In depression there is, as it were, the vision of some Dostoiyevskian great sinner, riddled with guilt, neglecting the self – nutrition, self-care, cleanliness, even the common wish to live: an image born of a horrifying Puritan conscience at work. The un-pleasable parent; the condemning joyless God; the imperfectability of human kind; the impossible, felt responsibility for everything – poverty, perversion, the indifference of most people, housing, the international situation, insider trading: these hopeless themes go round and hopelessly round. Guilt, guilt, guilt. Not a guilt trip: a transfixing by guilt.

The elation of mania is a feeling that can be understood if it is seen as appropriate to the fulfilment of an unconscious wish. The intensity of the feeling is related to the intensity of that forbidden wish. Mania can also be seen as a crazy defence against feeling depressed.

Depression too, can be sometimes related to an unconscious fulfilled wish, sometimes a very similar wish, equally repressed, thrust out of consciousness, savagely unacceptable to consciousness. Here repression is so massive, so enormous, it leaks, it spreads, and it affects consciousness itself, so that all thinking and feeling become slowed down. Such a patient can seem like a morbid idiot, sluggishly complaining of his wickedness, his unworthiness, the pointlessness of his life. Such patient's look and walk like old men, or women, whatever their age. With successful treatment they not only feel better: they look younger.

Freud with his monograph 'Mourning and Melancholia' first drew attention to the similarity between mourning and depression; they have in common a felt experience of loss. In normal mourning, we know for whom we grieve. There is the 'curious pain of mourning and it is like an illness – but mourning is so commonplace, we do not think of it as an illness, as Freud remarked.

For someone with a fragile self-esteem system, which can only be understood on a very personal basis, many events can feel as painful and devastating as bereavement. A lovers' quarrel, a financial disaster, a verbal assault, may not merely offend, but deeply depress.

There is one set of textbook writers who see psychiatry as a collection of diseases. Such texts assert a consensus on this view, which cannot sensibly be sustained. Man is a sensitive, social animal embedded in relationships from conception on. He is rarely alone in his maladies, even when he feels he is. His thoughts and feelings have meaning. Without some kind of psychotherapy, physical forms of psychiatric treatment are only first aid (or felt as punishment).

On the other side, there are the pure psychotherapists, who hardly seem to acknowledge the body at all. They can seem to represent a modern version of the Puritanical Christian view, that any suffering has redemptive value and undeserved suffering has even more. This suffering is viewed as providing motivation for patients to work through their problems. The scientific evidence

for the positive value of anti-depressant drugs, or, say, lithium in mania, is largely ignored. There may even be frank criticism of those who use drugs to treat major mental illnesses, as though it were an illicit practice. Yet the major mental illnesses are not treatable by psychotherapy alone; indeed, a competent psychotherapist would not take them on and it could be dangerous for them to do so.

On the other hand, the organically minded, those who search for discrete disease entities in depression, also have problems. Humans can be sad for so many reasons and in several ways. But more than this, we live in a guilt culture. Our western version of being human is in fact only one possibility. We are more highly individuated than individuals in simpler cultures. We have, perhaps painfully, more fully found each of our unique identities, or at least reached for them.

There are cultures, which have avoided developing our sense of guilt – or sin. Often less individuated than us, individuals in them belong to a shame culture. That is to say, there is not the cultural demand put upon the developing child to internalise his / her shame (“You ought to be ashamed of yourself – a big boy / girl like you...”). Every society requires psychological control systems to regulate behaviour between people. For us, it is the ‘internal policeman’, conscience, and the super-ego. ‘Our conscience doth make cowards of us all’, by threatening us with guilt feelings if we transgress.

In shame cultures, shame seems to be the control. It seems to be, put obviously, a fear of self-exposure before others at a much simpler, more superficial psychic level than guilt. ‘Shame anxiety’ works by the individual fearing criticism, scorn, or ridicule if his shameful act, or an inadequacy, are discovered. It is a fear of rejection by others. If discovered, the perpetrator is unruffled and can go on with his life as though nothing had happened (or even feel he has been smart). In a guilt culture, we can regret our sins of omission, or commission to the end of our days.

There are dramatic facts, which emerge from the comparison of guilt with shame cultures. Thus the Hutterite religious community has a very high incidence of depression. The Javanese, who put only minor restrictions on their behaviour, have little incidence of depression. The Judeo-Christian tradition is not the only one to generate a punitive super-ego. Those Chinese who live among the Javanese, that is to say, in the same environment, have a much more guilt-regulated society and are prone to depression.

There are therefore unsolved problems for psychiatry. On the one side there is an obvious, established genetic factor associated with some cases of depression in our society. There is no reason to suppose that the same genetic factor does not exist in individuals in shame cultures – yet apparently it does not manifest itself as a depressive illness.

Again, the fact that physical forms of treatment for depression – tablets or electro-shock – work, suggests that there is a physical causative basis for the state. Yet it can be argued that the mood has set up its own abnormal physiological state, which prolongs the mood until the physiological state is altered by physical means.

The work of C.M. Parkes and his colleagues on bereavement make a psychological theory credible. They identified the typical stages following object loss, that is to say, bereavement. At first there is numbness and a feeling of unreality. There is denial, a refusal to accept that death has happened. Only hours or even days later can some of the bereaved begin to feel sad, or to weep. There is insomnia and loss of appetite, restlessness, concentration and memory become poor. There can be much self blame for not showing more love and care towards the lost one. A few people have an uncanny feeling that the dead person is still alive and near them. A few even hallucinate this. Finally there is acceptance of the loss.

A substantial number of the bereaved complain of physical symptoms. A substantial number of elderly females, recently bereaved can be diagnosed as depressed, rather than normally grieving. More than this, many of the

bereaved actually fall prey to a physical illness. Thus there is an increased mortality rate from cardio-vascular disease among men in the year after the death of their wives. Thus we discover possible effects of the mind on the body.

To return to the comparison between guilt and a shame culture, there have been very few studies at any depth in psychoanalytic literature of shame. Yet there have been endless papers written about guilt and the super-ego, some utterly brilliant.

Guilt has been defined as a special form of anxiety felt because of the conflict between love and hate. In most of our meaningful relationships there are mixed feelings, affection felt for affection given, anger at being frustrated, or misunderstood. We are grateful to Freud for having made so much of this clear for us for the first time. A guilt sense implies a tolerance of this ambivalence, this loving and hating the same person. This special kind of anxiety about mixed feelings is what is aroused when someone cared for dies and this is why grieving is so painful and not ever simple. This is why too grieving can miscarry. If, in fact in the living, loving relationship with the lost person, strong hostile feelings and unconsciously, or even consciously, death wishes had been also felt, a real death can seem like a hostile wish come true. The guilt generated from such an event can be too unbearable to be permitted to be made conscious. Such repression of feelings of this intensity can only lead to illness; or rather, this is the illness.

It is well known that Freud brought the ancient idea of conscience, or super-ego, in his terms, into this concept of mind in relation to the Oedipus complex. He saw the super-ego as its heir, in the sense that the maturing child solves his rivalry problems with his father by identifying with his father, the girl doing the mirror image with her mother. Parental voices fade in us; their injunctions remain. Later analysts posited precursors for nearly all the elements that make up Freud's concept of mind. The earlier infantile subhuman, indeed as primitive to any degree, before it becomes human and father-like or mother-like. And, psychoanalysts can say that guilt sense in each individual infant



and child develops from crude fear to something akin to a relationship to a revered human being, who can understand and forgive. Guilt feelings is seen not as something that results from moral, or religious teaching, but as an aspect of ordinary, spontaneous, human child development, morality developing naturally in children, so the account goes, in children who are thriving in a setting provided in a personal and individual way. Put like this, one is reminded of Rousseau and his images of a simple savage, somehow pure and splendid. The analytic view of morality exemplifies, it may be suggested, one of the extreme yet essential characteristics of analysis: the taking of only intra psychic factors into account.

It is curious to remember that Freud was interested in anthropology – as his ‘Totem and Taboo’ illustrated (if full of inaccuracies). His ‘Civilisation and Its Discontents’, we are told, is a mistranslation. For ‘Civilisation’ one should read ‘Culture’ in its valuable anthropological sense; yet he ignored the impact of culture. It is, surely, clear that guilt and shame are taught, implicitly and often explicitly, on top of intra psychic events. Children are charming, wild animals, who we love because they belong to our species and are our own. Parents intentionally and unintentionally coerce them, if only by love, into becoming responsible and moral in the terms of the family and culture in which they live.

The same alleged precursors of the super-ego and guilt sense could be as easily put forward as the origins of shame anxiety, and a shame sense.

Doubtless there are individuals in shame cultures, who can feel some guilt. Without question, however, in our guilt cultures we also experience shame as well as guilt. When we feel shame-anxiety, we relate outwards, towards others and their opinion of us. It informs our grooming, our manners, our cultural pretensions, our sensitivity to what the neighbours say. We do not like to be shown up in public. The ‘self’-consciousness of this is in fact based on our consciousness of others, our fear of contempt, of ridicule. Yet, if we are sure we are not observed, we scratch ourselves in odd places, pick our noses, stare at ourselves in mirrors, even commit minor transgressions that would hideously embarrass us if we found ourselves observed.

There seem to be situations where both shame and guilt become inhibited as civilising control systems, regulating inter personal behaviour. In particular, certain types of large crowds seem to have in themselves an effect of lowering the intelligence of some of the individuals in them, simplifying their emotions and in some circumstances coarsening them and destabilising them. From the faceless anonymity of the crowd emerges the group that has lost individuation, conscience, or sense of any men grass-hut village, or posh suburban semidetached dormitory, an in human has emerged. It would be incorrect to describe football hooligans, for example, as animals, since most animals are very rational in their animal way. They kill only to eat. They fight for sex. Again, one would like to know the social history of the individual, who can give up his uniqueness, his person-ness, for the sake of breaking glass and faces. He, in one respect only, is like the Puritan, for something and against something else. In his extremism he is less than human, but he is riddled with passion and certitude.

Like most landmasses, Europe is a continent of bereavement. It is ironic to think that if French has been the language of diplomacy, German has been the language of psychiatry. It has also, of course, been the language of a superb culture in general, in arts and sciences. It remains a challenge to understand how such a high culture could have come crashing down in our century. It stands as a terrible warning to any culture.

In writing about depression and love and hate, there seemed to be an inadequacy, if nothing could be said about the Holocaust. I mean by this I have been left by earlier, other accounts and by Gilberts 'The Holocaust' with a horrid extra unease, apart from a sense of horror, anger, nausea and outrage at the initial crime by the fact that the German S.S. made their condemned slaves dig up the rotting bodies of the Jews, Slav and Gypsies they had already murdered, children, homosexuals, the mentally handicapped, the Resistance fighters, the mad, the Partisans, and all the others we will never know, in order to burn them. The gas ovens in which

unknown millions had died were later dynamited. Worlds of fine people became smoke and ashes. What on earth for?

The Spanish Inquisition did not feel it needed to hide what it did. There was no shame. The Auto da Fe was a public spectacle – and an awful warning. Here then is a ghastly example, it seems to me, of the difference between a guilt culture and a shame culture, of the difference between an individuated person, be he, or she ever so strange in belief, and the member of a crowd, critically up-dated and structured with slogans, such as ‘the individual must be sacrificed for the state’, turning everyone into a crowd and into a shame culture. The totalitarian vision, be it extreme left or right (where they meet) in diminishing authentic personal responsibility, justify unconsciously their loss of human self by finding a victim, be it the capitalist, the communist, the Jew, or whatever. In doing so, in projecting their own problems, faults, infantile angers and inadequacy into someone else, there is no super-ego. Or rather, we cannot call the compulsive behaviour of all this as resulting from the injunctions of each individual’s super-ego. We need some other term for a mutilated and mutilating collective which without meditation or contemplation, carries out the sick orders of their weird, revered, charismatic leader. Perhaps the term for this, which is not super-ego in action, should be called the action of the collective infra-ego. One looks in vain for ordinary guilt in the perpetrators. My point is that this allegedly deep aspect of the human psyche can at times suddenly seem to vanish.

The release from super-ego function has been described before. It accounts for the gaiety and enjoyable foolishness of fiestas, parties and carnivals. In a carnival there is an open invitation to lose oneself. There is an open tradition that on fiesta days one can dress up outrageously, alter one’s appearance and behaviour, throw off the obsessive, correct observances of everyday life, be as silly, amusing or amorous, as one had secretly longed to be, now among friends, in a celebratory crowd.

A special sickness on the other hand seems to lie in lying and secrecy attached to an abeyance of super-ego. There are the murderous, greedy

secret societies, such as the Mafia or the IRA, both with 'protection rackets'. There were all the secret camps of the Soviet Gulag and all the hidden crimes of a Stalin, sick with the will to power. There was the calculated fiction to make Jews cooperative in their being entrained to oblivion, that they were being resettled in the Eastern Territories to work. There was the reliable voice of the BBC announcer, announcing the successful bombing of military targets, in the Second World War, when in fact the bombers were going for every man, women and child in the targeted German city.

Again, I am trying to make the point that there are categories of mental illness that have yet to join the academic classifications. Only strange political personalities can really believe they know so much better. And yet some special doubt in them, for all their arrogance, made Nazis not publish 'The Final Solution', or Stalin tell the Russian people that he had liquidated twenty million people (and his own friends), or others reveal what the CIA did in Chile or Iran. They wish to be seen as moral people.

Are we discussing mental illness at this point at all? We emotionally respond to such accounts, when they come out, with moral indignation, as though deadly sins were still with us and were to be punished – even if they were committed in our name. But of course the secrets usually come out too late for much to mend.

There are all the sadnesses of wars and persecutions, which are not to be accepted in a human name. With open government, in either a shame culture, or a guilt culture the ordinary morality of ordinary people, mediated through whichever fascinating cultures they possess, seems to be some safe guard against those without conscience and who can really carry out shameful crimes only in secret.

There is a high relevance to psychiatry in all this. The massive mental hospitals, mainly built by the Victorians, were chiefly occupied by masses of almost totally idle, certified patients until only some thirty years ago. These hospitals were mostly located far from the patients' homes. Many patients

were totally unvisited. The social structure was hierarchical, and communication was from above down, with the patient at the bottom of the heap. Many of the hospitals seemed to believe their only function was custodial care and were only hospitals in name. They were, if you like, totalitarian states in miniature.

It has been the exiting, difficult work in psychiatry of the last thirty years to look at asylums as social systems and then introduce the ideas of a free society into these systems, to see patients as people, to open up communication and to exploit all the ideas derived from those few centres of excellence, the therapeutic communities. The plans are slowly being realised of doing away with the giant asylums.

It is very rewarding to see how quite severely depressed people can be supported by a small cub-like day hospital – when years ago they would have been hopelessly incarcerated, becoming socially dilapidated, anonymous.

One can see very sad people making out – if their community cares without fear or shame and with lessening guilt.

## CHAPTER FIVE:

### LUST:

Aquinas saw sexual intercourse having as its objective the preservation of the race and the pursuit of this to excess he saw as lust. This remains of course the Catholic view. A sensual appetite is regarded as sinful – an animal desire for sexual indulgence. The view accounts for the Catholic attitude towards contraception. Thus sexual intercourses that do not have, as its objective the conception of a child is sinful, a sign of lust. How could anyone for see then our population explosions, or the spread of Aids?

In our age, we feel some excess of sexuality are wrong – indeed some forms of it as against the law, some as a sign of illness. Yet our context for this is vastly different from that of the Middle Ages, Western cultures in recent decades became more tolerant of sexuality. Critical, as religious taboos began to lose their power, so too did factual knowledge about sexuality begin to be won. How can one say something is excessive without having norms? Yet it is only very recently that sexuality has become a serious subject of study. Just a few decades against thousands of years of weird superstitions and often, savage prohibitions.

For example, Medieval Europe was convinced of the reality of witchcraft. Witches were seen as evil, erotic, homicidal, subversive and highly organised in an international Society of Witches. Belief in witchcraft was not merely that of ordinary illiterate people, but held also by Bishops, Princes, Writers, and Philosophers – not stupid people. Paranoia has its' own strange logic and seductive force in anxious societies looking for certainty. Certainly some of our contemporary historians of that period, believe there was indeed a widespread practice of witchcraft, even though witchcraft was seen by them as silly as astrology.

The Dominican monks – later to become Inquisitor, Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger wrote a massive book on witchcraft – its detection, its punishment.

The book was supported by a Papal Bull and became spread all over Europe. For nearly, three centuries it was seen as an irrefutable authority, a volume on the bench of every Judge, the desk of every Magistrate, Catholic or Protestant.

The *Malleus Maleficarum* – The Hammer of Witchcraft (1486) – shows a considerable obsession with sex. It is a curious book to read with modern eyes. It resembles our contemporary science fantasy literature in presenting an unfamiliar magical reality, as though Tolkien might have written it. Yet it is also, one might say, pornographic and it is violently anti-feminine. It has a section on “Why Superstition is chiefly found in Women”. It exhibits a lot of fear of women and is sprinkled with remarks such as “All witchcraft comes from carnal lust which is in women insatiable”. These are among the arguments to account for there being more female witches than male. Again “....witches themselves have often been seen lying on their back in the fields or woods, naked up to the very navel, and it has been apparent from the disposition of those limbs and members which pertain to the venereal act and orgasm, as also from the agitation of their legs and thighs, that, all invisibly to the bystanders, they have been copulating with Incubus devils...”. The authors do not claim to have witnessed these strange activities; but then, a great deal of the text derives from hearsay evidence. The priesthood had become celibate from the 5<sup>th</sup> Century AD and perhaps the unnatural strain of this abstinence reveals itself at times in some individuals in texts like these, as the sexual fantasies of the frustrated. Underpinning the evaluation, of course, was the curse that had been laid on women at the Fall and woman was seen as an incomplete version of man, to be associated with the inherent sins of vanity, pride and lechery.

It would be foolish to rail too much against that distant age, since the suffragettes had their struggle for equality in our own and we have lately seen

the Feminist movement continue the struggle against the stereotype of woman as an inferior version of man: at best a continuing version of “inferior in nature, but equal in grace”.

Feminist writers, such as Germaine Greer, Kate Millet, or Betty Friedan have not merely made popular and plain much of the factual evidence relating to woman's nature; they have often been acute critics of both classical and contemporary literature. Under their reviews, the works of a Henry Miller or a Norman Mailer emerge – as they are – often remarkably sexist, lacking any idea of the reality of a separate, sexually different persona to their own, only writing about female sex objects, when not writing about what they see as men. Sexual relations based on such attitudes could be described as lustful rather than loving. And also lacking in knowledge of the complexities of sexuality, male or female.

Freud, so radical a thinker in so many ways, seems to have been a traditionalist in a sense in his view of women. In that much quoted remark of his “What does women want?” he at least admitted that after thirty years of research into the feminine soul, he had not been able to answer the question. He did, however, acknowledge the need for more coherent information from science. For all that, he elaborated a complex theory of “Female Sexuality” (dutifully outlined again in a book of that title by Marie Bonaparte) in which again woman emerges as an incomplete version of man – this time a castrated one.

Women can be castrated of course, as they are when their ovaries are removed for medical reasons. Their emotional response is more severe the younger they are, since the hormonal upset caused by this is more severe. But there is of course, as well as this, the meaning of castration: the loss of the ability to have children, or more children. Anxiety and depression arise so understandably from this. Hysterectomies can have similar effects, so that women can feel they are not women any more. Similar feelings may make a sterilisation cheerfully, but not thoughtfully sought, a source of regret.



Terminations of pregnancy should also not be casually undertaken, as sad feelings of loss can follow.

Pre-menstrual tension and menopausal symptoms, both of which have psychological as well as physiological determinants are common in women in developed societies. In the third world generally, women menstruate far less often, since they are constantly either pregnant, or breast-feeding their babies. The expectation of life is so low, that only a minority of women live long enough to experience the menopause.

The obvious point is that the psychosexual details of a woman's life are inevitably very different from that of a man: the fantasies she has about her body, her wishes for it to contain and nurture a child, her vulnerabilities at different times of her life, the oddness of post-baby blues, yet beyond all the apparent fragility, the ability to conceive and feed a child. None of our modern studies reveal her as more lustful than men.

Yet the concept of history itself is a modern one. Much of the work in psychotherapy is trying to help a person to understand and shed their past experiences, or at least, come to terms with them. Repetition of prejudices, such as anti-feminism is keeping the blindness of the past alive in the present, even if the language used for this is now psychological, rather than theological, as though everything in the end is mere changing metaphor.

The 'more coherent information from science' Freud awaited, has begun to be gathered. Studies accumulate on the development in individuals of their psychosexual identity. Even early in the second year of life, infants seem to be able to identify their own gender. This is even more firmly so by three years of age. The play of the three, or four year old and perhaps even earlier has already divided off into the little girl playing with dolls, the boys pushing their toy cars about; so far, so obvious, perhaps. However, there are several rare conditions which can affect the physical potential underlying sexual identity. Physical factors, which can vary, range from hormonal disorders, metabolic and chromosomal aberrations to mis-developments of the gonads

themselves. In addition, the internal sexual organs may not be consistent with the external genitalia. The main point is that it can be difficult to decide whether an infant is basically a boy, or a girl and a decision must be made; or a mistake can be made, because of the anomalies, so that a boy is raised as a girl or vice versa. It does seem that in general a child regards itself as truly belonging to the sex its parents believe it is and conforms in behaviour in being a typical boy, or girl, however, contradicted by its physical endowment. There have been also recently described very rare cases, where a particular inherited metabolic defect was discovered to lead children, mistakenly raised as girls, to switch to being boys at puberty. They had been physically anomalous earlier. In adolescence they became physically and emotionally unequivocally male. For all that, these conditions and the others illustrate the enormous cultural pressure on individuals to belong to one sex or another, and once belonging, how natural each feels their psychosexual identity to be?

Hormonal treatment of pregnant women has been shown to affect the female child rather than the male. Thus the male hormone, testosterone, given to the pregnant woman seems to affect the nervous system of her daughter, in that she is often more aggressive and tomboyish as a child – though still identifying herself as a girl. Oestrogen, a female hormone, on the other hand, can, given via the pregnant mother, produce daughters much less likely to be tomboys than other girls.

There is of course a wide range of behaviours within each gender, so that one may encounter very self-assertive little girls and gentle, timid boys. In general many sex differences in behaviour are culturally determined, but there is always biological variation in every species and there is, in the West, a bewildering variety of parental styles, which transmit a culture to children. And between male or female stereotypes can be found the male homosexual, who could never identify with the culture's boyness, even as a child and the lesbian, who never found the other sex sexually attractive. And, again, our modern view is largely to accept the idea that there is an important bi-sexual element in each sex. Both Freud and Jung believed this it is probably largely because they did, that there is now more enlightened tolerance of all our

individual sexual differences. In times, homosexuals were put to death, as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. And now the spread of Aids revives old prejudices.

When the behaviour and abilities of boys are compared with those of girls, it is perhaps surprising how few real differences there are. Boy toddlers are generally both verbally and physically more assertive than girls (though girls are becoming more assertive) and go on through childhood to adulthood like that. In our culture, in later childhood, boys have seemed to be superior in mathematical skills, but this is changing, and in tasks requiring visuo-spatial ability. Girls on the other hand, have from early childhood onwards, superior verbal ability. The greater assertiveness of boys seems to be found in almost every culture, whatever the cultural attitude towards boys and girls. The other factors, affecting both sexes, are probably at least partly cultural inventions. For instance, some studies show that mothers talk more to their girl babies and girl toddlers than to their boys. Fathers indulge in more rough and tumble play with their sons than with their daughters, at least in Western cultures. In each case, there is a different kind of stimulation, a different cultural permission granted. How pretty, the neighbours say of the little girl. He's a proper boy, they may remark of the tough boy. In these kinds of ways, the culture invents differences (after all, there are pretty boys) or augments endowment (even though after all there are tough little girls). Boys in our culture receive more punishment and more praise, more intense socialisation experiences than girls and more pressure to conform in sex appropriate ways. The tomboy girl, by contrast, is mostly amusedly accepted, maybe even with pride; yet the effeminate boy may be given a hard time, at least in the playground. Boys show more conduct disorders and go in for more delinquency. Before adolescence, emotional disorders in boys and girls occur with equal frequency; yet, in adulthood, both neuroses and depressions are much more frequent in women. Women are much more emotionally vulnerable just before their periods and during the menopause – factors not relevant to men – though to be sure, some authorities believe there is a male equivalent to the menopause in psychological terms. This has been called the Jungian watershed, in which perished earlier dreams have to be abandoned and faulty personal philosophies can fail. Again, marriage seems

to have a protective function for the emotional well being of men. Fewer married men have breakdowns than single men – a fact well established, which allows for the easy explanation that unhealthy men might not marry. Yet marriage does not have this protective function for women. As many married as single women are over whelmed by emotional problems.

We are trying to reach concepts of male and female and what destinies seem to reside in receiving one gender title, or the other. The destinies have been so unequal and myth-bound for so long, courtship and sexual dominance not the least part.

Girls are two weeks more mature than boys at birth, as determined by radiological tests (bone age) – a large advantage in babyhood. Girls walk and talk earlier than boys. Before the care of babies had become so efficient, more male babies died than girl babies, probably because of the boy babies' relative immaturity. Girls not only keep their developmental advantage in physical maturity, they even increase it, at adolescence maturing sexually eighteen months before boys do. Early sexually maturing boys, have personality advantages, which early maturing girls do not seem to have. This appears to be because the issue has different cultural meanings. Physical prowess, the big lad for his age, is socially important for boys, but more often an embarrassment for the girl. A ten-year-old girl is at least as physically strong as a boy her age and her height is only trivially less. After adolescence boys become significantly taller and stronger than girls. This physical superiority, I personally believe, has largely accounted for male dominance over the female historically. The tedious conservatism of history has allowed this dominance to continue, when size and strength in an electronic age might seem much less important than intellectual worth. A further factor is the voice, perhaps in adulthood. The female voice remains much closer in frequency to a child's voice of either sex. Men may unconsciously associate the pitch of a woman's voice with that of a child and so take less seriously what in fact is saying.

It was Freud, of course, who introduced the idea of infantile sexuality. He received more foolish, prejudiced attacks for this from the establishment, than perhaps even Darwin had received from the Bishops for suggesting our relationship to apes. We now take for granted, having cultural permission to do so, that boy babies can have erections from the day of birth. A full bladder in a baby boy can lead to an erection, as can the caressing of his penis, or the rubbing of the nappy. Baby girls have equally sensitive responsive genitals. Babies, of course, neither produce sperm, nor ova, but both sexes, sufficiently stimulated, can achieve a mounting excitement, a more rapid breathing, a flushing and a climax, that we can only call an orgasm. Pre-schoolers of both sexes can learn that it is pleasurable to stimulate their genitals, so that occasional masturbation is quite common. It is, of course, harmless and is only excessive in the unhappy child, who has no other pleasure, or distraction. Such a child can make itself quite sore. In any event, it would seem foolish to call this lust. And in the case of boy babies and infants they have no “seeds to cast upon the ground” yet, so it is a very junior form of masturbation.

The Spanish Inquisition forbade any molestation of the genitals when those accused of witchcraft were tortured to obtain confessions. This followed the Catholic view of the sacredness of the genital in its ability to create a new soul. However, other religions have had other convictions, not in terms of ritual and religious identity, or cultural tradition. It is curious how sex and religion (and other traditions) are linked. There is understandable protection of the family by condemning adultery for instance (an example of lust surely), having rituals and injunctions designed to support and establish more firmly the bonding of a man and woman.

However, it can be an embarrassment to parents for their small child to behave like this. Indeed, unsophisticated parents can still be made alarmed or angry by it, feel it is wicked and punish the child, rather than offer some interesting, distracting alternative. Such parents often belong to a kind of conspiracy against children acquiring any sexual knowledge, so that, for example, many girls from inhibited backgrounds, one is sometimes surprised

to learn, are still upset when their periods start – variously wondering if they are ill, or have injured themselves.

The theme of masturbation has a long history in medicine. It is condemned, of course, in the bible. It was thought to be one of the causes of madness over a hundred years ago and quite barbaric castrations, or clitorectomies were carried out as a form of treatment, which of course failed.

Despite the power of sexual feelings, the human has no instinctive endowment, which informs him, or her, what behaviours go with the feelings. The child, or adolescent has to depend on what information can be acquired from society via the home, the school, or playground gossips. The ignorant adolescent may be acutely confused and embarrassed by his or her physical responses to sexual feelings, and if coming from a markedly guilt-ridden home, will feel very bad about the responsive, natural life of their own bodies. Such guilt has ruined many a marriage through the impotence of a man, or the frigidity of a woman.

It seems strange remarking on these dilemmas nearly forty years after the Kinsey reports on the 'The Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male' (in 1948) and that in the Female (1953). Not scientifically elegant as studies, nevertheless the work of Alfred Kinsey made a huge contribution to our knowledge of what human beings in a Western culture in general do with their sexual lives. His work did not consist of generalising from a few cases in treatment situations, but rather sought randomly to survey how the man or woman at large conducted themselves. Thus he and his co-workers could record how many homosexual experiences ordinary men might have had, or what masturbatory habits men or women pursue. There was detail enough to show class differences – how the lower socio-economic groups, for example, are very conservative in their sex patterns, often thinking sexual variations dirty – but being prepared to drink coffee from a grubby mug. The more bourgeois, on the other hand, are more sexually adventurous, and more fastidious about cleanliness in other regards. The effect of such honest revelations gave an impetus to further research, but also led to, much more

openness about sexuality among the general public. There had, of course, been earlier pioneers – Marie Stopes, say, with her battles to establish contraception as a contribution to feminine freedom, or Havelock Ellis, trying to let sex be a subject, which could be studied and openly discussed. Both had run up against the law.

Years after Kinsey and a stream of other researchers, Kate Millet could still need to say that male and female are really two cultures and their life experiences are utterly different. Conditioning, she says, runs in a circle of self-perpetuation and self-fulfilling prophecy. The young male is encouraged to develop aggressive impulses, the female to thwart her own, or to turn inward. “That guy has balls; the chief feminine virtue is passivity”. Like Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*), Millet found Freud’s notion of woman’s penis-envy ridiculous, if applied as a truth about all womankind and her psychic identity. Friedan’s outline and criticism of the orthodox Freudian view of femininity should not be summarised, but read in its own compelling original form, already surely a classic.

Important sources of information about sexuality came from anthropological studies of different cultures. They are important because they graphically remind us that, however, secure we may feel in our identity as a man, or a woman, in our own culture, we could have felt equally secure in another, in which everything we feel is normal and natural now could be entirely different. Many of our present rights and wrongs would be meaningless. There are wide differences in attitudes towards sex different societies, different taboos and permissions. This is because patterns of sexual behaviour are learned by the human, who is not driven by instincts and hormones, as lower animals are. Of course, there are limits determined by the anatomy of the man and woman; yet these again determine some critical differences between humans and other animals in their sexual behaviour. Some elements in our erotic lives can be seen to have continuity, in a graded series, as it were, from our ape cousins; yet there is a large discontinuity, which marks us off from them. Thus the human female does not have only a fairly brief time when she is sexually receptive. Again, because her vagina is further forward than it is in

apes, a woman has more stimulation of her clitoris by some variety of face-to-face intercourse than by the rear entry employed by the apes, with their different anatomical arrangements. The so-called 'missionary position' is in fact "among" the most exciting for a woman. Cross-cultural studies show that the stereotype of the male being active and the female being passive is by no means universal. Again, Kinsey and others have found that in the United States at any rate, there are usually large differences in the time needed to reach a climax as between men and women, men being much quicker. Yet there are a few cultures where this is not so, as the male is trained to prolong his act to match the female.

Foreplay is found also to vary greatly in amount and variety, both in different societies, but also in different strata's of Western societies. Some do not even kiss. Religious affiliations, income and educational level influence these sexual techniques with us. Thus the manual, or oral stimulation of the female breast, or of the male and female genital is rare among the lower socio-economic groups, whereas it is frequent among the higher. And of course, complimentary words and presents may be part of all this, part of chatting up. The human female breast differs from our nearest animal relations. In the apes, it is a modest structure. A much smaller organ can be entirely efficient simply to suckle an infant ape, or human. The larger size of the human breast seems to indicate that it has not only evolved to feed a baby, but that it is part of the female sexual self. Of course, it is not only size which makes it attractive to the male. The sexuality of the breast is such, that breast-feeding actually leads to uterine contractions and to helpful reduction of the size of the womb after childbirth. The contractions are pleasurable and contribute to bonding between mother and infant. They are even an aspect of the partly sexualised relationship between a mother and her child. A few women even achieve an orgasm when breast-feeding; thus the physiological basis for a man to stimulate the breasts of a woman if he wishes to excite her.

Freud referred once to psychoanalysis and 'my mythology'. In many passages of his works he looked forward to further knowledge to correct his ideas and challenged his contemporaries to provide it. It may be remarked



that cascades of information, particularly about sexuality, that were not available to him, have been largely ignored by the second and third generation of his followers.

Masochism in classical psychoanalysis is seen as an essential element of female sexuality. Defloration is assumed always to be painful, which is not true; pleasure is seen as always associated with pain: the old Puritanism. Female sexual pleasure is even seen to be dependent on pain. Yet if we look at the vast natural laboratory of cross cultural studies and get away from the narrow observations of one society at one particular and brief historical period, it all seems different.

There are indeed particular societies in which men traditionally inflict pain on women to increase sexual excitement. The men pinch, or scratch, they bite a woman's neck or shoulder or chest, or even spank them. Yet it is exactly in these societies that women are free to do just the same to men. The infliction of pain is mutual in the pursuit of excitement. It is also in these societies that women are expected to be vigorous and energetic partners in making love – in no way passive. These are also the societies where great sexual freedom is allowed, not only to adults, but also to children and adolescents. It is only in lower mammals that the male is cruel to the female in a sexual advance, and almost without exception, the female does not retaliate. Thus one may venture to say that wife battering, say, is not some kind of regression to an earlier stage of human development, qua human. No studies of normal child development equate to this, in which a boy reaches some kind of climax by physically abusing a girl (or his mother). As a metaphor one might call this regression to a lower species (to the level of the macaque monkey or the baboon). In fact, the mutual inflicting of pain occurs only in a few cultures and is totally absent in most. The concept of intrinsic female masochism does not survive a review conducted of how most human pairs live and relate in societies that have been studied in great detail. These are not the biased samples coming to the consulting room in distress, but are the characteristics of life-as-usual (as Schultz would say) in many, many cultures.

So again it is necessary to find particular explanations for the particular unusual events societies encounter in their midst. There are battered wives. The battered wife is a woman who has received deliberate, severe repeated physical injury from her partner. She often comes from an unhappy home. In over half the cases studied, her husband, or co-habitee, has been in prison mostly for crimes of violence. Many wives have come from broken homes and many have had aggressive mothers or fathers. Some of these women were disorganised in their lives, but it is interesting that few were educationally handicapped. There appears to be no 'class distinction' when it comes to being battered (I have had the wife of an Earl, a patient, her jaw being broken). Over half are pregnant when they get married, but not a particularly young age. They seem averse to contraception. Half, curiously, say their sexual lives are good. About a third experienced rape or incest prior to marriage.

There is substantial minority of these women who confess to battering their own children. A substantial proportion of husbands – well over half – have drink problems and are prone to jealousy and lack basic emotional security. Such wives and husbands have been described as setting up violent mini societies, in which the men have a low frustration tolerance, made even more fragile by drink and the wives nag and provoke, all in a truly agonising vicious circle. Since they have children, such family patterns set up yet another cycle of emotional disturbance down the generations. The children are often the terrified witnesses of all this blind brutality and become emotionally disturbed themselves, internalising these pathological ways of relating, taking into their inner worlds these violent images. They take these to be normal, to be recapitulated in their own adult lives yet again. The provoker and the provoked, the sadist and the sufferer, the aggressor and the victim, are the only lessons that they learn as models of how to be human. It might not matter if they existed in the bullying hierarchies of apes. It desperately wounds them as humans.

Related to the myth of female masochism is the question of rape. There are indeed cultures where there is no foreplay and men and women simply go

straight into sexual intercourse, without any stylised wooing or preceding directly verbal or physical tenderness, or caressing. However, in every society that has been studied, there are rules, traditions and negotiations found to exist, determining how men and women come together. In those societies where there is almost entire tolerance towards sexual relations between children, or between adolescents, rules come in once pregnancy is possible. These cultures seem to have learned that girls do not become pregnant early in adolescence. We know that periods start before ovulation, while ovulation begins before a uterus can nurture a fertilised egg. Similarly, while most boys seem to mature sexually around their fourteenth year, they rarely produce fertile sperm before their fifteenth. Thus early sexual intercourse is highly unlikely to produce a child.

Having said this, all societies, whether very permissive, or strict over early sexual activity, come in with strong sanctions supporting a bonding fertile pair, whether in monogamy or polygamy and punish any infringements. However abrupt-seeming the coupling in foreplay-less cultures, in fact there has been negotiation, there have been mutual signals of want and acquiescence. It is not rape. There is person-to-person relating.

Rape is defined legally in England as unlawful sexual intercourse knowing that the woman was not consenting, or being reckless whether she was or not. If a jury can be convinced that the man thought the woman was really consenting, he will be acquitted. This is rather an odd piece of legislation, as obviously a man might be set free, when the woman involved knew very well she was not consenting. At least, now the victim remains anonymous in Court (as does the accused) and evidence about the woman's past life is generally not admissible any more (though this latter can be overturned in particular cases). Obviously there are difficult border areas and injustice might fall either way. Some men undoubtedly press their intention on reluctant women. Many inexperienced women fail either to consent fully, or to protest unequivocally. Some women do tease, or overact in a sexually provocative way. A male bully may frighten a woman into giving in.

There is the uninformed male theory, linked to the feminine-masochist theory that women really want to be physically overcome and even their strongest protestations, even their tears are to be ignored as only play-acting. In fact, the male with this approach is on the one hand treating the woman as a sex object, a mere genital, and on the other he is behaving like the member of a lower species, dominating the female by mere strength, a form of assault in humans.

It is true in most societies, as in the West, it is believed that men should make the first advance. Such traditions have a certain force, but directed towards personal contact initially, even if, but directed towards personal contact initially, even if, perhaps, with a view to intercourse eventually. Where such a social determinant is lacking in a society, women openly initiate sexual advances as often as men do (as they of course do actively, though covertly in both forms of society).

The rapist sometimes complains that he was aroused by the provocative way a woman was dressed. Again we differ markedly from other animals. With them, the female exposes her genital to the male as an invitation to copulate. In almost all human societies it is particularly the female that must cloth her genital area, be it ever so skimpily. The rules are generally less strict for males, which may be connected to male 'flashing' in some way in our own society, that pathetic self-exposure that can frighten the innocent girl.

There is a danger in writing about sexuality of diminishing the essential relational basis of it at times making us sound like a collection of promiscuous hordes. We are, of course, in general, only looking very briefly how sexual relationships begin and assuming that they are part of, or lead to stable relationships – pair-bonding, or marriage. The commonest form worldwide is polygamous, in which, if a man can afford it, he has more than one wife. As with all human relationships, the institution of marriage and the family is everywhere bound by rules and restrictions. These vary enormously from one society to another. There is, however, a universal taboo on incest, forbidding men or women to have intercourse with their children, forbidding it between

brother and sister and in some societies putting out far reaching restrictions beyond even the extended family. Yet once more, the human differs from the ape, which recognise no such barriers; if he is dominant, he will have sex with any female, related or not.

There has been a certain amount of agreement by sociologists and anthropologists that the human taboo on incest functions to keep intra-familial sexual rivalry and jealousy to a minimum, to protect the integrity of the family group. Men and women are made angry by their partners having sexual relations with others. There are therefore elaborate rules against incestuous, or adulterous relationships in almost all societies. So the consensus goes. It does not, of course, address the question of polygamous cultures and seems an inadequate construct for those. Indeed, a wife in such a culture has been well known to demand that her husband takes on another wife because there is too much work to be done by only one. In these cultures, more often than not, wives do all the agricultural work. It is ironic that the physically stronger male uses his strength to dominate the weaker female, who has then to do all the heavy work in the fields, under a hot sun.

Again, there is interesting data from the 'classical' period of the Israeli kibbutzim. Non-sibling boys and girls brought up together, as though they were all siblings, who share childhood experiences, nursery schools, who shower together, who acquire all the range of values and ideas of the cultures together, simply did not see each other as sexual partners. These young people had to be introduced to other youngsters from other kibbutzim in order for them to find sweethearts, wives or husbands. They felt they were brothers or sisters to the boys and girls in their own kibbutz.

The point I am trying to make is that simply to try to explain incest taboos mainly in terms narrowly of sexuality seems to me to be a rather unconvincing story. Certainly the taboos appear to refer essentially to sexual relationships. In my view, this is shorthand for personal relationships. Freud meant maleness, when he used the word penis, or femaleness when he wrote vagina. In the context of incest taboos, the issues are: are you, as a person,

loyal to me; do you really love me; do you recognise me as a person; am I more than a body – certainly more than a genital to you? Even, in polygamous cultures: I can recognise your needs, if you respect and do not forget mine.

Sharing is one of the great challenges of childhood. How can my mother love me, when she spends so much time with the baby? Sibling rivalry is normal and gradually overcoming it is a great measure of emotional maturity. Incest taboos surely have evolved as prohibitions against disloyalty, against a kind of domestic treason and are semi-legalistic bolstering of the rationality of commitment, of sharing life between man or woman, or man and women in polygamous cultures, or woman and men in the very rare polyandrous cultures.

Yet it is also true, as Freud said: that which is forbidden is desired. He followed Nietzsche in seeing so clearly that if there is a law to enforce something; there must often be a strong human wish to act very differently, in an opposite direction. There is a desire in many men and women to have sexual relations outside their mate-ships, for example. That these desires are in fact sometimes requited is shown in the Kinsey and other surveys, which sought to discover what people, do, rather than what they are supposed to do. Anthropological studies show other cultures than our own share this occasional secret flouting of social regulations by quite appreciable numbers of their members. It was possibly the wide publicity that was given to the various reports on human sexual behaviour that led to the permissive society. The secrets were out; the past regulation of behaviour was seen to have been partly a charade. A further factor aiding greater sexual freedom was the greater spread of knowledge about contraception and particularly the advent of the contraceptive pill, which seemed to have a particularly liberating effect on the female. We simply do not know whether these and doubtless other factors led to more sexual promiscuity. We have no firm base line for the period before, and no follow up of a Kinsey kind to tell us of behaviours after. Some reliable studies of teenagers at least tell us that with them, while there was indeed physical intimacy, it was within a stable relationship between two affectionate people, even if engagements and marriage had often become 'old

hat'. To many observers there seemed to be less sex-guilt and more real friendship between young women and young men, than there had been before.

During this period – the 1950s, particularly the 1960s and the 1970s, the divorce rates in Britain soared, until they reached the American levels of one divorce in every three marriages. It is especially interesting to note that women are the principal seekers of divorce rather than men. It could be argued at length, that marriage in a nuclear family, as constituted in Western Society at the present time, just does not seem to work for huge numbers of women. This could only become obvious, when reform of the divorce laws and legal aid to finance legal procedures, both of which obtain in Britain, were in place.

Immense psychological problems remain to be explained. Why does marriages help the mental stability of men, but not women, as we have remarked before? Why do so many women now elect to form one-parent families, having children, but avoiding marriage altogether? Is it related to the loss of the extended family, which could be so supportive, with its ready supply of aunts and cousins as baby sitters and minders to give a break from the relentlessness of parenting, or to step in when there is illness? And, in the case of one-parent families in particular, is it that the vastly increased individuation of girls and women in our culture makes the partial loss of self in the sharing imposed by marriages or cohabite-ships too great a stress? After all, a woman has spent all her life becoming an individual. She then undergoes a diffusion of her ego-identity in becoming a parent; even of one child leave alone several. She calls on her own internalised mother to guide and form a basis on which to develop her own mothering feelings and skills. These skills and feelings are directed outward to a child and may almost exhaust the resources also needed for her own emotional self-care. To care for a man too may lead to emotional demand outrunning supply. Did it always? Perhaps this does not happen in simpler cultures, where many relationships help with child care and where the heightened sense of self and individuality Western cultures develop and value much less obtain, where

men and women lead much more group and community lives. Whether women are happier then, one simply does not know.

I discussed briefly incest taboos earlier. Freud heard many accounts of incest from his patients and eventually in public writings concluded that these must be fantasies, simply unconscious wishes, only fulfilled in dreams. Fairly recently a scholar with access to Freud's private papers startled the psychoanalytic world by asserting that Freud had distorted the histories of patients, so that his case material would fit in with his theories. Freud claimed a universality of the Oedipus complex – the sexual desire of an individual for his or her parent of the opposite sex. His theory included the idea that such desires were held in check by fear of the parent of the same sex. This fear is dealt with by identification with that parent, but residues of the sexual fantasies remain in the unconscious and are only requited there.

One can have no opinion about private papers and what they are said to reveal. It is, of course, an essential part of orthodox psychoanalytic technique to treat the free associations of the analysed as products of dynamic unconscious fantasies, to focus on the intra-psychic, the inner world of the analysed. This means largely a disregarding of whatever one means by facts in the history of the patient. The concern is less with actual events, more with what events felt like and the memories in feeling. Theoretical constructs – 'my mythology', as Freud once called psychoanalysis, come in crucially. Psychoanalysis is not a technique – the patient lying on a couch, saying without reserve whatever comes into his hand. There is an interpretation of the utterance. Part of the interpretation will be informed by the analyst's clinical experience, for psychoanalysis has, naturally, an accumulated body of clinical knowledge. The crucial aspect comes in where the psychoanalyst uses Freud's dramatic metaphysical ideas. The setting, as has been remarked on, is one in which suggestion ability can be very high in the patient. Freud himself was aware of this and said he was not able to assess how important a contribution suggestion made to the situation. It has been often remarked that patients come to have Jungian, Freudian, or Kleinian dreams, depending on the particular school to which their therapist belongs. If this is



true in fact, does this matter in itself? It can be argued that, on the one hand, there is a certain underlying overlap in ideas as between the schools. Perhaps, more importantly, the language used by the schools may all be elaborate, almost literary metaphors. The ultimate underlying referents might all be the same. It may be agreed that there are often great problems in trying to find an apt phrase for a feeling. The compliant patient may then simply learn a new language, as it were, which he accepts as standing for what he feels and, it being a new language, it helps him in a way further to objectify feelings. These have after all, often been nameless, especially when he had few words, or even none at all to label his vivid emotional experiences.

It is interesting and related to note that where studies have been carried out, comparing the results of therapy achieved by different schools of psychotherapy, very similar findings are discovered. Yet each school has tried in its different way to answer the patient's urgent questions, his search for meaning, his demand to know why he feels as he does. Each school provides different images and explanations. The dream may be 'the royal road to the unconscious', but it seems to lead to very different places visually.

In the end it became unbelievable that any particular mode offered of the mind by one school or another can possibly be an entirely adequate one. Each reductionist, partial (pg 146). Each contains some truth about the human mind; none seems to contain the whole truth. It really does matter whether theoretical constructs and interpretations frequently, obsessively, refer to the penis – the fear of castration in men, or the lamenting and reconciling that she has been so mutilated, by women. It does matter that another therapist might on the other hand, often deal with similar case material in Kleinian terms: talking of good breasts and bad breasts, death instincts, persecutory, or depressive anxiety. Yet again, the same material in Jungian hands becomes known as archetypal images. The existential psychiatrist is, to some extent, on safer ground since at least he will deal with the manifest aspect of the dream. That is, he accepts the dream as experienced and remembered, rather than grappling with the latent content – the many, many other meanings the dream may have buried between and in its images.

A peril, it seems to me, of looking beyond the surface value of a dream is when there are narrow, rather rigid, fixed ideas in the therapist's head, as though his psychological vocabulary is too small really to capture freely much of the sheer individuality, complexity, and uniqueness of his patient, which includes memories of real events, as well as fantasies.

Worse, the peril is that the narrow theories of the prestigious therapist are conveyed to the patient. Patients, after all, are largely self-selecting for psychotherapy. They are judged to be suitable for such treatment if they are not likely to regress much, are reasonably verbal, intelligent and regular attendees for their sessions. They must be capable of taking insights. That is to say, they are compliant individuals, not only placed in a learning situation, but also in a suggestible one. Most forms of treatment produce a 'placebo effect'. Thus even an inert drug will have a measurable beneficial effect, as we know from scientific drug trials where they are used as controls. The beneficial effect of the rituals of psychotherapy is all credited to the therapist, even though some of the response is to be accounted for simply mechanically, by the situation.

My point in picking out in outline aspects of psychotherapy is an attempt to explain how at least two generations of women in analysis could have come dutifully to accept the notion that women are intrinsically sexually passive and masochistic. It was also for this reason that I felt it worth looking at cross-cultural studies of sexuality, to note that in some societies women are neither passive nor unilaterally masochistic. They do not seem to feel they have lost their penises. Further, there is the curious authoritarian assertion that an orgasm produced by stimulation of the female clitoris is less mature, or complete than a vaginal orgasm. The researches of Masters and Johnson contradict this view. Certainly, the 'lubrication' response of the vagina is the female erotic equivalent of a male erection. The actual female climax, however, relates to the clitoris. One would expect this on anatomical grounds, since the vagina has few sensory nerves, while the clitoris, a homologue of the penis, is richly endowed with them.

There are thus several important issues in which classical analysis has been found to be in error. Not the least of these is the question of incest.

Members of very few societies in the world talk about the sex act, or the genitalia in the presence of members of the opposite sex. This used to be true of course in our own Western society until recent years. As frankness developed in our society it might have been hoped that with the loss of mystery, there might be less sexual anxiety.

To child physical abuse and to a child's failure to thrive as serious issues in our society, child sexual abuse has now been added. All of them raise very difficult problems at the interface between the law and psychiatry. Quite small children, even babies can be the victims of sexual abuse. Not all cases are by any means incestuous. However, even in those cases that are, it is not the infant or child, who is the active agent. He or she is the passive victim. There is no reason to challenge analysts, when they report on incestuous wishes in their mothers, sons to their mothers, more than to their fathers. We have no clinical evidence, however, that the ordinary child actually seduced his, or her, parent. The ordinary love between children and parents is different from sexual love.

There are no bass-lines, no reliable figures from the past that could let us judge whether the sexual abuse of children has become more common than it was. It seems much more likely that increasing social openness about sexual matters has finally led, fairly suddenly, to a realisation that the abuse was occurring. If this is the case, there must have been previously a massive denial in a psychological sense, a refusal consciously to appreciate the true state of affairs. If this seems far-fetched, child physical abuse also often failed to be recognised, for example, until fairly recent years and even the most characteristic severe injuries were accepted as accidental. Once there is the concept, the word, the name, the thing itself can suddenly become recognisable, as though it had been invisible before. Beyond this, there becomes an extension of what can be talked about. Beyond this is the

contemporary agreement that when a child complains of being sexually used, it is rarely lost in fantasy, or lying. It is a gross mistake to talk always of wish-fulfilment in fantasy of a child who complains of being interfered with. In some cases, of course, these experiences have been true in the history of adults too, frightening remembrances from their childhood. Yet in the recent past these witnesses were often not believed. One can only conjecture how individual experiences having real memories treated as unreal, whether their disbeliever is a friend, or their therapist, or a parent, whether it is the bewildered hurt child who is complaining, or the grown up trying to make sense of their lives.

There has been enormous value in using psychoanalytic techniques to explore our individual inner worlds. Yet there is something wrong with a technique that always turns fact into fiction, through having a doctrine, imposing a myth.

There is probably too little data accumulated yet to describe a general picture of cases of incestuous child sexual abuse. It is not always the girl who is involved as victim and even she may have been buggered, rather than have had vaginal intercourse. Some studies have shown mothers to be as often involved as fathers with children of either sex. Step fathers and co-habitees seem more likely to interfere. In families there can often seem to be a curious collusive relationship between the incestuous father and his wife. The abused daughter either dares not complaint to her mother, or if she does, she is called a liar.

There is additionally the risk of child sexual abuse from a stranger – the risk so dreaded by parents.

As for the victim in incest, the psychological hurt is usually very long lasting. As in rape, the abused person feels tainted, damaged, contaminated. A girl with such experience may be left feeling she can never trust men again. Her own sex life can be wrecked, her body a dirty instrument left to her as no source of joy.

There are of course laws against incest and against sexual intercourse with minors. If a father is sent to prison, the child is left with even more guilt. As with death wishes, incest wishes, if fulfilled, only bring deep emotional pain.

However, they evolved, taboos on incest seem very rational – to put it cold-bloodedly. They work indeed to avoid intense emotional stress and pain. It is only with modern knowledge that we can see the genetic advantages of avoiding in breeding, the danger, where recessive pathological genes are present, of producing damaged children. It is not very relevant to quote the ancient royalties of Hawaii or Egypt, where brother-sister incest was the rule. In terms of populations, to mate away from the family makes health sense in terms of psyche and soma.

As for the sexual seduction of small children, they seem to experience this as sexually stimulating and mere toddlers can show frank sexual behaviour in their play with other toddlers or with adults.

Many neurotic problems are embedded in the psycho-dynamics of families, as well as, in varying degrees, being located within the psyche of the neurotic individual. In a similar way, child sexual abuse in a family, rather than consisting simply of a dyad: perpetrator and victim. The psychiatric therapeutic approach is, most rationally, therefore in terms of family therapy, though the child may also need individual, or group help on his, or her, own behalf.

However, in England Social Services Departments have the statutory powers to take children at risk from any form of abuse into their care if necessary and must be told of any case any agency comes across. The police may have been involved too, so that there needs to be close cooperation between different social agencies. This can cut across medical notions of confidentiality, in the best interest of the child. A number of countries have Family Courts – Holland and Scotland, for example. To many working in the field, this seems an ideal approach to these complex cases, where the force

of the law may be required at one extreme and the most sophisticated array of psychotherapies at the other.

Alex Comfort has remarked that it is partly because of the Oedipus and our taboos on incest, that the human has contrived so much more sophisticated a family and a society than the apes, who mate as enthusiastically with their near relations as with any other ape.

Not the least surprising among the findings of the Kinsey Reports were his data on homosexuality, while he estimated only 4 percent of the American male population as being exclusively homosexual contact, found that 37 percent of men had had at least one homosexual contact. He also found that there was a lower orgasm rate among homosexuals than heterosexuals and one is tempted to wonder if this accounts for their fairly frequent use of multiple partners – which would be beyond the energies of the heterosexual. In general, homosexuality is found to be more common in adolescence than in adulthood and to be more frequent in males than in females.

With the male, the sexual activity tends to be much more physical than with the female. The male enjoys manipulation of the genitals, or anal and oral contact. The female is more relational and emotional, often finding hugging and kissing gratification enough. One is reminded of schoolgirl crushes, where even nearness thrills.

With gay liberation, there seemed to be a release, too research the area. If psychosexual identity is a learned identity, what had gone to make a gay identity? Not too much has yet been established. In the case of the woman, she had often seemed to have found it difficult to achieve independence from her family of origin. This, again, is an area where one would hope for more light to come from psychoanalysis. It surely needs a new theory for woman. Boy babies and girl babies both attach, or bond firstly to their mothers. Yet because of anatomy and cultural pressure it is much easier for boys to become un-like their mothers in a psychic sense (even if their loving problem remains) than it is for girls. A girl will be described as an image of her mother.

A girl's play with dolls will be imitating her mother caring for babies. Her identification with her mother will be longer and deeper than a boy's. It will be harder for most girls to 'get away' from her mother than for most boys. And because this can be so frustrating for any human who wants to be her own self, the level of ambivalence will be set high. And, from time to time, in one girl or another, the heterosexual drive will fade out. Is this where fathers have failed to admire their daughters, been absent, or frightened them by admiring them too much, perhaps erotically? We simply do not know. In any event, male, or female love for male or female is not in itself a psychiatric problem and has no part in any contemporary classification of disease.

Many male homosexuals have felt themselves to be different from other males all their lives. There seem to have been more studies of the life histories of gays and have been, than of lesbians. In these studies of what generalisations are possible; yet always one feels cautions about generalisations.

It would seem that such boys avoided the rough and tumble that we tend to think characterises a boy. Often such boys seemed to have an innate gentleness. They could have an unusual degree of physical beauty, so that the adults around them would tend to respond to them as to a girl. In some instances a family would be found that had encouraged feminine behaviour in a preschool boy, even going in for cross-dressing. Another finding was maternal over-protection and a lack of psychological separation from the mother, similar to the observations made about the childhood of some lesbians. A lack of male playmates, but several female ones in the early years was also noted. Often there had been no mature male figure with whom to identify, or alternatively, the father had rejected the child, or been too tough for a boy to identify with. These studies are retrospective and suffer the disadvantages such studies always do. Freud himself remarked on how if one looks backwards down a life (I am paraphrasing) every event seems to have emerged inevitably from preceding events. Yet if one tries to predict from the much more familiar present, the future seems unpredictable, even obscure. We await definitive predictive studies and even then may become

easily confused by arguing from correlations to causation in our search for understanding.

The majority of societies round the world have traditionally been tolerant of male homosexuality. Indeed, they have not only seen it as just a variety of normal behaviour, some societies have given it a special status, and some even accorded a homosexual the role of priesthood. It is largely the Western societies that have had to overcome irrational prejudices, alas, rekindled by the advent of Aids. Female homosexuality, on the other hand, has rarely caused much attention to be paid to it in either simpler societies or our own. The clamour for recognition of contemporary lesbians in the West is something new.

Sexual differences between male and female are impressed upon us from the beginning in any society. We will be dressed differently, and in different colours perhaps as boys or girls, even as babies. In many cultures boys will be circumcised and in some girls, too. Even languages, more often than not, are sexualised, so that there are feminine, or masculine, or neutral vowels. Many societies have puberty rites, sometimes quite cruel trials for boys becoming men. The first period for a girl can often have its ritual-recognition, too. Western societies seem to me to lose out by not having any appropriate ceremony to mark the biological passage into manhood or womanhood. Our definitions of psychological adolescence need increasingly to extend towards the twenties, when physical adolescence is already long over. Within many cultures the bleeding of menstruation is associated with disease, or injury and is also seen as unclean. There is therefore a prohibition against intercourse at that time. With us, there is more concern about pre-menstrual tension and its relief, than with menstruation itself. It is interesting that periods could be entirely suppressed by a particular choice of contraceptive pill, yet, despite calling a period the curse, women seem to feel menstruation to be a badge of femininity, and most do not want it suppressed. Virginity was once highly valued in our culture. It still is in many. Yet some societies, ritually deflorate young girls before their marriage:



We have had our experience of a permissive society. Other societies besides ours have been and are permissive. Those, in which the girl is allowed sexual freedom and initiative, seem to produce women without a problem in achieving an orgasm. Other cultures in which girls are enjoined to be shy, modest, retiring and submissive often have women who cannot climax. It is by no means clear that female higher apes experience an orgasm, so this feature may be peculiarly human. Much has been made of the value of the pleasure of sexual intercourse in creating and deepening bonding between human and other monogamous pairs of animals. Yet the point must be made, that while courtship and mating in lower mammals seems to be narrowly directed towards reproduction, sexuality in higher mammals can be used for other purposes. Thus a female chimpanzee may offer herself sexually to an aggressive male to deflect his attack, or to share his food. With the human female, sexual satisfaction is much more subtle, relational and even obscure than only a physical experience in the bedroom. The advent of contraception has significantly altered the meaning of sexuality altogether, except perhaps in fantasy.

As for lust, how common is the “pursuit of sexual intercourse to excess”? This is not an easy question scientifically to answer and perhaps in general, it cannot be exactly, without huge epidemiological surveys that are often unconvincing, because of all the difficulties of definitions and of framing questions, which do not in themselves inadvertently, frame answers.

There is little psychiatric illness that shows a marked increase in libido among their symptoms. Depression leads to loss of libido. I have already spoken about mania, in which a man, or woman can be sexually very provocative – but also quarrelsome, managing and difficult. There is, again, a very much rarer condition indeed, called Erotomania (De Clerambault’s syndrome). In this curious condition there are delusions of passion. The victim of the condition is usually, but not always a single woman, who believes that some great celebrity is deeply in love with her. The famous person, however, is quite unable to declare his love for her, because of protocol, because of his exalted position in society. He is Royalty, or some other great public figure,

prevented by his high office from making public what he really feels or saying for whom he cares. Described like this, it all sounds touching (to be sentimental) and absurd – like the plot of a second rate, dated musical. Yet if, as it is generally thought to be, Erotomania is a rare variant of paranoid schizophrenia, it may be more pleasant to dwell in some kind of elaborate Ruritania, than to have delusions of persecution, which are the commonest paranoid problems. In either case, there lurk the profound inferiority feelings of the paranoid, at a deeper level.

There is, of course, both male and female promiscuity to consider, which might be thought to indicate, surely, lust in action. The male, in a dated way, is still, to some extent, urged on to have numerous conquests as a sign of masculinity, insofar as the ancient dual morality still holds sway in our society. Yet such studies that we have to hand, suggest that most young people prefer stable relationships, relating, going steady, appreciating each other. Of course there is experimentation, some switching around, quarrels and new liaisons sought. Only a Puritan would say, however, that the young were promiscuous. Yet there is promiscuity among a few; in what way do they differ from others in their generation?

It is interesting to read biographies of Leo Tolstoy. I suppose one motive is that we always hope to learn from reading the life histories of great men. He was promiscuous when he was young. Few peasant women were safe from his sexual attentions if they encountered him in his walks across his estate. Yet his religious conscience tortured him afterwards and he would passionately berate himself and swear: never again. Yet again happened again and again. It is also interesting to notice in his later life, when he was already a famous writer, exhibiting the high moral sense and sensitivity that is never absent from great art, the bitter complaints of Sonia, his wife, that she confided to her diary. On the one side was the moral conscience informing one literary masterpiece after another; on the other side was a brutal, hostile husband. I do not know any biography that links Tolstoyan sexual manners with his childhood. Yet the facts are there. His mother died when he was only two years old. This seems to have left him in life, if not in literature, as a

man who found great difficulty in sustaining deep, meaningful, intimate relationships with women, as though he could not in the end trust, or rely on them, if they were too close to him. As a young man he could only make contact through sex with submissive young peasant women, who could not, dare not, refuse him. Yet irony remains, as one remembers the wonderfully observed, insightful characters, men and women, who crowd his novels. There are said to be a million people in War and Peace.

Emotional deprivation of one kind or another appears regularly in the histories of those who compulsively sleep around. A Western culture has less excuse than any previous one, in being to such an extent largely indifferent to the emotional development of children. For unlike any past time, we do know that there are simple, yet irreducible conditions for an individual to grow into a mature adult. There is first the primary attachment to a reliable, loving figure, the mother. There is the support she needs from the child's father and his interest in the child. A small girl needs to be admired. A small boy needs to feel he can grow into being father. None of these relationships need to be formal, or legalistic. The crucial element is the quality of feeling, the parental love in creating life and passing it on, the recognition and validating an identity.

When all this goes wrong, it is not subtle, or invisible. It is quite wrong to see psychological factors impinging on a life as only detectable by experts. There is the death of the mother, or the desertion of the father, or, for one or other reason the small child going 'into care', or any variation that will leave a child who has attached to caring, protective figures, suddenly to be left on its insecure, obliterated, own among strangers. There are, too, rejected children, who have not had parental figures to love. It is out of these kinds of backgrounds that individuals can emerge who seem to use sexuality itself as their main way of relating. They are capable of innumerable affairs, but few are in sustained interpersonal relationships. Their wanting to be wanted has largely only one way of being expressed.

It is interesting how many people seem familiar with sexual deviations, yet they are all quite rare. Fetishism, transvestism, exhibitionism, voyeurism, are all pretty harmless: (yet a third of sex offenders referred to courts are exhibitionists). There are individuals who get their sexual gratification from bestiality, or very, very rarely, there are necrophiliacs. While it is clear the general public has found all these ways of expressing lust interesting, which is interesting in itself, (literary critics seem to like these terms), each activity and each individual who takes part in it, needs a special psychodynamic explanation. Their life histories will differ from the common run. Some men will be devastatingly shy and awkward with women. Some will be terrified of them. Some will hate them. And their earlier lives, could we but know about them, could help us understand.

Few people complain of their intelligence, but many curse their bad memories. Few, if any, complain of being over-sexed (though their partners may). The important researchers carried out by W.H. Masters and V.E. Johnson (*The Human Sexual Response*, *Human Sexual Inadequacy*) in a way throws a sad light on sexuality, at least in the West. It would seem that those who came to Masters and Johnson often did not know how to even begin to make love. Their complaints were classified as premature ejaculation, impotence, orgasmic dysfunction, or vaginismus. The approach adopted by Masters and Johnson was not individual. They helped the man and woman together, as a pair, the pair at first playing at physical love, each discovering what most pleased the other, in what the researchers called sensate focus. A Puritanical upbringing, latent homosexuality and many learned, mis-learned, or misunderstood attitudes and all kinds of guilt's and even plain ignorance could account for the failures the couples brought to the treatment situation.

The abiding impression left, at least with me, is that, as Freud of course really said in so many different ways, already so long ago, sexuality stands for the person, the man or the woman. It is a summary. It is a measure of what we have seen, or not seen, or seen through in our lives. It is not simply a penis and a vagina. These are just symbols of all our unique complexities.

There is indeed lust and there remains a moral, social rejection of this. We use a different classification from Aquinas in our saying what this is. We continue to condemn legally and morally paedophilia – child sexual abuse, but have been curiously slow until recently, to recognise how much more common this is than we had preferred to believe. Rape, most often carried out by young men, many of who have been drinking, in a somewhat similar way, has only of recent years really been brought into the open. That is to say, the incidence, again, is higher than we had believed. In the past, many women did not dare make a complaint. They often felt too guilty, blaming themselves and overcome with shame. In addition, the police and court procedures could be too humiliating, with an anti-female bias, throwing a harsh unsympathetic light on the whole of a woman's life and character. Many still think that Courts should deal with rape in terms of a charge of physical assault, which would clear away this latter threat once and for all.

Prostitution in all its varieties presumably caters for lust. Society seems to have ambivalent attitudes towards prostitution, in that there are laws to control and restrict the activity, yet none to stop it all together. By a curious quirk of law, for once favouring the female, a male pimp breaks the law, but a female one does not. Stories about famous madams are hugely popular in the press, perpetuating the myth of the golden-hearted tart. Apart from this vicarious gratification, it has been argued that the availability of prostitutes may lower the incidence of rape, by making sex available for purchase. It would be difficult to prove this to be true. Prostitutes are not only willing to offer orthodox sexual intercourse, but some are willing to take on the roles required of them by sexual deviants – the sadist, the masochist or whatever, with the unusual tastes.

At one time it was thought that most prostitutes were not very bright and had been driven into their profession by harsh social circumstances. Many of the younger ones, who may be of school age, do often seem to have come from broken, unloving, deprived homes from which they ran away. 'Rent boys' are the same. Not all are by any means stupid however and to some it is a career.

It has been claimed that pornography offers a similar sexual safety valve as prostitution does. Again, it has proved very difficult to demonstrate this to be true. All restriction was swept away in Denmark and early claims alleged that fewer sex crimes were then encountered. However, the police no longer pursued sexual offenders, so that there was no way of measuring change. A variety of studies of erotic material, 'porno-videos' and the like have been carried out. Gradually the consensus seems to be reached that these are not merely, obviously, sexually stimulating. In the case of some of the nastier videos (to be judgemental) they are harmful, degrading women and perhaps energising the viewing individual in border-line emotional adjustment, into acts he might not have otherwise have carried out.

There is always the tension between freedom and licence. While a culture shows an increasing maturity when it grants freedom of publication to James Joyce's 'Ulysses', or Lawrence's 'Lady Chatterley's Lover', it may be its own executioner if it allows the showing of even simulated experiences of the degradation of human beings; even more so if the victim simulates pleasure in humiliation.

It has always seemed to me a quite extraordinary feat of the imagination to be able to have even a notion of what a human being might be like if free of cultural pressure. Cross-cultural studies show that each of us man or woman, might feel entirely normal and natural, while almost every one of our individual certainties were quite different from what they now are. That each and every culture partly invents and surely augments differences between men and women, suggests that it is of value to societies that there is an identities can be easily discerned and that there is an important social value in difference. It is an area where basic elements of the nurture versus nature, environment versus heredity argument are still astonishingly unclear. In many cultures, men exploit women sexually and as the principal sources of labour to grow food. An economic, Marxist or power argument does not seem sufficient to me. There is a 'beyond' notion of Primary Femininity and Primary Masculinity

related to identity differences, rather than the obvious anatomical differences and the deplorable exploitation.

There is a recurrent description in many texts, which may summarise what I mean. Put by the Stanford Research Institute, there is the Alpha, masculine cast of thought. It is characterised as being rational, analytic and hierarchical. Contrasted with this is the Beta feminine style. This is intuitive and relational. For women morality is a matter of caring for others; for men it is more like a blind application of principles. It is perhaps unfortunate that the labels suggest inequality in difference (alpha versus beta). There can be equality in complementarity.

## **CHAPTER SIX:**

### **GLUTTONY:**

'The good of the body pertains to self-preservation, as food and drink; gluttony pursues these to excess. The unregulated avoidance of self-preservation is a contrary evil'. Here I have slightly paraphrased Aquinas, but not, I hope, altered his meaning in anyway.

To consider obesity first, the anxiety about being a glutton and over-weight is one of the striking, particularly feminine, obsessions of our time. Every few months it would seem, yet another diet is launched and more often than not seized upon and tried out by huge numbers of women, never daunted by previous experience of diets and all their disappointments. It is a particularly Western concern. In several other cultures slim women are thought unattractive and unfeminine. They may even be seen to be a slur on the ability of their husband properly to feed them. Then again, if one strolls round a portrait gallery, it is obvious that in classical times in the West, a typical beauty was almost always very plump indeed.

Such is the crushing power of fashion, it avails one nothing to try to say to the slimmer, that it is a normal secondary sex characteristic for a female to accumulate adipose tissue in her thighs and buttocks. Even if quite slim already, she wishes to fly in the face of hormonal nature. Remarks about portrait galleries are equally futile.

There are individual of course that is genuinely overweight. This may be judged by an arbitrary measure of being a fifth in excess of weights in standard tables. To be, as much as a third above does, one must admit, start to risk health problems, such as hypertension, or heart disease. Obesity than becomes a medical problem.

The obese are surprisingly difficult to help. Certainly, they over-eat and they seem compulsively to prefer large quantities of carbohydrates and fried foods,



the very food that compound their problem. However, many researchers in the area believe that there is a constitutional factor present as well. After all, many of us know when we have eaten enough and stop. The greedy just eat and eat. There have been many theories as to what the constitutional factor might be. One was the idea of an 'appe-stat' – a kind of physiological mechanism that controlled appetite. There must be some such arrangement, since most of us do have a natural link between our appetites and our actual nutritional requirements. This is demonstrated by the fact that most people hold a fairly steady weight, having equilibrium between food intake and tissue repair and energy requirements. This balance is out of order in the obese. A more recent notion was that there are special brown-fat deposits concerned in metabolism, that are deficient in the over weight. Doubts have been thrown on this idea.

Some psychiatrists believe that psychological factors are not very relevant, in a causative sense, but recognise that there are emotional reactions to being over-weight. It has also been observed that severe dieting with rapid weight loss can leave an individual quite depressed.

My own view is that it would be surprising if there was no significant psychological factor involved in causing obesity. Food and feeding are such important sources of pleasure and satisfaction and the human can displace so many feelings in a symbolic way, perhaps we have just not got the analysis right yet. This is by no means meant to overlook the underlying 'collusive' physical side of our lives. Here I am thinking of Alfred Adler's concept of 'organ inferiority'. After all, if anxiety is relevant to psychosomatic illness, we do have to answer: why do some people, say, get only asthma and others only ulcers, unless there are particular weakness in the lung or the gut, vulnerable to the physiological accompaniments of anxiety? Perhaps putting on weight is the way some individuals respond to their worries.

It is interesting to note that Israeli psychiatrists found great problems in treating obese children whose mothers had been in concentration camps. Feeding a child is such a natural maternal pre-occupation in itself. For a

woman who had barely survived on scraps, food ever afterwards could, very understandably, have a value out of all proportion to ordinary feeding. Children matched for age, sex and ethnic origin, raised largely apart from their similar mothers in a kibbutz, did not have problems with being overweight. Just as some women try to validate their female psychosexual identity by one affair after another, an anxious mother may try to prove what a good mother she is by feeding and feeding her child. This, of course, is in no way specifically a Jewish problem, but can be found among any survivors of extreme situations.

Apart from diets attempted by the individual on his or her own, many other approaches have been tried. The group approach of Weight Watchers is one involving mutual praise or criticism. Drugs, which suppress the appetite, are another. Some of the drugs involved, alas, turned out to be addictive and in any event, weight-loss was only temporary. Quite heroic other physical means are tried, beside pills. One is to wire the upper and lower teeth together, so that only a limited amount of food can be taken. This does indeed lead to weight loss, but when, perhaps after some months, the wire is removed, many individuals make up for lost time and over eat until they face their old problem all over again. Even more dramatic are the various operations on the gut aimed to reduce absorption of food – yet sometimes seeming to be successful, unexpected, by leading to a lower appetite. A recent approach is to put a balloon in the stomach to simulate fullness.

It seems we have unsolved human problem with obesity. Is it that we are asking the wrong question? After all, in terms of intra-species variation, we can expect some people to be tall, some to be short, some to be fat, and others thin. Is there not something ridiculous in imposing the stereotypes of fashion on a naturally variable shape? What is more, a shape, in the case of women, that is counter to biological forces? A factor that has not been discussed very much with those whose concern is the science of all this, is the question of women's variable size. The menstrual cycle leads women to vary appreciably in their dimensions. Oestrogen cause fluid retention and some of the physical and emotional strain of pre-menstrual tension is a

reflection of actual tissue tension. The breasts become larger, the tissues generally more puffed up. The period itself releases all this. Again, what of the fantasies related to: I wonder if I am pregnant? To be pregnant will dramatically alter a woman's shape. Her clothes will no longer fit her. Her thoughts will be no longer just about her body as 'herself', but about her body and about another self inside it, like a Russian doll. We are in a new era (there are new things under the sun). As we said in an earlier chapter, in primitive societies women were, and are, mostly pregnant or breastfeeding. Can there not be ghosts from all previous times that somehow haunt contemporary Western woman? Her anxiety about her obesity (as she defines it) may be sometimes an unconscious wish and yet a fear to be with child. The stronger contemporary wish is to restrict the number of children that she has, and to remain girl-like in shape. While contraception has provided an important feminine freedom, there may be a bio-rhythm of longer scale than the better known ones, that has to be denied – and worried about in a foggy jet-lag way.

Our wider culture remains appreciably sexist, so that the social pressures on women continue to stress surface attractiveness and appearance, rather than qualities of intelligence and personality that are, surely, more lasting. There are obese men, but they do not put anything like the same pressure on professionals in a research to become slimmer.

There is another eating problem known as Bulimia Nervosa. In this curious state, which usually affects women rather than men, there are uncontrolled episodes of eating – greed on a grand scale; this is followed by self-induced vomiting. Both the compulsive devouring of food and the vomiting is a solitary, secret performance. The trick of making herself sick is an attempt to avoid putting on weight. Some women with the problem also take quantities of laxatives for the same reasons. In any event, the manoeuvres seem to work, since they are usually of normal weight.

The victim will tell you that at times, they are seized by an overwhelming compulsion to eat. This may be at night, so that they creep down to the

kitchen and start on what comes to hand, jam, biscuits, leftovers, a loaf of bread, all are speedily consumed. A real "binge": For some, there is an experience of tension, which stuffing food away seems to relieve for a short while. For others, there is a kind of solitary loneliness, a sad nostalgia, not to be relieved by any person in the household. For such an empty feeling, a kind of un-lovedness, food offers comfort eating, as a temporary solution. It is all very like a residue of infantile, disgust and guilt follow and the fear of becoming fat. These later feelings, then, lead to the vomiting.

Bulimia can occur on its own, and though no general surveys have been carried out, it is not thought to be at all rare.

The binges of bulimia can be found however, as one of the more ominous markers of the severity of Anorexia Nervosa. Anorexia, however, with or without bulimia, is an illness that produces the most striking emaciation in a person. While some boys and men rarely suffer from the condition, it is, again, much commoner in females. A few develop the problem before adolescence, but most are adolescent and seventeen or eighteen is the commonest age for it to begin.

The degree of emaciation in a fully developed case can be quite astonishing, particularly striking when the young woman is also lively and active as she can be. Her weight may be down to four or five stones and what should be a young face looks haggard. Her ankles may be swollen from protein deficiency (like the starving in Africa). Her extremities will be cold and she may have chilblains. Some girls have a curious growth of fine down on their back and face.

It is interesting that it seems to be more common in the higher socio-economic groups, where food, one might think, should be no problem. There is evidence that the number of cases is increasing, at any rate in the U.K.

The usual start of the illness seems often like an innocent desire to slim. One of the sex differences is that boys put on their puppy-fat just before going into

the growth spurt of adolescence and many lose this as they shoot up in height. Girls, on the other hand, put on a comparable plumpness, but after their growth spurt. In addition, as we have noticed, their hormones determine a laying down of their adipose tissue in characteristic sites. This shape pleased Renaissance Europe, but does not seem to please many 20<sup>th</sup> Century Western women. The rapid changes both in shape and size partly account for the self-consciousness of many adolescents; compounded by an increasing sexual curiosity and awareness.

The anorexic seems revolted by an increase in weight and size – real or imaginary. It is this that determines how they behave, rather than a dislike of food as such. There is a desperate wish to control this physical area of their lives and anxiety about sexuality. The severe weight loss by itself stops girls having periods early on.

Despite the name anorexia (no appetite) the anorexic is obsessed with food and feels very threatened by a powerful appetite, which she feels, might overwhelm her iron self control. Indeed, it often does with some girls, the ones who have bulimia as well. Their secret binges, followed by making themselves sick, in fact are very dangerous, as their body chemistry can become severely upset by frequent vomiting and this is made even worse if they also purge themselves. The effect of this can be life threatening and indeed, some anorexics die from it.

Anorexia is a long-lasting condition without treatment and may become a way of life. There are many theories as to the cause of it. At the individual level, the studies of Hilde Bruch have been found very relevant by many clinicians. She sees the anorexic as having seized on the control of her weight as the one route available to her to achieve autonomy and prove to herself she can be personally effective. Going with this are two curious, almost delusional features. One is that she has a false perception of her size and shape, seeing herself as fat, even when she is skeletal. The other feature is her misinterpretation of feelings of hunger, so they do not signal to her as they do to others, as natural feelings, but rather as persecutory.

In no way contradictory are the various family approaches to understanding, particularly that of Salvador Munuchin. He sees a combination of unusual ways in which a family functions as locking into an individual psychosomatic vulnerability to produce the problem. The four patterns of habitual family interaction are: enmeshment, over-protectiveness, rigidity and lack of conflict resolution. In enmeshment there are poorly defined boundaries between individuals and their roles in the family. Over protectiveness is self-explanatory. Rigidity is the characteristic in which the family strongly resists change, so that it is very difficult for a child to change into an adolescent. Lack of conflict resolution is shown by the habitual by passing of issues, avoiding disagreements and never 'getting down to cases'. Family therapy using Bruch and Munuchin's ideas can be very effective in many cases. Anorexia, fully developed, is a serious affliction and each case must be judged on its merits, when deciding how to help.

Fasting and feasting feature in many religions round the world as part of the ritual calendar. Hunger strikes have been often used as a weapon in political protests. Food as a human theme has enormous emotional power, so we need not be too surprised perhaps, when the power miscarries and sometimes produced illness. All strong human feelings seem to have on occasion their maladies.

Among the odd appetites, one might include the peculiar fancies that seize the appetites of some pregnant women. This seems to be mostly harmless and can even be amusing. Less amusing is pica, which is found in some children. In this, they develop a habit of eating quite non-nutritional objects – chewing bits of wood, or cloth, or whatever. Many of these children are not very bright, but some are bright enough. They seem to find comfort in the habit. It was very dangerous in the era of lead paint. This has a sweet taste and children could poison themselves nibbling the lead paint off painted objects.

Drinking is included among the gluttonies when it refers to an excess intake of alcohol. It is interesting how many cultures in the world discovered, by one means or another, the fermentation process that can produce alcohol from many easily obtainable plants, or other natural substances. Social drinking is widely accepted and wine appears as part of many religious ceremonies, as well as in celebrations of all kinds. There are lots of jokes about drunks and many people, particularly young ones, seem quite proud, even boastful, of the odd episode when they over did it. In addition many governments, including that in the U.K., obtain substantial revenues from the taxes they impose on alcohol. It is perhaps because of all these associations and reasons, that it remains difficult to impress on the public how much substantial ill health flows from alcoholism.

There is, for example, the alcohol dependence syndrome. Here, the drinker feels compelled to drink and suffers with withdrawal symptoms if he stops. Drink becomes more important in his life than job, or family, or anything else. He can for a long time develop an impressive tolerance of quantities of drink that would render the amateur drinker unconscious. Eventually if denied drink 'the shakes' appear – a tremor of legs and hands, a facile agitation and nausea. He can have the shakes, when he wakes in the morning. Later, visual illusions and hallucinations flit past, shadows menace and move; imaginary voices make jumbles of sound. With further deterioration the D.T.s – Delirium Tremens – strike.

Consciousness is clouded. Recent memory goes; there is disorientation for time and place, made more unnerving by misunderstanding perceptions and striking visual hallucinations. Understandably, he is wildly restless and terrified. There are many abnormal physical reactions as well. Nights are the worst. After a few days, he drops into a deep sleep. When he wakes, there is an unremembered in his life – longer than a lost weekend.

It would be too much like imitating a medical textbook to detail the incredible range of physical injuries gross alcohol abuse can cause to our bodies. Cirrhosis of the liver, which most people have heard of, is only one. Many

organs in the body are vulnerable to toxic levels of this simple chemical, particularly the brain. And, of course, it is possible to drink oneself to death quickly, by imbibing vast amounts at a sitting. The drunk staggering into a hospital Casualty department is a trap for the inexperienced doctor. He may miss an additional head injury, to which heavy drinkers are prone, in attributing all the patient's symptoms just to drink.

There is a condition, which is called the Amnesic Syndrome. Intelligence as such does not seem to be very much affected, but there is a gross impairment of memory for recent events and this seems to account for a further feature: a disorientation for time. Remoter memory remains intact. You can have quite a bright conversation with someone having this affliction and think they are quite reasonable – unless you check out with him what happened ten minutes ago. Some individuals seem in some way, aware of their gap in memory, or perhaps because of the way our minds work, we are compelled to fill gaps in our lives in some rationalising manner. Be that as it may, in these instances he will give a good account of what happened ten minutes ago, only it won't be true. He will be confabulating, imagining and bringing back from the remoter past, sufficient events and images falsely to bolster his present. An acute neurological illness (Wernicke's encephalopathy) is the commonest beginning of the chronic picture (Korsakov's syndrome) just described. There are several possible causes of the particular brain damage, which produces the amnesic syndrome, but gross alcohol abuse is the commonest cause. It is thought to be due essentially to deficiency of thiamine, the vitamin. Drunks, of course, have usually very inadequate diets.

Having a social drink at a party is a pleasure. In moderation, it seems to lift the mood and a mild dis-inhibition can help the socially awkward. Alcohol is, however, a depressant of the nervous system, not the stimulant it is often thought to be. Reaction times are slowed down. Most heavy drinkers in the U.K. are male, though women are drinking more. The males are mostly in their teens and twenties. Single young men, unmarried, or divorced, make up most of these. The divorce rates of alcoholics are very high, which is not surprising. So often a heavy drinker has become increasingly self centred,



irresponsible and deceitful. He will steal the housekeeping, or even money from a child's moneybox to buy drink. Everything spirals down. He even becomes impotent. Roughly a third of drivers who die in road accidents, after midnight – have an alcohol blood level above the statutory level. Even without accidents, their mortality rate is higher than the norm for their age, as is suicide.

In terms of other social pathology, excessive drinking is commonly found among football hooligans, wife beaters and rapists. Some individuals do not seem to need a great deal of drink to precipitate in them sudden aggressive outbursts in which they can wreck a pub, or even kill. These individuals can be among heavy drinkers who have black out – a loss of memory for that violent episode, or just some lost evening in a bar, even though they were entirely conscious at the time.

There has been a good deal of research trying to identify the typical personality of individuals, who cannot stop drinking. This has been as disappointing, so far, as similar investigations of obesity have been. Certainly, one can find depressed people who drink apparently to try to cheer themselves up. Yet we also know that heavy drinking can, in itself cause depression and anxiety. It is only too easy to confuse cause and effect. The commonest personality features described in the alcoholic are chronic anxiety and inferiority feelings. Yet these features, alas, so common, do not turn each person with them into an alcoholic, so we cannot say they are in any way specific.

We may have laughed looking back at the Victorians, with their Temperance Societies, their signing the pledge, their talk of demon rum. In fact Victorian England, from 1860 onwards was an extremely heavy drinking society, in which drink was cheap. Alcoholism was a huge social problem, leading to all kinds of brutality and destruction. It destroyed individuals and families. Much less now than then, but still on a large and largely denied scale, it still does.

Drugs offer another form of gluttony and of becoming dependant. As with alcohol dependency, much investigation into the personality of drug dependency, much investigation into the personality of drug addicts has been carried out. Among younger drug abusers, it is possible to find many who did not, or who do not do well at school and who have anti-social traits, shown as truanting, or other delinquencies. Many seem to have had rather miserable childhoods. As with alcohol, the drug dependent seem prone often to anxiety and depression; but again, drugs can produce these symptoms, so cause and effect are once more difficult to disentangle from each other.

There has been much debate about the nature of the drug – vulnerable personality generally without a very clear definition of it emerging. It would be unwise, in any case to argue that there is necessarily always a particular kind of person who indulges in the habit. It is fairly clear, for example, that it has been the availability of cannabis, or heroin and other addictive substances that, to a large extent, has led to a much wider drug-abuse problem. There have always been fashions among the young, often with a strong element of defiance about them. Almost anything their elders, or society might be thought to find objectionable, can seem in each rising generation irresistible. In addition, the young exert great pressure on one another to conform. Thus many perfectly ordinary youngsters can try out drugs, yielding to the social pressure of their peer group.

Unfortunately, of course, taking up some drug habits puts the individual beyond the relatively free-will situation in which his, or her experiment began; the nature of the drug takes over. Examples of such a drug are to be found in the group typified by morphine and heroin, together with pethidine, methadone and some others. These substances are major analgesics, of great medical importance in treating severe pain. Not the least virtue of these drugs, particularly heroin and morphine, is one of their additional effects in being powerfully euphoriant, allaying anxiety in a patient. This can be life saving in calming acutely distressed patients, whose stress reactions to their illness – increased pulse rates and so on, may be catastrophic otherwise – for example, in the heart attack.

Yet it is particularly the euphoric effect of these drugs that make them drugs of addiction; there is also physical dependency. With seriously ill people, they are only used for the three or four days, that the acute phase of the illness, or post operative stages last. Very, very few of such patients ask for more medication after that and, except in terminal conditions, one would be suspicious if they did. Even in terminal illness, medication can be reduced, or even stopped, if only a hospice, humane and understanding approach is shown – exemplified by the work of Cecily Saunders.

The problem of the longer-term use of these drugs is that of increasing tolerance developing. That is to say, with many people, but not all larger and larger doses are required to obtain the same effect. This is true of morphine, but even more, true of heroin.

The effects sought by the heroin dependent are those of the loss of anxiety and the most intense pleasure. Side effects they accept are a poor appetite and a considerable loss of interest in sex. However, the addict is between the hammer and the anvil. On the one side is a need for larger doses; on the other is risk of withdrawal symptoms. To be denied the drug will not only reveal the most desperate psychological craving for it, but also what has become a physiological dependence. Abdominal cramps, a rapid pulse, dilated pupils, diarrhoea, vomiting, runny eyes and nose, restlessness and insomnia and body pains will show this. To avoid these torments, addicts can be driven to theft, mugging, or prostitution to get the money to buy their 'fix'.

The withdrawal effects from methadone are less severe, which is why it has been used to get people off heroin. It is claimed, on the other hand, that the Black Power organisation in the USA can help addicts without using drugs at all.

We know that there are naturally occurring morphia-like substances produced in our bodies – the endorphins, which have helped us to understand many of the effects of major narcotics. Endorphins have also thrown light on the

effects of acupuncture and some other previously mysterious human responses to various treatments.

An appreciable number of heroin addicts drop the habit after some years. Quite a few, however, (10 – 20%) die from overdose or drug related causes. The advent of Aids has brought in an added terrible, lethal threat to those who share needles to inject drugs.

Cannabis is another drug, which has become widely used. There is no evidence that tolerance arises and there are countries where there are no prohibitions against its use. Its effect seems to vary with the expectation of the user to some extent. It often relaxes people and can sometimes distort one's sense of time and space. On the one hand it can be alleged that cannabis causes apathy and indolence. Yet in the West Indies, it is widely used by sugar cane cutters 'to give energy'. There is something about drugs that generate mythologies.

Barbiturates have been another drug much abused. They were originally developed as anticonvulsants and still have an important place in the management of epilepsy. Their use as sleeping pills has fallen into disrepute, as they depress the respiratory centre, which is very dangerous in overdoses. The sudden withdrawal of such a drug from someone used to a high dosage can produce a picture very like delirium tremens, fits and even death. There has been a vogue among young addicts to crush up the pills or capsules with some liquid and inject the resulting mixture. This is an excellent way to produce a hideous ulcer.

The amphetamines are another class of drugs that have proved a disaster except when prescribed for particular medical conditions. They have a place in helping with hyper-kinetic children. Here they have a paradoxical effect, in that they slow them down. With narcolepsy in adults they wake them up. Amphetamines are most powerful cortical stimulants, found also to be euphoriant by some. They cause insomnia and following the 'high', the taker is left anxious, depressed and irritable. Dependence develops rapidly. Since

this class of drug reduces hunger, various versions – Benzedrine, Dexedrine and several others – were tried in the treatment of obesity. Weight loss was only temporary and the addictive side too dangerous. Many years ago, these drugs were also used to treat depression, with unfortunate results. The most dramatic ill effect, however, is the precipitation of a state indistinguishable from paranoid schizophrenia. When this happens, the individual shows violent aggressive behaviour, suffers from auditory hallucinations and delusions of persecution. Mostly this psychotic episode clears up in a few days, but some argue that a few cases go on to become chronic.

Cocaine is another powerful stimulant of the central nervous system. A strong psychological dependence quickly develops. It produces great excitement, which can go on to a confused state and even a paranoid reaction. It was a great favourite of Jazz players in the Golden Age of Jazz, sustaining them at two or three in the morning. It has another wider vogue again, as suppliers smuggle it in.

The hallucinogens form, theoretically, a very interesting group of substances. They can have a most powerful effect on our minds in quite tiny doses. They alter mood and perception, and have been called psychedelic, or psychomimetic drugs. There are several of them (L.S.D., D.M.T., Psilocylin, P.C.P. etc). The effects produced by these substances are not exactly the same as, say, schizophrenia. Nevertheless, they do offer a quick chemical way of being out of your mind in what is generally considered to be a toxic psychosis. If L.S.D. is taken as an example, the effect can be to feel such a distortion of body image, that one feels outside oneself. Objects can seem to melt into each other, as visual perception becomes disarranged. Sounds can seem to be seen, rather than heard and vision heard, instead of seen. An intensification of perception may make trivial, ordinary objects seem detailed, strangely coloured, and extraordinary. Aldous Huxley, indulging in peyotl, wrote in his *Doorways of perception*, how fascinated he became merely by the creases in his trousers. A world in a grain of sand!

In the recent past there was a fantastic series of claims made for the action of many drugs, but particularly for the hallucinogens. The drug experience, the trip, was likened to a consciousness expanding, sacred journey, and a mystical experience of the most profound value. It is difficult to find anything of value that was brought back from these many journeys. It cannot even be guaranteed that there will be an exotic trip. Many individuals have had a terrifying, persecuted time and only remember anxiety and distress. Someone high on one of these substances can be often 'talked down' gently out of it. There is a curious flashback phenomenon, in which a trip can recur spontaneously, perhaps weeks, or months later.

Another way of achieving a toxic psychosis is to take up solvent abuse. That is to say, to be a glue sniffer. This again has been a fashion among the young. It has appealed to many times more boys than girls and while most abusers have been adolescent, quite a few have been younger. It has tended to be a group affair, but some unhappy youngsters have been solitary in their use of these substances.

A very large number of chemicals can easily obtain which, when inhaled, produce effects similar to that of alcohol. Correction fluid (now supposed to have a safe substitute solvent), aero-modelling glues, cleaning fluids, nail-polish remover and many others have been involved. At first sniffing produces excitement and sense of well-being.

Vision becomes blurred and speech slurred. The boy becomes unsteady on his feet. If he is sniffing in a plastic bag, or otherwise inhaling a heavy dose, he may go on into a coma. Less than this, he may have terrifying visual hallucinations. Fatalities have been reported and a variety of injuries to the liver, the brain, to bone marrow. These are all rare, but very sad when they happen. If there is dependency, it is psychological rather than physical. That is to say, there are no physiological responses to withdrawal from the habit.

Some of the boys are said to belong to the group called conduct disorders; some are depressed. Many feel these youngsters are simply victims of the time and place and fashion in which they find themselves.

In looking at some of the concerns of psychiatry in relation to gluttony, it is perhaps curious to note that excess and also the avoidance of self-preservation remain human problems. Gluttony can be dangerous, but so can be the suppression of appetite. Individuals struggle to exercise free will – not to eat too much, or even at all. And among all the gratifications lurk those various substances, such as drugs, which can have the power sometimes to overcome such free will, as we possess.

## CHAPTER SEVEN:

### SLOTH, AVARICE, ENVY:

I have tried, in this brief work to use an ancient and still to be honoured classification of human dilemmas of various kinds as a way of reviewing, yet in non-religious terms, some of our contemporary problems in psychiatry. There seems to be a different amount to say about each one, yet none has vanished altogether. There remains Sloth, Avarice and Envy to consider. They may remain morally important, but they do not seem to demand the space needed for the others. Whether this reflects on their present relevance, or the author's prejudices and interests, it is hard to say.

There is a state of feeling, which has been characterised as a way of being crippled by a triad of unwanted qualities. There is insensitivity to pleasure or to pain. This goes with an inability to be productive in any way. The mood is one of fear and sadness. Perhaps the most common name for the condition is sloth (M.E. Slowthe). It has more recently been called disgust with life in general. Aquinas saw 'acedia', or sloth, as a flight from one's own personal good, a sadness over a spiritual value that troubles the body's ease. He further says that all sins resulting from ignorance are reducible to acedia – the neglect in seeking out spiritual good because of the labour involved.

Sloth was one of the eight cardinal temptations listed by John Cassian in 415 A.D.. Gregory the Great, recasting Cassian's list a century later, put sadness and sloth together as one vice, acedia spiritual torpor. This meant that for several hundred subsequent years any idea of depression as a separate, particular human problem remained confused.

It must be confessed that our contemporary classifications of depression are not very satisfactory, but at least we do not think of it as a kind of laziness. It is possible to argue that depression is primarily psychogenic in origin, or that it is an organic disorder, or that it has social origins. There are many theories, very well reviewed by Janice Wood Wetzel in her book 'Clinical Handbook of



Depression'. Yet one has to notice that many of the symptoms of developed depression – which are at least not in dispute, do resemble spiritual torpor. A clinician notes the tiredness of depressed patients, their hopelessness and irritability, their feelings of inadequacy, their fearfulness. Again, there is their indecisiveness, slow thinking, and poor concentration. The depressed seem to have lost any interest in people, or pleasure. They lose any reasonable pride in their appearance, or other self-care. Everything has slowed down, fixed in one futile sad mood: movement, speech, appetite, sexually, all. They are even constipated. All these symptoms are usually summarised by the term 'psycho-motor retardation'.

Yet there are so many ways for our living to reach an impasse and depression is only one of them. Robert Finlay-Jones has written interestingly of 'Disgust with Life in General'. It does seem to me that we do indeed need some title for a condition that is not depression as such, but which is characterised in varying degrees by the elements of the triad, which we described earlier. People do exhibit lethargy, or mopishness from time to time. There are diseases of personal philosophy, in which nothing feels worthwhile. Many if not most creative people go through cycles of output with blocked troughs of feeling between them.

Terms go on being used or being coined for the blocked state: suburban neurosis, neurasthenia, ennui, and futility depression. Finlay-Jones believes this 'acedia' is to be often explained by the boredom of many people's work. This is indeed so often repetitive, impersonal, emotionally unrewarding. Equally, unemployment can produce only too easily a largely meaningless life pattern at a personal and social level, and this can be a danger too for the retired. The housewife trapped at home alone with small children is another potential victim. No matter how much she loves and enjoys her children, she is also an adult and needs other adults with whom to interact. Anti-depressant drugs cannot help these situations. Some interesting occupation, even if it is part-time, or even unpaid, often does.

The troughs fallen into periodically by many creative people seem related to their characteristic swings of mood that we have remarked on before. Some artists and writers, however, run into a much worse state. The current name for this is the 'Burn Out Syndrome'. This condition seems related to stress. Some stress in life is inevitable and may even contribute to emotional maturation. A high level of stress that goes on and on as a crushing overload. However, can lead to emotional and physical exhaustion. To burn out, one must have first been on fire. So it is that the condition generally afflicts the idealistic, socially isolated, hard worker, often and the kind of person who is most reluctant to turn for help, who runs until he, or she drops. Top managers who have identified totally with their companies and idealistic members of caring professions are likely victims. The writer, or artist always struggling to bring out their deepest visions, feelings and thoughts are others.

To turn to another variety of problem, there is a kind of school child that is sometimes called lazy. A perceptive teacher may detect an underlying potential and will mark the report 'Could do better'. There are several varieties of neurotic learning inhibitions that can hold children back. A child may, for example, deal with her or his rivalry with a brother or sister by such a degree of repression, that he or she does not compete or learn in the classroom at all. At a very simple but real level, one finds a boy, say, who has made a normal identification with his father, who happens to be illiterate. The mother is a great reader. In terms of family values, literacy is for girls, not boys.

There are slothful people and it is not the brief of psychiatry to turn all people into patients. It is also important not to treat patients as sinners.

'The goal of advance is an external good, namely riches. Happiness includes self-sufficiency; this is the allurements of the riches that avarice seeks'. One is again impressed how well Aquinas set temptation in clear, common sense words.

Our Western age no longer seems very upset by the grasping, or the covetous, even though to covet so often involves a desire to have what belongs to another. Materialism has driven deep, so that self-abnegation and indifference to material goods is to be thought either saintly, or eccentric.

From the psychological point of view, one can observe greed showing itself even in infants, hungrily feeding at unsociable hours.

We can suffer from all kinds of greed – wishing to have more money, a better house, a better brain. The possible and the impossible can give us the most vivid fantasies. As Joan Riviere remarked: these things we long for would stand for proofs to us, if we could but get them, that we are ourselves good and full of good, worthy of love, or respect and honour. They would be insurances against our fears of the emptiness inside ourselves, or of the evil impulses, which make us feel bad and full of badness to others and ourselves. A person whose sense of personal security is only based on greed is terribly threatened by seeing someone who has more than him; so the multi-millionaire goes on relentlessly.

The most famous theory of greed is surely that of Freud, that is, when he described the anal character. This, in his view, had three primary features. There is orderliness, a detailed conscientiousness often amounting to pedantry. There is obstinacy, which may go with irascibility and vindictiveness. Then thirdly, there is a degree of parsimony, often amounting to avarice. He saw this character type as gloomy, pessimistic – and sadistic. The link with defecation and the vicissitudes in reaching bowel control in infancy made for a rather easy explanation for the term 'filthy lucre'. Books, food, time could all symbolically represent faeces and could be subjects of stinginess. Whether one goes along with Freud, or not, there is the huge question, why such incredible difference between rich and poor countries, or individuals can continue, when, rationally, with our technology, there need be no poor. The moral and the psychological question remain.

'(If) flight from another's good (should) stop at brooding, it is envy'.

Envy and jealousy are often used as though they meant the same thing. It can be useful to differentiate them. Jealousy can be said to have its accent on the loss to another of love felt to be one's own due. It is a relationship between whole people: one child, for example, wanting its mother all to himself and finding it hard to share her with his siblings. Thus jealousy involves at least two people, other than the one who is jealous. A jealous woman feels deprived of the love of a man she loves by someone else. She is desperate about and angry with the depriver, but still loves the man.

Envy is also an angry feeling – the angry feeling that another person has and enjoys something desirable that the envious has not. The angry, envious feelings, however, are directed against the owner of whatever it is that is desired. The impulse is to take it away, or to spoil it. Envy is, therefore, felt in relation to only one person. It is more primitive, infantile and even more destructive than jealousy. The very regressed schizophrenic, we and dirty; or some children who soil themselves as an act of aggression against their mothers, mothers who are too perfect, controlling and remote; the poorly nursed senile dement taking revenge by soiling and wetting – are all these different beings with all their different fragilities, spoiling, smearing, degrading another person from envy?

Melanie Klein felt that envy was a most potent factor in undermining feelings of love, affecting the earliest human relationship, that to the mother. She saw envy as an oral-sadistic and anal-sadistic expression of destructive impulses operative from the beginning of life. Klein developed the concept of envy beyond anything envisioned by Freud. Kleinians embraced Freud's late formulation of a Life Instinct and a Death Instinct. She made, let the point be made, very important contributions to our understanding and psychological treatment of children, particularly quite small ones, as young as two-and-a-half. She led child psychiatrists more clearly to understand the role of fantasy in children's lives – and in adults too. We understand 'persecutory anxiety' better because of her (and it is her term, too). There are many other important contributions to psychological understanding we could list. Yet

many psychiatrists feel that Klein raised envy to a level of general importance beyond the justifiable and often too poorly conceptualised to be separated in the end from just anger or greed. As for a death instinct, as John Bowlby has said, this is too un-biological a concept to persuade us of its actual reality for living organisms, or as a major drive within the human psyche.

It is surprising that feminists have not made more of Klein, who wrote so extensively about 'good breasts' and 'bad breasts', as key symbols in her psychological system. Kleinian psychoanalysis is less well known in the USA, where Millet and Friedan wrote their fierce criticisms of Freud's views on femininity and perhaps that is why they overlooked her.

There are pathological states of envy from which rarely individual patients suffer. In common experience, one knows ordinary envious people, who curiously make little effort to obtain what they envy and seem to avoid the success in life that might bring it to them. They can seem oddly smug as they disparage and discredit others, as though their denial of their own unfulfilled wishes bestowed on them a moral superiority.

Klein and followers have written interestingly about envy between the sexes. Admittedly, feminists would be irritated by the ready acceptance of 'penis envy' along traditional Freudian lines. Joan Riviere makes many telling points, however, in remarking on some of the very understandable elements related to male to male 'potency in life', such as male physical strength and especially the greater self-confidence in men, which can be enviable.

Yet there is also the envy of males for the female to be noticed. For, of course, the female has that mysterious capacity of her body to create babies out of food and what men give them, and she has breasts and the ability to feed her child. Male writers and artists are seen as individuals who are using largely the feminine side of their personalities in their work. The works of art are essentially created inside the artist, who may be oblivious of all external circumstances. He feels he gives birth to his work. In this aspect, he may be said to have gained unconsciously the advantages of the other sex.

Kleinians have also remarked on a perhaps clearer, less metaphorical example of male envy. Thus in some cultures there is the custom of 'couvade'. In this, a man whose wife is giving birth to a child takes to his bed and is treated as though he were having a baby. This custom, it is held, is based on the man's envy of his wife for being able to have a child, for being fussed over and admired.

Envy remains like all the other sins and temptations alive in the twentieth century as in any other time: individuals do make mean, envious attacks on others. The class war finds some of its energies in this. Some battles just go on and on.

## *PART TWO*

### *ASPECTS OF THE PSYCHE*

## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **KNOWING ONE'S OWN MIND:**

Bertrand Russell begins his 'The Problems of Philosophy' with "Is there any knowledge in the world which is so certain that no reasonable man could doubt it?". He sees this as one of the most difficult questions that can be asked. He goes on to show why this is so. He contrasts the Empiricists (such as Locke, Berkeley and Hume) who asserted that all knowledge is derived from experience, with the Rationalists (such as Leibnitz, or Descartes) who maintained that, in addition to experience, we have certain innate ideas, that is, some given, a priori, knowledge. Logical principles cannot be proved by experience. All proof, after all, presumes them to be true. In this sense they constitute a priori knowledge. Yet the principles themselves must be "elicited and caused by experience". To some extent then, Russell reconciles the opposing schools. He feels that the empiricists have a powerful point in their alleging that 'nothing can be known to exist except by the help of experience'.

Over fifty years later, written in the tradition of British Empiricism and of Russell, a book by AJ Ayer can still begin, "It is by its methods rather than its subject matter that philosophy is to be distinguished from other arts or sciences". Such a book still has the sweeping title 'The Problem of Knowledge'. It reflects accurately, however, the turned-in preoccupation of philosophers of our time with methodology. No wonder then, that a good overview of the philosophy of the last hundred years "is somewhat narrow and professional, just because I have had so little to say about those branches of philosophy which most nearly touch upon the interests of non-philosophers". The latter are, of course, most people.

The point is perhaps that the very word 'knowledge' has become deformed reduced and alienated from the traffic of everyday usage. Indeed, for those not trained in mathematics and linguistics, a good deal of the modern ideas of logic will be beyond reach. The term 'sense data' is still used by some contemporary thinkers in philosophy – meaning, they allege, experiences



brought before the mind. Yet these sense data must be only of a certain kind, (the colour of roses, the hardness or squareness of tables); remarkably dull, inartistic still lives, dead. Clearly, it is an incestuous game, played out in some bleak prison, rather than even an ivory tower. Despite, or because of, the philosophers' current interest in language, words form the walls of their tiny cells. For example, there are three that have burdened psychology and psychiatry: cognition, affection, and conation. Cognition means 'knowing, perceiving, conceiving, as opposed to emotion, or volition. Affection means emotion. Conation means the exertion of willing, that desire, or aversion shall issue in action. The words come down to us, as the body-mind problem does, as a long tradition, from philosophers. The body of argument that gathers about the "thinghood" of each word, ensures that our personalities have been taken apart by words. Each descriptive term has been opposed to another word so we can scarcely think clearly as a whole person again, since so much of the language we now use reflects these historical directions and divisions. The complete knowing-feeling-striving person falls into dried, fragmented dead pieces, with only useless, apparently trivial knowledge to record uniqueness. Emotion is described as 'mere emotion' or the deeply felt is called 'an emotional noise'. The 'will' is seen as merely what one does.

But in human learning, for example, no such academic divisions are believable. As well as perceiving the learning task, motivation and a reasonable level of feeling are required – all simultaneously. Boredom, apathy, not understanding is all factors, which block learning or make it slow and unsatisfactory. There is now a formidable literature in experimental psychology to back up these statements. 'Learning Theory' is itself a body of knowledge. Despite the self-indulgent over-use of the term 'empirical', few modern empirical philosophers seem to know much about this research. It escapes both the index and the body of their books. Yet a scientist of formidable teaching gifts can try to have a humane vision of man. Bronowski wrote: "the act of discovery in science engages the imagination (first of the man who makes it and then of the man who appreciates it) as truly as does the act of creation in the arts". There is a large literature now on creative thinking and few believe it to be a cold-blooded, analytic, purely 'cognitive'

activity. So in two aspects of knowing – in getting to know, or learning, the self is involved in a complex relation as between awareness, feeling and intention. In thinking of a problem solving kind, not only is much of the self-involved, but also some of this is even below the level of consciousness. This concept receives its perhaps most original handling in Jayne's work 'The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind'. Indeed, he writes, "In being conscious of consciousness, we feel it is the most self-evident thing imaginable. We feel it is the defining attribute of all our waking states, our moods and affections, our memories, our thoughts, attentions, and volitions. We feel comfortably certain that consciousness is the basis of concepts, or learning and reasoning, of thought and judgement, and that it is so because it records and stores our experiences as they happen..... On critical examination, all of these statements are false". A large body of evidence is then reviewed to provide proofs for each point. In a related way, Michael Polanyi marshals the evidence for our knowing unconsciously much more than we can ever bring to mind consciously. He calls this knowledge 'Tacit Knowledge'.

The purpose of the last few paragraphs is to attempt to give at least a partial view on the essential human-ness of faith. For the religious, or formally irreligious, all humans believe in something. The evidence for many beliefs is often elusive. Yet the evidence from psychology is that much of our classical idea of 'consciousness', as we habitually assume it to be, is in fact elusive. We come very much up against the Freudian paradox of consciously grasping how truly unconscious a large part of our mind is. It follows that the 'appeal to blind faith' of the priest is not necessarily to blind faith, but for a faith whose lodgement can only be partly introspected upon. The appeal goes home, if it does, beyond consciousness. Perhaps tacit knowledge is then another aspect of 'deep' faith, for we do indeed seem to have some imprecise, yet deep powerful feeling that accompanies knowledge and faith. Polanyi offers the interesting idea that, "all thought contains components of which we are subsidiarily aware in the focal context of our thinking, and that all thought dwells in its subsidiaries as if they were parts of our bodies. Hence thinking is not only intentional, Brentano taught: it is also necessarily fraught with the

needs that it embodies". Again, one is reminded of the 'body-ego' described by analysis – that part of the 'I' that is our physical self as it is known to us, as a ghostly background to our feeling lives, our soma felt in our psyche.

"The fact that we can know more than we can tell", as Polanyi put it, also gives something of a link to the first existentialist, the man who coined the term, Soren Kierkegaard.

Deeply religious, yet urgently critical of organised, establishment Christianity, Kierkegaard rejected the traditional theological arguments in favour of the existence of God. Indeed, most logicians would agree that there are no formal logical arguments that critical examination. His was a strikingly original appeal for faith on grounds beyond, or beside the pseudo-logic of theologians. For him, there had been a perversion of Christianity by Christian institutions. In Kierkegaard's writings, three of the main ideas of existentialism are made vivid for us for the first time: - the absolute paradox, the concept of dread and the jump into the abyss. He considers Job, the man apparently innocent, yet punished to despair. "...by this absolute paradox, that he knows he is right, even against God, against whom he cannot be right, while the whole of existence contradicts him – he discovers, in his repair, in his fundamental Angst, what faith demands, and why, in the last resort, he is nevertheless in the wrong. God is so infinitely greater than man that ..... we must accept the apparently senseless.... Faith means complete surrender.... I must shut my eyes and plunge confidently into the absurd. I must take the risk of plunging into the abyss". This is indeed a dramatic way of saying: faith is the evidence of things unseen; and yet, another way of echoing Polanyi's 'we can know more than we can tell'. In almost a Zen way, Kierkegaard challenges us. The very absurdity of the idea of God should compel us, he says, to believe. The dreads that run as tides through our existence should urge us on to the answer. Out of the very paradox, our faith should emerge, thrust and survive. A call to myth, as it was.

Yet again we can think that this existential "leap into the abyss" is more or less than it seems. Not only is there a Freudian mind beyond consciousness,

but all that ‘tacit knowledge’ which is, on the evidence, different, not merely, obsessively sexual as Freud suggested, but linked to all our different, largely unconscious, immense varieties of ‘understood’ knowledge. Because consciousness in Western culture so often demands understanding before believing, can we not therefore re-phrase this ‘leap in the dark’ to faith, as: trust your hidden emotional and intellectual self, which is on the evidence of hard scientific data grater than you can entirely know it in consciousness? Let the idea leap across our finally shallow introspections to lodge in our greater mind.

It sounds odd to mention our bodies in this immediate context, yet some contemporary neurology places artistic ideas, such as musical experience and poetry – ideas of the aesthetic self – and the idea of God, in the right cerebral hemisphere, in right handed people.

None of these last sentences, of course, in themselves, either add or subtract from the idea of God as a truth, as a reality. They merely change some of the words and metaphors that stand for the immemorial ideas that have accompanied man through all recorded time. We surely do not have only to be adolescent to know deeply, however, the meaning of these words:

“Where am I? Who am I? Who is it that has lured me into the world and now leaves me there? Why was I not consulted? How did I obtain an interest in this big enterprise they call reality? Why should I taken an interest in it? Is it not a voluntary concern? Why am I compelled to take part in it?

To add a few fragments that seem also relevant to this idea of a largely submerged, immediately unknowable self, one can refer to a similar theme that runs through the works of others. Thus Carl Jung wrote of the ‘Universal Unconscious’. It has often puzzled me how some claim to be baffled by Jung and his “mysticism”. It seems to me that his concept of different psychological types offers a valuable vantage point towards gaining a view of human nature. That is to say, Jung visualised several different kinds of ways of being human – that one might be an extravert, or an introvert, thinking, or an intuitive type

and so on. His massive reviews of folklore and mysticism can often be faulted, just as contemporary anthropologists look on Frazer's 'Golden Bough' with much scepticism. Yet Jung's view is right – that all human groupings produce mythologies and similar themes in them can be identified, which have emerged from human groups widely separated in time and space. Despite our different temperaments, we share common archetypal images and thoughts.

Jung meant by the Universal Unconscious that part of the to-the-self-unknowable, unconscious self, which is common to all humans by virtue of being human. In that unconsciousness are to be found Archetypes? Indeed, they make it up. Examples are the 'anima' or femininity and the 'animus', masculinity. Like Freud, Jung saw the individual as bisexual, so that each man and woman had in some balance, both animus and anima. There are indeed normal rather feminine men and normal rather masculine women, so that the balance can be very varied. It is through his anima – a collective image of woman in a man's universal unconscious – that a man can apprehend the nature of woman: through her animus, woman apprehends man.

Jung asserts then, that we, as individuals, have a great deal of a priori knowledge both about the opposite sex and about ourselves. This knowledge is of that special kind – tacit, in that it is understood, is implied by our behaviour, that it exists; yet it is not stated. Indeed, for Jung it is unconscious, which relates more to our unique histories and individuality.

Of course, our personalities may be divested by privations and deprivations when we are small. All deep psychotherapy, however, assumes that buried in the chaos, alive among all the perceptual and emotional distortions, a usual human survives.

The rationalists, who classically believe we have a priori knowledge, have other contemporary voices: Naum Chomsky, for example, in the field of linguistics. For Chomsky, linguistics, psychology and philosophy cannot be

regarded as separate disciplines. He speaks of a 'universal grammar'. Unless defective, we all learn to speak. Language is unique to man. While we speak in so many tongues, Chomsky believes – to put it very simply – there are, as a constitutional endowment, deep structures, which determine that we speak. He asserts that there is, in the end, a limited, finite number of possibilities: sounds we can make, orders in which we can place words (syntax) and semantic units we can deploy. We cannot introspect on these structures. They can only be deduced. Here again, we find limits to consciousness, ironically, in the field of language itself, so often thought to be the essential and sufficient vehicle of logic and thought. We can use language to deduce of course, but how we deduce is not directly open to our self regarding sentiment, our ego, even though this feels so much "ourselves". It is at any rate; naive to say we learn to learn how to speak. Rather, we are born and at first have only simple means of communicating by crying (even then, crying in different ways at different times in different moods). For all its complexity, the growing child acquires proper language incredibly quickly. We have an unfolding endowment to speak and to understand, as always, the innate and the environmental interacting.

In outlining only some of the limits to consciousness, the purpose is not only to put in perspective 'blind faith', but also to outline why we need faith at all, in terms of personality and human-ness.

The feeling and argument that there is more to reality than is ever presented as sense data to consciousness can be traced very widely. It is, after all, an aspect of all religions. It can equally, of course be traced widely in philosophy. The simile of Plato, about the cave, in which men see only the shadows of objects and of themselves, thrown by the light of a fire onto the cave wall, is perhaps the most famous one. In this, reality is outside, in the light, beyond reach or vision; it is unknowable.

It is extraordinary that we can find so many formidable problems in simply wanting to know our own minds directly. This matches in complexity the problems of knowledge and the two themes are, of course, clearly related to

one another, are functions of one another. It seems probable that such themes can only be even partially understood if they are brought together and considered together. And we have to be reconciled to the fact that none of us can now know enough. I say this, remembering the remark alleging that Aristotle was the last man who knew all that could be known in his time. Our *embarras de choix et de richesse* can feel like poverty. '....it is Appearance which in consciousness is clear and distinct, and it is Reality which lies dimly in the background with its details hardly to be distinguished in consciousness.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **MYTHS AND MYSTICISM:**

Kierkegaard posed the existential problem of his keenly felt vision of the paradoxes of life. Paradox has had its more up-to-date interpreters. Not the least of them, now classical, was Freud, who could so often show for neuroses, that apparent contradictions made another sense in terms of unconscious wishes, which can run counter to consciously felt values and convictions. The trouble with this perspective, brilliant though it is, is that it destroys the essential mythic quality of dreams. The metaphysics, which it offers in exchange, is harsh, partial and pessimistic. It is often a destructive form of analysis, which deepens our knowledge of how our minds work, yet long narrow atomistic lines. In a sense, the dynamic field of multiple, felt forces in which we actually exist in the world are left as mysterious as ever.

Anthropologists have on the whole had great respect for all the exotic peoples they have studied. Anthropology has had enough great men in its own past to now present us with an immense and glittering spectacle of, for example, human social organisations. The desire for meaning, for deeper understanding, attends the discipline as it does any other. Anthropology has had, perhaps, more courage and imagination in seeking insights from other disciplines than has, ironically enough, current philosophy, or psychiatry. Linguistics, pre-history, geology, politics, psychology, logic, photography, geography – all these just start the list of sources used by anthropologists. These sources are not much used as ‘models’ (or metaphors) as they might be in psychiatry. Since anthropology itself subsumes these other subjects and disciplines, they are incorporated into a body of knowledge and attempts have to be made to relate them to each other in terms of meaning and function.

A subtle and intelligent example of this attempt is that of Mary Douglas, when she edited ‘Rules and Meaning’. Contributors range across an astonishing spectrum. Mary Douglas writes of her book: ‘There is a recognisable



epistemological viewpoint, working through European literature, philosophy, linguistics and sociology ... it is not novel. It is old ... speakers started from a common concern with problems of commitment, solidarity and alienation .... The theme goes back to Hegel and Marx; that reality is socially constructed'. The book contains chapters by judges, contemporary composers, sociologists and so on. Philosophy has Wittgenstein as exemplar. Curiously, the complementary work of Jean Piaget is overlooked. His 'The Construction of Reality in the Child' is surely relevant, describing how children get their first impressions of time, space, objects and people. His concepts of 'picture' and 'scheme' are constructs Piaget hypothesises as reference factors, or evolving mental 'bench marks' for a child trying to order experience. We note again a deduced but unknowable-by-introspection aspect of mind. Piaget's very closely argued and solid style may daunt or defeat researchers trying to integrate differing approaches to psychological knowledge and child development. His stages of development differ from other workers'.

Perhaps only a French anthropologist (if born in Belgium) could take food so seriously as to use it as a basis for classifying the meanings of social occasions. Yet Claude Levi-Strauss does so by pointing out the different social situations in which food might be raw, or cooked and if cooked, then roasted, boiled or smoked. This anthropologist, possessing monumental knowledge, has dealt at length with myths and the almost invariable paradox myths contain. Here, of course, the word 'myths' does not mean 'fallacious history', but rather the sacred tales found in cultures, in which history and the Bible might be held to be an un-provable account of an unreliable past. Research and chance discoveries, such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, gave much more historical confirmation than might have been expected, to the accuracy of many biblical accounts.

Levi-Strauss claims that Geology, Psychoanalysis and Marxism are his three mistresses: 'All three showed that understanding consists in the reduction of one type of reality to another; that true reality is never the most obvious of realities ....in all these cases the problem is the same: the relation ... between reason and sense perception'. His concern is with "the unconscious nature of

collective phenomena". Thus yet another contemporary thinker looks beyond appearances and, indeed, for a universality of meanings, even in mythology. He sees one of the functions of myths as the ability to enclose, to be a vehicle for, our failure to resolve a paradox in any other way. In a sense this 'failure' of logic is dealt with by contradiction being incorporated in a myth; or if I may extend the idea, the paradox as it were generates the myth. An example of such a paradox is, for instance, that the very idea of life encompasses its opposite, death. Religious seen for a moment as mythology, have myths to encompass the concept of being born, the origins of life, of the world. Other myths account for death, so that is not in a sense, real death any more. What cannot be resolved by purely intellectual, rational means, finds its place in hugely elaborated stories, which by their very detail and complexity can enclose and incorporate what is otherwise senseless, or dreadful; dread-full in the existential sense. Naturally such myths must feel moving and sacred. For Levi-Strauss, their outstanding characteristic is in their universal non-rational logic; universal, because his 'structural analysis' of myths form many different cultures produces, in the end, only a few factors common to all.

Time itself has changed for Western cultures. Clocks have us by the throat, and our cities, streets and houses try to destroy the feel of sense, with artificial light and heat running counter to the sun. Our sense of time is a complex experience; our explanations of it are controversial, even if we ignore Einstein. We would not need so many clocks and watches, however, if our sense of time was always as obvious and accurate as some writers assert. William James, who 'wrote textbooks like novels', unlike his brother, Henry, who some critics feel, 'wrote novels like textbooks', wrote about time. He remarks how the filled, busy interval of time is shortened in experienced time, but is longer in remembered time. On the other hand, unfilled time – that time which bores us when we wait, when time, 'ticks blank and busy on our wrists', is long in the here-and-now, yet hardly exists, when we try to recapture it in memory. In the event, the social pressure in our culture now, its assumption, is of time as the unforgiving second, as linear, irreversible. Our emotional lives have been largely divorced from the changing seasons and faces of the fields.

Up until about three hundred years ago, people thought about time, if they thought about it at all, as cyclical, an endless repetition of seasons. "... although our perception of time has many subjective and even sociological features, it is based on an objective factor.... for the timing of physiological processes. This objective factors is what we call physical time". Further to complicate our contemporary index of time, a literature accumulates on Biorhythms. Different parts of our bodies are shown to observe different cycles of time. The unpleasantness of jetlag is made up of many dysthymias. All our several inner clocks are out of time.

Levi-Strauss talks, on the other hand, of "Machines for the Suppression of Time". Music, myth and dreams have common elements. If we hear music, or listen to, or partake in a myth, or we dream, we are, in some way, out of time. Further, these communications are intensely personal. They mean what they mean to us, in contrast to everyday language, in which it is the meaning of the sender, which we must unravel. One might say then, that Levi-Strauss too has attempted, in his original and intricate treatment of anthropological knowledge, to be able to talk rationally about our irrationality. The striking complexity and novelty of his language and his approach might lead us to overlook how small a number of elements he discerns behind myths. This could be predicted, less from his 'structuralist' approach, than from his Freudian reductionism.

More important is how he largely ignores the existential, or phenomenological aspect of a myth. The myth as such, without interpretation, has power over intellect and emotions. The myth as such has many levels of meaning. It is often a pre-scientific attempt as one level, to explain natural events, such as the spring, or the sunrise. At the same time, it is true that there is a 'participation mystique' between the event and the myth felt in us. It is in exploring why this should be so, that we find the justification with Levi-Strauss of looking beyond the surface of the 'savage mind'.

There have been complaints of difficulties in following the thoughts of Levi-Strauss, to which one might somewhat archly answer, alas, 'an unbridled lucidity can destroy our understanding of complex matters. Yet the range of meanings released by contemporary analysis of one sort or another is bewildering. What would 'Levi-Strauss explanations' of a myth mean put to the member of a primitive society that lived such myths? What does, 'really mean', really mean, anymore?

Happeld, in his fine study of mysticism writes: "Reality is one single whole; but within the one reality there are different levels of significance. Man participates in all these interrelated levels. There are, however, as it were, screens separating each region of significance from the rest. What is seen at the normal level of awareness is the result of a particular combination of image-making faculties, revealing a picture, true and real within its own limitations, but, compared with the complete whole, only an appearance, what in Eastern philosophies is termed maya". Arthur Koestler in his 'Beyond Reductionism' also addresses the problem of recognising and relating different levels of meanings and knowledge.

The underlying drift of recent pages has been to try to illustrate the difficulty in seeking 'any knowledge in the world that no reasonable man could doubt it'. And further, how quickly, once we wish to know what lies beyond mere appearance, difficulties multiply. Yet down the centuries and alive in our own time, some of the greatest human thinkers have tried to speak of what might be beyond the appearance of things – sometimes of internal reality. Sometimes, in their philosophies, both realities merge. Then the world-with-self-in-it is only conceived of as an idea; in the metaphysics of one philosopher or another, the ideas exist alone, or in the mind of God.

Yet, as our quotation from Happeld illustrates, there is a body of knowledge – much of it from the East, but not by all means all – which can recognise without unease the differing layers of being, of consciousness, of ordering of the multiple realities, all of which in their contexts, have reality. Freud could

writes, 'For I can assure you that it is quite possible, and highly probable indeed, that the dreamer does know what his dream means; only he does now know that he knows it and for that reason thinks he does not know it'. (Freud's italics). Freud could be so sure, because, after all, he was triumphantly his own analyst and his 'Interpretation of Dreams', was largely filled by his own successful reaching to deeper levels in himself.

Freud is reported to have referred to psychoanalysis as 'my mythology'. In his three million words, however, he insists, for all the changes he put it through, that psychoanalysis is a body of knowledge, scientifically founded, having its special scientific technique and generating a unique metapsychology. We will have need to this kind of knowledge again.

Eastern Myths and mysticism have become, in a way, popular and popularised in the West of recent decades, as though a vacuum had been left, a religious hunger left unmet by the decline of Christianity. Katmandu became 'touristy', a kind of toxic Youth Club, as drug addiction seemed, to many accidental youths, an essential part of eastern religion. It is, of course, very western to want instant relief, so perhaps their demand for instant nirvana need not have surprised the onlooker.

Eastern religions, subtle, profound, are at least as difficult to live by as Christianity. The mere outward manifestations of varieties of Buddhism, for example, may seem distinctly lacking in authenticity, when practiced in Kentish Town on a wet November afternoon. The Noble Eightfold Path to Enlightenment enjoins taking up a morality, a way of feeling and thinking, above all a way of acting, with all the values that lie embedded in the eastern cultures or origin. Really to have emotional and intellectual rapport with these other wisdoms is very like becoming perfect in another language, so that one thinks in them, lives them. How else can one reach the meaning of: 'Only by right action beyond reaction will the individual purge his mind of the old illusion, self; not until the self we now call 'I' has died past resurrecting will the Self appear which knows itself as One? Each word, each phrase links to infinities of meanings that cannot simply be read and learned as a catechism,

behind the recital of which, on merely hides. The either terms of the noble eightfold path have yet to be even translated the same way twice. The path of the Gotama is not available in instant form. And like Christianity, Buddhism has several schools.

Yet through all the superficial self-delusion of one-self and other people, sometimes an unexpected delight appears. Robert Pirsig comments that this, 'Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance' is based on actual occurrences. Of the arresting title, he says 'the real cycle you're working on is a cycle called yourself'. Pirsig exhibits some American writers' gift of huge range. In his novel he goes on a sacred journey. We accompany him and through his flashbacks, we are given level after level of meaning, as he fights for underlying meanings. As personal, intimate catastrophes are stripped bare they are borne upward by a swift, economic directing of one philosophy against another, the recognition of one truth against another. A space for mysticism is created and filled. Above all, the tour de force is the narrative power that makes for compulsive reading, even when the cargo is so serious. Perhaps this is the clue: that a deeply felt and thought out life is not finally tragic, if spiritually before our physical end. As a comment on Pirsig's breakdown and recovery, we may quote Maxim Gorki, 'The madness of the brave, this is the wisdom of the world'.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **BEYOND COMMON SENSE:**

There are, as we could expect, many other statements that take us beyond appearance and common 'common sense'. By doing so, that common sense, to which we make so many appeals when arguing, always comes into danger. Common sense for us, after all, is functions of all we know, have experienced, have failed in, or won by. It bears with it an illusion that it is reliable, that it is unchanging. When we fall back on it, it is with familiarity. Yet our common sense would terrify the headhunter, or the medieval knight. Our calm assumptions are the blasphemies, the nightmares, the magic and the priestly secret knowledge of another time, another place. And it will seem primitive to those of future lives.

To continue the theme that there is indeed, a conflict between appearance and reality, not only recorded in the texts of thinkers dead these centuries, we can appeal to an even more unlikely witness: Wittgenstein. Ludwig Wittgenstein is of course more often thought of as one of the great creative thinkers of Logical Positivism – that extension of the empirical tradition, the would be natural reflections of philosophy on scientific method. Logical positivism asserts that intelligible propositions must be based upon experience; they must be verifiable by experience. Part of the concern of the logical positivists was clearly to understand language. An analysis of language, it was thought, could show if a question was meaningful and not tautological. The answer must above all, be verifiable. Out of all his contributions, perhaps Wittgenstein's struggle with language is the most well known. His concern was with the limits of language – what can be said in a meaningful way and what cannot. He gave up the idea he first held, that the structure of reality determines the structure of language, to embrace the opposite view, that our language determines our perception of reality. In passing, Freud, too, showed a deep feeling for language. Indeed, his first honour was for literature. His 'Interpretation of Dreams' could have been, in parts, written by a contributor to linguistics. In 'The Ego and the Id' he writes

‘the ego wears a ‘cap of hearing’ – on one side only, as we learn from cerebral anatomy. It might be said to wear it awry.” (footnote in S.E. i.e. the auditory lobe).

It is sometimes not made prominent by the colleagues and followers of Wittgenstein that he had strong reservations about science. Neither is his brilliance helped when others attempt to put his earlier and later views, profoundly discordant, into a unity. Above all, it is curious to have to find in all the daunting language: “The sense of the world must lie outside the world”; ‘the feeling of the world as a limited whole: it is this that is mystical’. Or, again: ‘if a question can be framed at all, it is possible to answer it’; ‘when all possible scientific questions have been answered, the problems of life remain completely untouched’ ‘there are things that cannot be put into words; they make themselves manifest; they are what is mystical’”.

Having these views, it is understandable that Wittgenstein had no interest – indeed was resistive – to the construction of systematic philosophical theories. Like Kierkegaard, he rejected the poor logic deployed that tries to make rational the basis of religion and morality. These were non-factual areas in terms of Wittgenstein’s views of meaning in language. However, he did not go on to say, therefore, there was no place for religion, or morality, even if it lacked a basis in what he would call scientific evidence; even if it could not be verified, as he thought, scientific data can be. Indeed, he felt philosophy itself, as well as religion and morality, had a kind of immunity from scientific criticism. They were essentially psychological attitudes, involving intentionality, which contrasts entirely with the concept, say, of causality associated with scientific ideas. Causality can be defined, measured and quantified. In this sense, causality is factual, verifiable, which cannot be said for human intentionality. To intentionality – that word again – Wittgenstein gave the status of a mental phenomenon and a kind of autonomy. It would be a mistake however, to say he entirely tolerated non-scientific subjects. His criticism of Freud’s ‘Interpretation of Dreams’ was almost totally destructive and unfair.



There are many easily discernible disaster areas in Western culture. Knowledge and half knowledge of these have perhaps led to the loss of confidence in our culture now so manifest. Our way of life may be infinitely more leisurely and physically comfortable than it was for our ancestors. Yet avalanches of information stun us; giant, impersonal institutions diminish us; we are bewildered by technologies' that accelerate into remoter complexities, like receding galaxies, even as we turn to them trying to understand.

It would be reassuring, therefore, at least to be able to assume that we can put our faith in the factual basis of science. Indeed, it has been one of our concerns that many people do, who have little, or no, grasp of what science is, and what the limitation of scientific knowledge might be. It would be a novel idea for it to be thought there could be limitations to science, when its triumphant products move us along motorways, across oceans, through airways; music pours from small boxes; pictures are taken of our bones through our flesh; we converse with others across vast distances... For millions of us this must be a kind of magic. We often do not really know how it is done; but, somewhere, a scientist does, just as a priest once had his reassuring special relationship with the Gods. And as the Gods could be cruel, so of course can the science we personify in anxious imaginations.

Science can even generate its own unavowed mythologies. Science fiction must function in many different ways sociologically. One of these ways must surely be to allay anxiety, to make human, to reduce to human terms, mysterious facts, paradoxes and experiences. Just as the myths of the savage in his wilds makes nature and danger in a sense controlled, understandable, something that can be put into words, so can 'S.F.'. Malinowski observed that the 'Garden Magic' of the Trobriand Islanders contained much common practical sense. In the same way, writers with scientific qualifications can write science fiction. There is, too, the fun side, and a Kurt Vonnegut has a quick, sharp humour as well as a rich imaginative power. Yet, behind the inventiveness, or the mere S.F. literary fashion, one finds both social criticism and conscience, mixed with terrors and threats and magical solutions posing as science. For indeed, for millions of people to be

conveyed, informed, have illnesses treated, dark nights lit up, homes warmed by pressing buttons, or levers, or ritually taking pills, moving switches – all these are as remote from ‘how the thing itself works’, the ‘scientific facts’, as a myth is from a truly scientific hypothesis. It is almost as if the cars and busses that stream along, the filaments that heat up and emit brilliant light, the soaring aircraft, the towering buildings around us, all these, are the emotional equivalents of that very wilderness through which primitive man can only move helped by sacred tales. Yet science must be more repellent in the end than religion as an explanation, since, while it may be thought to monopolise truth and explanation, so many turn, not to the bibles of science, but to its magical interpreters in science fiction.

Francis Bacon is usually credited with first putting the scientific approach in order. The scientific approach that is taught in schools tends to be a very simple one. It tends to be along the lines that a scientist, by means of carefully controlled experiments, in precisely defined circumstances, carries out experiments. These involve acute observations and measurements. By these means, observable facts are gathered, by methods that are clearly stated. The methods can therefore be replicated by others and the ‘facts’, or observations, verified independently. When enough data has accumulated in the area of interest, generalisations become possible, by noticing similarities, orders of magnitude, or whatever. That is to say, an argument from particular observations to general principles follows. It is this that is called induction. Science is therefore based on induction.

The classical flaw in the argument is rarely presented at the secondary school level, so that most children exposed to science in schools have the idea of the inductive process, if they have grasped science at all. It is the empirical view. Science in the media, particularly television, uses this version also. Only a small minority in Britain go on to university and of these of course, only a proportion will learn anymore about science and its basis. It is small wonder then, that science can seem such a respectable, concrete and firm body of knowledge, if most of the population know even now, so little about it. Many

Arts graduates, artists and musicians seem to have marked inferiority feelings in relation to science, this powerful rival and source of ideas.

The classical flaw of course is one long since remarked on. David Hume, in his 'A Treatise on Human Nature' pointed out that the inductive process, on closer examination, couldn't be called a logical process. Just because one event is on one, or even many occasions, associated with another, there is no logical necessity that this will always be so. We may come to expect events to accompany or follow one another after repetitions have impressed themselves upon us. But this is a psychological expectation, not a fact of logic. No arguments about all the sunrises of all our yesterdays can make it logically certain that the sun will rise tomorrow. The certainty we feel is, indeed, what we feel, not what we can induce, no matter how many fiery suns have come up into how many days of how many lives. Scientific knowledge then, if it depends upon induction for its factual nature, is no certain knowledge at all. Indeed, the discussions that have gone on at length about scientific facts having such-and-such a probability of being true, along with the complex statistical techniques, the control groups and the (often poor) random sampling of data, cannot change this underlying fact. The argument from a body of particular instances to the elaboration of be-it-ever-so-elegant a general law does seem to rest on inductive logic. Bertrand Russell had to concede this asserting that induction is 'an independent logical principle, incapable of being inferred either from experience or other principles'. This strangely unsatisfactory assertion from a philosopher, usually so crushing about loose thinking was the only solution he could offer, when his conviction was that without induction, science is impossible. Yet induction, dressed up as the 'principle of empirical verification', the corner stone of logical positivism, has been rebuffed in more recent times. The principle, which had been used with considerable arrogance to crush other philosophical points of view, which could not be empirically verified, cannot itself be empirically verified. There are several other arguments against verifiability, all powerful and, on the whole, unanswered.

It is relevant to consider other complications that attach to a concept of scientific method, that even in bare outline, make any simple account unsatisfactory. Physics has been one of the main contributors to the metaphysics of the past century. It was from work in Quantum Mechanics that Heisenberg formulated his 'principles of uncertainty', better known as the 'principle of indeterminacy'. That is to say, one could not predict, he said, the behaviour of an individual electron, even if the context it was in was acutely known. From this was but a step for others to say that the rigid determinism of traditional science had been overthrown. It had been asserted that if all the facts were known about a physical system and about the forces acting upon it at any moment, a prediction could be made about the future state of the system. Indeterminacy seemed to overthrow the idea that there was a causal chain that could be written: A causes B causes C causes D.... It is to be noted that Freud believed that psychoanalysis was scientific, because above all it was founded on the concept, rigidly applied, of psychic determinism. Freud used in general, of course, the model and ideas of science of the era in which he lived. It is to be wondered at, how his work would have proceeded without the concept of psychic determinism. Indeed, the incredible and dramatic knowledge he won for us, might not have existed, if he had worked in the light of the principle of uncertainty.

Space and time, so long subjects for unprovable disputes among philosophers, were dealt with in the special theory of relativity by Einstein, who also dealt with a classical wordy problem from metaphysics, that of simultaneity. The study of energy could be said to have "dematerialised" matter.

It is not part of our times to do more than make the paradoxes of science and of some of the relevant philosophy of science plain, in relation to psychology. It has thus been especially scientists, particularly in fact those, like Einstein, who knew the work of Hume, who have, as it were, turned science into philosophy, or, as has been said, put science back into the state of 'natural philosophy'.

There is no certainty, then, to be found in science. It is important to know that this is so. The fact that it is so, is in itself not daunting; rather the reverse: science can appeal to the mind in a free democratic society. In this and in other ways we can contrast a culture, such as ours, with a medieval one, (or a totalitarian state) in which the church laid down what had to be thought and believed as true. Refusal to accept such truths was perilous indeed. And the dogma of the church covered all aspects of living, not merely moral, but what we could call factual. Science does not lay claim to cover all aspects of human existence. The claims for the probable answers are to reasonably defined questions. There are no penalties for not accepting the answers, nor are there any for having odd ones of one's own, for being a heretic. Our uncertainty about scientific answers contrasts with the absolute and eternal certainties of the medieval church: The contemporary, flexible view of scientific facts, in terms of probability, gives our modern minds an openness to new information, to modification of our old views; an adult maturity rather than an infantile dependency.

We have left over of course our wish to believe. There are "believers in science" and we may suspect they do not know science very well. Science has produced its mythologies in its time – ether, phlogiston, the vital principle; and we have suggested science fiction readers can be added to the list. It has been suggested as a danger that special social organisations emerge from the vast developments of science as a technology. By their very nature such industrial organisations put more and more power into fewer hands. 'Ends are no longer considered; only the skilfulness of the process is valued. This is also a form of madness'. Russell, whom we have just quoted, also notes that the 'first effect of emancipation from the Church' (during the Renaissance) 'was not to make men think rationally, but to open their minds to every sort of antique nonsense'. One thinks of our own post-Christian preoccupation with the occult, Tarot cards, Flying Saucers and things of that ilk. Freedom has risks then and is too much for some.

There is a contemporary challenge to what philosophers call 'Hume's problem': that is to say, the problem of induction, the problem of the logical

basis of science. Common sense had always been irritated by the idea that, on the one hand science and its methods were busy changing the face of the world, while on the other, some philosophers could allege there was no logical foundation for science itself. Philosophers concerned with theories of knowledge had, in countless books declared the problem logically insoluble.

Knowledge remains often a poor traveller, in the face of all our instant methods of information processing and transmission. Thus very few people in the west knew till recently of the work in child psychology of the so-called Moscow school under A.R. Luria, even though it has now come to be known as a highly original and creative force, strongly science-based. There was the problem of late translation. French might seem less a language barrier than Russian, but the admittedly difficult use of French by Levi-Strauss, hardly excuses our academic colleagues from giving us access to his work in English so late. Equally, the French and Germans, it has been said, have never really grasped the truly European stature of the British Empiricist School of Philosophy – often misunderstanding it, because of poor translations, even at the level of the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre. As a mirror image of all the bad and absent translations, Existential Psychiatry burst in upon the Anglo-Saxon intellectuals in the 1960s as a glittering novelty, without the long parenthood it had had in the philosophies of several European countries. The stilted awkward English, which is often its vehicle, can give it the appearance of originality of meaning, when sometimes this is the mere novelty of reading English with both German syntax and an equally borrowed use of cabinet expressions, where the original author could neither accept existing words, nor had always the vitality to create new ones.

A variety of comparable delays and misunderstandings led the English speaking world to tend to overlook for a long time Karl Popper, who has now been called ‘incomparably the greatest philosopher of science that has ever been’. His solution to the ‘problem’ of induction is intriguing and essentially simple. In particular, all his printed works are available in English.

It is interesting to find parallels to some of Popper's thoughts on science, particularly in the work of Teilhard de Chardin, the Jesuit priest, who was not allowed to publish in his own lifetime.

Induction as a psychological theory is very relevant to psychiatric patients. So many patients suffer from guilt, because they feel consciously, or unconsciously, responsible for their own parlous state, or the state of others, or even of the whole world. To challenge induction as a theory might be seen as a kind of logo-therapy. Patients are not only burdened and cursed by feelings they do not want. They can be borne down by false ideas, quite conscious, yet totally wrong. A did not necessarily create B nor B, C... With less guilt, there is not always certainty, but there is a greater likelihood of reasonable self-esteem. One might say: the more neurotic we are the more psychically determined.

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### IN CONSCIOUSNESS:

There is a theme which can be traced back to John Stuart Mill, but which is best known as Emergent Evolution, associated with the name Lloyd Morgan. Contemporary thinkers have developed it, however, in a way that may make a difference in degree become a difference in kind.

Karl Popper re-examined the traditional view of science, for which the verification principle seems essential and yet is itself unprovable. Popper then developed a view, that while scientific facts can indeed never be proven with any certainty to be true, they can be proved to be untrue. Thus a principle of falsification takes the place of that of verification. Scientific method is seen as the setting up of an hypothesis in a clearly defined way. A reasonably straightforward use of language in which we describe our problem and our hypothesis is of course required. That much from the era of 'the analysis of the question' survives. From such notions, it should then be possible to set up a variety of experiments, but not so much aiming to confirm as aiming to refute. By these, attempts, the hypothesis can be rejected or refined. Hypothesis, I suggest, are like myths. The precisely stated 'mini myth', 'bisociative idea', hunch, brainwave, or whatever we may call it, once stated in a testable form, can then be systematically tested. This view clearly leaves us with all our scientific knowledge having only a provisional validity, with certainty always beyond us.

Science is not, then, a system of reliable, absolute data, but a changing, immensely complex series of all that seems reasonable at anyone time. One remembers Ibsen remarking that few truths last more than twenty years. This idea of the 'true' facts being in a constant state of change and development fits the history of ideas. All rigorous experimental, scientific techniques remain, as they were, mandatory and critical. The attitude towards traditional views changes however. The force of the logic behind them is seen as acting critically. The negative becomes a virtue. It was Norbert Wiener who coined



the term 'cybernetics'. He stated that the most reliable signal is no signal (for example, if you don't hear from, I'll meet you under the clock'). If no contradictory evidence can be found in relation to an hypothesis its reliability becomes established – but without the certainty of a rendezvous! At any time a Newton can be overtaken by an Einstein. There is no need to invoke the process of induction for Popper's view of scientific knowledge. The difficult position of induction in logical terms is therefore of no consequence, having become irrelevant.

There have been numerous studies of how various great scientists have first got their ideas – from dreams, mistakes, chance, and sudden intuitions. Popper openly acknowledges that there is no logical method of having new ideas. For him, every discovery contains an 'irrational element', or a 'creative intuition'. It is from such elements, or intuitions, that the scientist goes forward to set up tests. It is senseless, in this view, to assert that observation precedes hypotheses. Faced with the whole world to observe, how could a scientist know where to begin, unless he first had an idea? The status of the observation itself is also changed in Popper's analysis. "...Observations and even more so observation statements and statements of experimental results, are always interpretations of the facts observed .... In the light of theories". As to the early historical and pre-historical origins of science and scientific methods themselves, Popper refers to "primitive theories and myths....in the end we shall find unconscious inborn expectations".

It must be conceded that this approach to scientific knowledge is radically different from the simple caricature, yet common place view of science and its cold methods that we earlier outlined. In particular, Popper's is a much more human view of science, psychologically persuasive – though this of course does not reinforce his arguments logically, formally. Certainly the approach is highly consistent with both the history of ideas and with the biographies of the men who have had them – a Copernicus, a Galileo, a Newton, or a Einstein. And just as Hume saw the idea of causality as a psychological idea, not a logical necessity, so Popper sees induction, the argument from the particular to the general, as a psychological tendency, not a logical necessity.

A further attractive feature of Popper's approach comes from his obvious excitement over the possibilities offered by the imagination. He does not see great scientific advances as triumphs of plodding obsessiveness, but rather, 'one of the greatest spiritual adventures that man has yet known'.

Popper, ranging across all kinds of knowledge, has had to face what it is that distinguishes scientific knowledge from any other kind. Again, the possibility of falsification is what he sees as the dividing line. He has considered for example both Marxism and Psychoanalysis, schools of thought of such contemporary influence. He notes how each attempts to explain everything and each has resolutely been formulated and reformulated, so that it cannot be tested in any particular. In explaining everything, thus nothing is explained. Such bodies of knowledge are therefore not scientific. They give a "sense of intellectual mastery, but, even more important, a sense of secure orientation in the world.... once your eyes were thus opened you saw confirming instances everywhere...". He goes on to note how Freudian analysts, for example, constantly claim scientific status for their theories, because one, or other of their clinical observations 'verify' them. Popper compares this technique with astrology, equally unscientific. At the same time, consistent with his view that true science at one time in the past emerged from myth, in giving say, Marxism, or Psychoanalysis a mythic status, he carefully avoids the totally destructive statements of logical positivists. For the latter, the non-scientific statement was only an 'emotional noise', or was none-sense. Popper sees the possibility that the mythological might evolve and eventually generate testable statements and by this, produce scientific knowledge. He does not despise metaphysics; and he is as concerned with evolution, in the Darwinian sense, as much as with the status of current knowledge.

What does Popper say of the transition of anthropoid ape into a human capable of having scientific knowledge? What of psycho-social evolution, and 'hominisation', as Teilhard de Chardin called it? Popper is the objective world of material objects. There is no play with words, with good and evil, or the

evasive notion of 'contingency' in the sense it was used by Leibnitz (so that out of an infinite number of possible worlds, this, the best of all possible worlds, exists). There is, for Popper, an objective world of things. There is also World 2, a subjective world of minds. It is his World 3 that we immediately, yet freshly recognise, however. It consists of the world that anthropologists call a culture, if we limit our concern to the human (Popper includes in World 3 all the things produced by all living organisms in this world: ant-hills, birds nests and the like). For us then, our libraries, our schools, illustrations, art, language, science itself of course, are all World 3 things. They have needed human minds to bring them into being. They can exist separately from us.

Somewhere, beginning with World 2 and ending in World 3, one glimpses the Catholic thinker, de Chardin's similar idea in his term noosphere – the sphere of mind, the 'transforming agency promoting hominisation'; de Chardin also noted the human biological tendency to show convergence, so that we remain all one species, inter-fertile. In this we are unlike, say, birds with their thousands of separate species, or insects with hundreds of thousands. It is this sameness of humanity that provides the basis for the noosphere, a new layer of the earth's surface, a thinking, communicating layer, remembering, thinking, feeling, willing.

Julian Huxley, in his warm introduction to de Chardin's "The Phenomenon of Man", writes of his own attempt to outline a 'critical point', after which 'evolving material underwent radical change'. Pere Teilhard was a Jesuit and also a geologist and palaeontologist of competence. Huxley wondered if de Chardin knew enough of genetics, of natural selection, or selection, or political and social history. He yet concedes de Chardin achieved remarkable success in 'The Phenomenon of Man', in his 'broad sweep', the towering overview.

What may be called the critical point in human evolution for Popper consists of two linked elements that made World 3 possible. The first was the evolution of language, for all the obvious reasons that at once come to mind. Not the

least of these is the achievement of books and libraries to record what is known.

The second achievement, which is perhaps much less obvious, yet critical, is: criticism itself. Primitive societies are on the whole intensely conservative. Their myths and rituals, which we have touched on before in another aspect, operate to preserve the status quo. The myths themselves must be reproduced in always the same way. Invention is unwelcome in theory, or practice. Invention, say, of a new, improved canoe could lead to the killing of the inventor.

Sometime in man's history, science began. Popper agrees with thus who place that time as the period of the pre-Socratic philosophers in Greece: Thales, Anaximander and Anaximenes. Criticism emerged, not only as a legitimate possible style: it was accepted as the intelligent part of good discourse. Scientific method, seen in this context as a critical evaluation of facts, must therefore be seen to have its birth in Greece. There were to be many Dark Ages to follow. Incredibly, the new critical approach survived, against all the irrational tidal waves of history and rigidities of religious institutions. Coupled with Popper's idea that "all organisms are constantly .... engaged in problem solving", we can see how humans became equipped culturally to become scientific.

As humans we all interact with World 3. The accumulation of institutions and knowledge envelope us from our conception to our death: Whether we use the description 'World 3', or noosphere', or McLuhan's term: the world as a 'global', or an 'electronic village', we are involved in mankind, linked by empathy, words, papers, documents, streams of electrons, passports, treatises, myths, misunderstandings, the vapour trails of aircrafts and the plane themselves. Out artificial satellites swing round the world and silence become rare, while the data-banks mount. There is indeed a World 3, a layer interacting with itself, a noosphere.

We quoted much earlier from the work of Julian Jaynes, his “The Origin of Consciousness and the Bicameral Mind. As with Huxley, de Chardin and Popper, Jaynes writes of a critical point in human evolution. As a human, we can, with Polanyi, work out that “we know more than we can tell”; de Chardin remarks that an “animal knows. But it cannot know that it knows”. But... “A circle can augment its order of symmetry and become a sphere. Either by rearrangement of the parts or by the acquisition of another dimension, the degree of ‘interiority’ of a cosmic element can undoubtedly vary to the point at which it rises suddenly on to another level”. Here de Chardin is describing in mystical, abstract and poetic terms, the origin of the ‘within’ and the ‘without’ of human things. To such a change, he attributes an increase in consciousness.

Our original reference to Jaynes was in order to point to his collected data, which illustrate some surprising limitations to our consciousness. Numerous experiments seem to show how illusional our everyday assumptions about consciousness are. Consciousness is not a copy of experience. Neither does it seem to be essential for concept-formation, nor for learning or thinking, or reasoning. Many skilled tasks can be performed without its aid. Indeed, self-consciousness can ruin a musical performance, say; even riding a bicycle. Jaynes assembles all these notions about the limits of consciousness, in order to make an even more dramatic point: it is possible that man at no remote time ago, while able to speak, reason and judge, was not conscious at all. ‘Bicameral man’ had his mind in two parts, with an executive part called God, and another subservient part called Man. The God part spoke to the man part. Neither part was conscious. Jaynes refers to Homer’s Iliad in particular to try to show how different was the mind of man in the period leading up to that time. Before that time, in other words, Jaynes sees man as an unconscious speaking animal, for whom it was normal to have auditory hallucinations. Man took these voices to be the voices of the Gods, which was so natural if, as Jaynes asserts, ‘the voices’ came only at times of stress, when Gods are needed. The voices had appropriate authority and sense of otherness, or separateness from self. Volition itself came as a voice. We can study human responses to voices of this kind in our own time, by studying

schizophrenics. Indeed, a wide variety of behaviours are examined by Jaynes as 'vestiges of, or regressions to the bicameral mind in the modern world. At the same time, we can remember how all those ancient prophets of differing faiths called out to their Gods, in answer, or questioning.

Evidence from a variety of sources, of varying reliability and persuasiveness, is mounted to show how, again, it was in Greece that consciousness, as we know it emerged, as a kind of accident of language development. The key was the acquisition of the basic metaphors of time with space, of a kind of realisation of a sense of self in a mental space of mind (de Chardin's 'within'). Going with this, underlying it, was the neurological possibility. For man have two cerebral hemispheres. In right-handed persons, there is a special 'speech area' of brain tissue located in the left hemisphere. The right hemisphere is dominated by the left. Yet certainly it can be shown, that many aspects of ourselves – much of our artistic self and our musical self, find their physical basis in the right hemisphere. Vivid subjective experiences can be elicited by electrical stimulation of various parts of the right hemisphere. These experiences include hearing voices. It is reasonable to ask why, when so many functions are represented in the brain equally on each side, the speech area is not, and why these other asymmetries for music and so on exist. For Jaynes, consciousness arose, when, going with the evolution of language, at a critical point, the left hemisphere became dominant over the right. In one way we could say most men then lost their hallucinations; in another way, they lost their old Gods and consciousness was born.

As startling as any other feature of an highly imaginative hypothesis is how recently in time Jaynes places the origin of consciousness: a mere two thousand years ago, and in Greece, where criticism could first arise and be tolerated.

It is interesting to notice also, that if Jaynes is correct, the 'biochemical aberration' theory of the cause of schizophrenia and most currently accepted psychological theories, will look equally nonsensical.

It is quite extraordinary how often experimental evidence about consciousness is neglected by contemporary psychologists, theologians and philosophers. Yet endless papers can be written about problem of reasoning or perception, for example, compulsively reminding one of a very dull English Grammar lesson on a sleepy afternoon. For the majority of philosophers, despite decades of playing with words, the 'it depends what you mean' situation still glues up imagination and trivialises subjects almost to the point of pointless television parlour games. Lucidity, intellectual courage, the courage on the stage of life (which is both larger and smaller than that of theatre) to imagine a larger fact, seems to be a vulgarity. An introduction can say: "there (is)... the complex business of accurately delineating, and clearly distinguishing, the concepts that are actually wielded in Judgements of perception. ....To this we may add also, ....the question of determining the logical relations between those things which the plain man believes and says about the world.... and these other things said.... by psychologists, physiologists, physicists and others". Envious of the leisure of the academic philosopher one may be, but it is not envy that goes on to say: pray procede. Let all these areas of human knowledge be brought into believable relationships.

It is, after all, late in the day and yet for all those words, we hardly know who we are. It is still on the whole, only the adolescents of our time, in their 'crisis of identity', who need to know? There are all the emotionally deranged of our time, or the madness of our time, if Laing be a true judge. And really Laing's is often a switched view point rather than a new one; musical chairs at the funny farm to the same tunes, if fewer chairs. We cannot logically assert that there is no such thing as schizophrenia and simultaneously, using psychiatric jargon, detect all the symptoms in the public at large; even though they are not of course symptoms. In yet another switch of framework: symptoms have become evidence of a sacred journey.

Be all that as it is, whoever journeys wherever, there are in hospitals across the world, tens of thousands of mental patients, or people who are, if you will, called mental patients by other people. There is an acknowledged humiliating

ignorance of general psychiatry to be able to make very accurate diagnoses and offer certain cure in schizophrenia. Nothing begins to compare with the treatments offered by other branches of medicine. This is no mystery; there are not always conspiracies, political, or otherwise. For all the bad jokes, psychiatrists wish their patients well. But what does 'well' mean? In comparison to what? And so we have the search for norms and abnorms, which might even indicate what kind of help is indicated. I have grappled with this one before, in my book on psychosis. Since we are talking about humans, we are again therefore asking: what is human nature? How many varieties of it are normal, like the different colours of some flowers? Where does variety end and something it is face-saving, or humiliating to call illness all the events of our eventful histories? But of course we have heard long since that there is only one thing to be learned from history, and that is, that we learn nothing from history.

To return to Jaynes: perhaps it is futile to be preoccupied with the origins of anything, even so important a thing as consciousness, or language. Cynics can agree that history is a myth agreed upon by historians. Yet the limitations of the fragmentary, easily misinterpreted evidence of the past does not fatally alter the experimental evidence of the present, even if we can never completely observe anything 'objectively', observe anything without consciously, and simultaneously unconsciously, interpreting what we see, or hear, or touch. In this way, the past is never past, but informs, adds, subtracts, helps and may give rise to illusions, as well. The 'self and the other' is not given, as primary sense data. If there were originally any elements from which we built up the whole objects of our here-and-now experience, these were tendencies, fragmentary. A face, a hand, a breast became 'mother. In inventing the first whole person, the first other, we invented ourselves. The less complete the first invention, the less complete the inventing a world through endless experience. Squareness, roundness, and larger, smaller, sidedness: we did not only take the rough with the smooth: we have had to learn to before they could become metaphors. In this way we climbed out of our bodies into our imaginations, out of our animal pasts into our conscious present. There is no certainty how this was done.



## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **PSYCHIC DETERMINISM:**

Dictionaries are interesting, but in the end always disappointing. They are at their best in giving correct spelling, a doubtful virtue, if reassuring to the pedantic. The great Elizabethan poets had no concern for uniformity. Dictionaries smoothly try to hide the essential ambiguity of language, and the tautology of their definitions. As philosophers, turning to linguistic analysis so swiftly found: in order to talk about language, we need to be able to stand outside language. We need a meta-language to describe language. In order to grasp the meta-language, a meta-meta-language would be required. And so into an infinite regress. Taking flight into mathematical logic only shifts the locus of the problem, not the problem itself.

Thus man is not entirely definable verbally by man. We are not words. The building of huge philosophical systems has, like talk of sin, fallen out of fashion, if not into disrepute. Yet despite the difficulties involved, the limitations we are forced to acknowledge, limitations to the very instruments we need in search for truth, limits to language, to consciousness and so on, it would be foolish to go to an extreme and end in saying we know nothing at all. Indeed, one of our current problems is how to use all our vast knowledge safely and fairly. It is not only reasonable, but also essential to place us in the framework of our biological knowledge. We can laugh at, 'The Naked Ape' – Desmond Morris meant us to. Many a true word .... But we can consider, at least in outline, some of the characteristics, which differentiate us from other species. The list must include our religions, our science and our art. Wit and humour seem highly developed in us and, indeed, we deploy them on many occasions to deal with conflict and paradox; we value them and many more of us might go mad without a sense of humour. Wit and humour have received little study considering their importance. There seems to be a sex difference here. Women so frequently claim to find it difficult to remember jokes and tell them more rarely than men do. There are far more adult female psychiatric patients than men. There might be a partial connection here, probably

culturally determined if it exists. As Virginia Woolf and T.S. Elliott both separately remarked: few of us can bear reality for more than a few moments at a time. The release of tensions by laughter may not carry us nearer to reality; indeed, the therapeutic effect of fun may be because it offers fantasies consciously and as alternatives to an unbearable reality.

The fact the humans have all-year-round fertility again distinguishes our species from most others. There are many behavioural implications that follow, even in a contraceptive age, from grooming to bedroom manners, the politics of sex and the family as a group.

Evolutionists continue by noting that humans alone have language, meaning the highly sophisticated, symbolic acts and communications we can carry out by spoken, or inner speech. We also communicate non-verbally. Naturally, the signalling system of other species is remembered. The dolphin is intensely studied, for example. Any reasonably comprehensive definition of our linguistic gifts, however, excludes the communications system of other species. There is a discontinuity here in comparative ethnology. We are unique.

Huxley notes how the human has biological dominance over all other species. This is only a recent phenomenon. Certainly, even now, one can find human groups in balance with their ecological system. There are groups of Eskimoes in Canada that exemplify this. What is more, such groups have mythologies, which acknowledge such a balance and praise it.

The human hand has won monographs from anatomists. It is curiously underestimated in the considerations of intellectuals. Yet the biological changes that freed our 'mammalian fore limb' for creative purpose, rivals the evolution of our brain in significance. Thus we had first to become upright, walking only on two hind limbs. Our eyes needed to be coordinated and in front, not at the sides of our heads. This could give us the potential for the accurate stereoscopic vision we in fact now possess. The latter, of course, is even more highly developed in, for example, predatory birds. In our case,

however, our hands and eyes can be directly coordinated. Because we can oppose our thumb to our fingers, we have, as a hand, the prototype of all tools; and the potential for all the inventions that have streamed forth from us. The visual feedback system, augmented by the senses of touch and kinaesthetic sensation, immediately becomes formidable, linked to a brain with a data storage and retrieval system, memory with intelligence and creativity – the problem solving drive, so valued and emphasised in the writings of Popper. The sheer skill of which the human hand is capable is mainly admired in the creation of sculpture and painting, the playing of music. The ability of the tool room fitter to work with his hands to tolerances within one ten thousandth of an inch does not particularly impress a class-ridden Britain, for whom even engineers remain beneath the salt. Manual skills and inventions have taken us out of our caves and mud huts. They have given us the leisure in which freedom can have meaning, beyond brute existence. Yet engineers have a curious twilight existence in terms of any cultural prestige. We cannot, however, overlook their biological significance and how such characteristics as superb manual skills mark us off dramatically from other apes.

While on the whole Darwinian ideas of evolution tend still to dominate, yet there is far less of a clash in current times, between the idea of the influence of heredity on the one hand and of the environment, on the other. There is massive evidence for individual biological variability, perhaps best indicated by the problem of organ transplants. Apart from identical twins, each one of us immunologically unique: On the one hand, we inherit a number of characteristics, such as blood groups, or eye colour. On the other hand, it is agreed that the organism begins to interact with the environment from the moment that the female egg is fertilised. (As Auden said: 'ridiculous to be born at all amidst all that waste of sperm'.)

The variability of humans indicates that we are still potentially able to adapt to changes in the environment as a species. That is to say, one variation or another, might be better suited to survive on environmental change or another. Such superior survival value would enable the individuals

possessing it in a species to flourish under new conditions; while others, lacking the trait, sank back in number. Our knowledge of the structure and of the chemical constituents of the 'Double Helix', those tiny constituents that determine our inherited physical and our mental being is incredibly recent. One remembers the monk, Mendel, experimenting, establishing scientific genetics, growing his wrinkled and his smooth peas less than a century ago. Now, we know that with changes in even one peptide, our whole individual lives and identities might have been different.

Darwin's theory of evolution holds that 'natural selection' accounts for the ongoing development of all living species. Chance variations are transmitted, some variations, as we noted, having a better survival rate than others. We add to Darwin's idea of chance variations that of mutation, called 'chance mutation' sometimes. Most mutations are disadvantageous. Mutations we know can be caused by a variety of chemicals and by X-rays. Mutation risks are part of the terror of atomic warfare.

The idea of heredity itself can be, has been, overstated. It could be alleged that 'crime is destiny', or that almost all intelligence is inherited. The contribution of environmental factors always comes into any reliable contemporary study of general genetics.

At the other extreme, best formulated by Lamarck in the eighteenth century, is the hypothesis that acquired characteristics are inherited. Thus Lamarck would say giraffes get their long necks from stretching for higher and higher leaves in trees. The main attraction of the hypothesis is its simplicity, which hardly makes it scientific. At one time Lamarckian evolution was official Soviet dogma, associated with the name of the notorious Lysenko. One feels obliged to say notorious, because apart from a variety of poor experiments, which were held to uphold Lamarckian ideas, many distinguished Soviet geneticists, who had more open minds, or were Darwinists, ended up in Stalin labour camps, often to die. Communism in the Stalin era often behaved as the medieval Catholic Church did in relation to knowledge. We have noted how even in the West, the works of Teilhard de Chardin were refused

publication until the death. In Stalin's closed society, party opinions were to be ignored at the peril of one's life.

Astonishingly enough, Freud was a Lamarckian. It is for this reason that constitutional and hereditary factors appear so seldom in psychoanalytic discussions, or writings, in any believable way. When they are mentioned, it is in passing. The main burden in analytic theory is as though we are born as tablets of wax, without differing endowments and gifts. All that we have become is the result of all the impressions upon that block of wax. An infinite complexity must be sought to explain why we are as we are, from our remotest infancy until the here and now.

As a demonstration of Freud's stubborn Lamarckism, his view that acquired characteristics are inherited, one can cite, say, his view that 'pre-historic' times, the sons murdered their father and modern man still bears and feels the "acquired" guilt of this act – a Freudian version of original sin.

We earlier commented that Freud had clung to a dated scientific determinism. Now, we must add, that he also used an apparently disproven evolutionary theory; on the occasions he used one at all.

At the risk of seeming perverse, I do not think these two apparent aberrations matter in the work of Freud himself. A better case can probably be made out for a "thorough-going psychic determinism", than for physical determinism. We have seen how Hume said the concept of causality belonged to psychology, not logic. The 'problem of induction', the argument from the particular to the general, was seen by him as a psychological tendency in the human. (Induction does seem to have been finally settled as a 'problem' by Karl Popper).

In offering his view of how the mind works, it was perfectly legitimate for Freud to see us as an organism that believes from intimate experience that one idea is caused by another. Equally, humans have a powerful impulse to make generalisations from out of a few instances. In other words, Freud was right

for reasons that were already “scientifically” wrong in his day. Wrong that is to say, in the view of the physical scientist. There is no reason, however, why the characteristics of the physical sciences, in any event always only provisional, and very abstract, should necessarily apply to how our minds work. In a perhaps ignoble search for intellectual respectability, most Freudians over-use the word ‘science’ and fail to see the difference between the requirements of physical science in its proper sense and that very different situation in psychology. In some undefined reflex way, most psychoanalysts reject the requirement that can nevertheless be made, that to be logical about anything, even psychology, one requires precise, testable statements. In this way we can be rational even about the irrational. It is clear that the works of Freud are products of genius. They are least so in their meta-psychologies, which are beyond proof, or refutation in their grand generalities. Yet to many of the followers of Freud, all his work is sacred. In it they find the closed, comforting complete system. His collected works are cherished. Innumerable psychoanalytic papers have references only to the Standard Edition, or to other intellectually equally incestuous psychoanalytic papers.

As Whitehead said, “A science which hesitates to forget its founders is lost”. Even the Papacy has become more liberal. Pope Plus XII condemned existentialism as late as 1950. By 1963, Pop Paul VI could bless the new translation of the ‘Summa Theologiae’ of Thomas Aquinas. Notes in these volumes not only refer to Teilhard de Chardin, but to existential literature and to the theatre of the absurd (Sartre, Camus, Beckett, Ionesco, Adamov). At least one excellent small textbook on Psychiatry, entirely frank on sexual and other matters, when this is relevant, received the Imprimatur. If one accepts this recognition of the sources of other ideas in the world as an enriching of the spirit, one must regret the continuing intellectual narrowness of psychoanalysis.

More constructive remarks can be made. As with determinism, so with the inheritance of acquired characteristics, we need not entirely fault Freud. Indeed we might fault Ernest Jones, Freud’s famous biographer for not seeing what Freud was saying, and being embarrassed by him on this issue. The

prestige of pure scientists and “proper doctors” intimidates many psychiatrists, and some great men’s followers.

It can be reasonably asserted that the human has two sources of inheritance. One is now so marvellously documented, via our understanding of the chromosome and the double helix with all its genes. There is further knowledge yet to come, but this, we can be reasonably sure, will be of the same kind, belonging to the world of biochemistry, macromolecular biology and cognate subjects. Freud ignored the forerunners of this and essentially the work of Darwin that led to this, via many a brilliant mind. That Freud’s followers fail to acknowledge the influence of physical inheritance is another question. Freud was heroically exploring certain paths. His followers could be wise after intelligence, to temperament and to certain devastating mental illnesses which analysis cannot cure. To ignore this soma and its origins has led to arrogant analytic attitudes towards forms of effective physical treatment, for conditions analysts cannot, will not treat.

The other human source of inheritance is, indeed, in a sense, Lamarckian, though, to be sure, not entirely as Freud used the concept. Anthropology has, among many gifts, given us the concept of culture. The term ‘culture’ can be defined variously, but it essentially means all those characteristics that define a particular social group, its language, values, mores, attitudes towards kinship, sexuality, its myths, its way of life. We may ignore tedious Marxist arguments that claim that economic factors mainly, or alone, determine the types of societies, primitive or sophisticated, that we find. It is not difficult to match environments and find lively people in one, bedraggled losers in another. Differences in social-organisation strike commonsense as more significant than ‘historical determinism’ with a very partial economic evaluation tacked on. Neither history nor economics prove very scientific, when put to the test.

The major point is that cultures are learned by the peoples who grow up in them. If a particular culture takes in a new concept, or technique, if there are changes in the language, for example, these ‘acquired characteristics’ are

inherited by the next generation. And as it is for a society, so it must be for the individual. There is a transmission of culture, via parenting techniques, social pressures, schooling and a wide variety of media. Clearly such inheritance has nothing to do with giraffes' necks growing longer. Yet the most profound ideational differences between peoples are to be accounted for by the concept of cultures. Our very identities as children, men, or women, emerge from both the wider culture and the 'under the roof' culture of our families, which first informed our senses. To an appreciable extent our perceptions not only of ourselves, but also of our surrounding world has been learned. Any one of us might have been a headhunter, and thought that a normal life; or an untouchable and felt that just. We might have been tougher, or more tender, more outward, or more bound in myth.

In a sense, especially in childhood, we can feel we have not only set out to discover the world; we can almost feel we have invented it. Yet so much of the world has invented us, without our knowing, or remembering it. Our unspoken dialogue with the world seems to unique, sincere, true. It is really there!

It is in to this dimension of our learning to be, that Freud poured out his genius. As with his exploration of psychic determinism, he drove to the limits and surely, in the end, beyond the limits can only be reached and defined in this way, in retrospect, as Wittgenstein in a sense also illustrates with regard to language ('all philosophy is "critique of language"'). During the recoil from overstatement, a new truth may be found. In each case, Freud and Wittgenstein are of course, not only actual, gifted, historical people who once lived. Any competent history of psychiatry, or of philosophy can trace out their human precursors and also their formidable contemporary colleagues, who failed to achieve the mythological status of these two men. It in no ways detracts from Freud or Wittgenstein to call them the successful symbols of appreciable movements in men's minds. History pauses for such movements and such men, but then always goes on.



We are, of course, very much in a post-Wittgenstein and post-Freudian era. It is much easier in an alienating society with changing and disintegrating values to be a critic.

Group and collective man more and more cling together for a synthetic illusional identity. It is possible to say: It is curious how we continue to theorise from an egoistic viewpoint. In Freud's theory, for instance, one has the "I" (ego) ... but no you ... the experience of you or he or them or us may indeed be as primary and compelling (or more so) as the experience of "me". This is an astonishing statement from the Laingian School of psychiatry. It has found its point of departure in analysis. At one time, the 'The Divided Self', it movingly dramatised the modern dilemmas of individual existence. In difficult explorations scattered through 'Interpersonal Perceptions', there seems to be one infinite regress after another, as though parallel mirrors are held aloft reflecting images from on to the other. The self and the other grow less and less defined, till they merge into undiscriminated images, circling helplessly, beyond solipsism and beyond knowledge or self, where nothing is real and all clear voices fade.

Freud in contrast stands in direct line with Renaissance Man – individual, courageous, with conscience and vision. He bears responsibility. He can act, be committed, prejudiced, mistaken, - rewrites, is pessimistic. He says to a friend "You know I am not Freudian" – as Marx is said to have said, "You know I am not a Marxist". The most valuable part is in the great Jewish tradition, which became Christian also: I am responsible for my acts. I cannot plead, "I was acting on orders" – or social pressure – or because of 'The Other'. Only I know my history, even if I know that I do not always understand it, or let myself remember it. My truth is in me. It is to this truth that analysis at best addresses itself. If the metaphysics – the meta-psychology – is mythological – the myths relate to our search for ourselves. Analysis consists of firstly a body of knowledge, sometimes of uncertain value; secondly a meta-psychology, which is largely mythological; but thirdly a technique. It is within a closely defined situation that the 'transference' emerges. In this situation truths are possible. It is when the individual addresses a purposely

undefined person in a quiet present, that the relating feeling-laden past emerges with all its personal myths, illusions and misunderstanding, to turn the therapist now into one emotionally significant figure from that past, now another. This transference is one of those situations in which human myths and illusions can be captured.

We have mentioned, in our chapter on myths and mysticism, the Jungian idea of a personal unconscious, as well as a universal unconscious. The idea of a personal unconscious is not too far from the more conscious concept of the 'guiding myth', which Alfred Adler talked about in discussing different styles of life and their origins. We also noted the central role of myths in the descriptions of different human cultures examined by anthropologists. We have to acknowledge then, that involvement in myths is another human characteristic. Clustering around some myths in each society, there are of course rituals to be found, taboos, prohibitions, injunctions, obligations, punishments and rewards. There are anxieties, in other words, generated by mythic ideas, which can be felt to be controlled by ritualised behaviour. It is through this latter view that Freud saw religion as an obsessional neurosis, in which obsessional acts and thoughts strive by a mental magic to create safety by rigid mental rules.

This reductive idea is curiously weakened by a certain observation about 'La grand hysteria'. Hysteria in general was the commonest neurosis in the nineteenth century. In that more religious age there are to be found many superb descriptions of hysteria. Our own "Age of Anxiety", as it has been called, has markedly less religion to characterise it, yet hardly less mythology and self-delusion. Clinics only rarely find, however, patients showing pure hysteria. Obsessional neurosis has become the commonest neurosis, quite independently from religion. It seems up to psychoanalysts to explain why obsessiveness, as it were, no longer finds itself able to express an overall myth, a religion, to give itself coherent content in Western societies. Why have our compulsions abandoned seeking some God?

There is no 'comparative anatomy' of language as between humans and other animals, but a discontinuity, as we have already asserted. There are, however, compulsive displays some animals exhibit, as in courting behaviour, in which may be found some similarities with obsessional behaviour. To be sure, more rationality can be discerned here, in these other animals than in our obsessions. It may be that, since so much human obsessionality can originate in primitive and perverse sexual impulses, there is a comparative link here, though a distorted one, understood by neither the sufferer, nor the onlooker, in the ordinary course of events. It is in this sense that we are less rational in our rituals than other animals, in that our rituals involve a symbolism beyond our ordinary conscious understanding. The strutting peacock flashing all his exotic feathers is, on the other hand, declaration for all easily to understand. How enviable this simplicity.

## CONCLUSIONS:

Perhaps among the many difficult problems that psychiatrists face and not easily to be separated from their clinical challenges, is that question about what is human nature? This is not an academic point. Upon some practical view of it depends who we call a patient and who we do not. Since there remain so many irrational fears and prejudices about things psychiatric, it can cruelly, dramatically alter an individual's life to be labelled "psychiatric" – both in the individual's terms and in his, or her immediate family and social situation.

It is curious that we can find so little help with such problems from professional philosophers. After all, psychiatry may be rather a confused subject, but is in no way modern one. Physical medicine is, without question, modern medicine, stripped of its weird, superstitious, often infinitely bogus origins. A few may have a sentimental attachment to folk remedies, but if their appendix becomes inflamed, or their peptic ulcer perforates, a surgeon will save their life, not their herbal tea. Modern physical medicine has immense scientific, rational power behind it in addressing some of the ills that human flesh is heir to. Psychiatry is beginning to.

Psychiatry has its relevance to physical medicine – if only psychiatry can avoid being quasi-religious. The schools of psychiatry – Behaviour Modifications, Freudian, Kleinian, Humanist, Existentialist, Jungian, even a few Adlerian, Primeval Scream, or whatever, can seem so competitive, all asserting that the truth resides in them alone. Each may have a truth to tell, if only it could overcome its sibling rivalry, and avoid implying it has a monopoly of truth.

It is to be hoped that the point has been made that one, among many, positive contributions psychiatry has to offer is to refine our sense of right and wrong. Forensic psychiatry is a branch of general psychiatry concerned with the psychiatric assessment and treatment of those who offend against the law. There are serious issues to be decided, such as an offender's 'fitness to

plead', or whether there is a state of 'diminished responsibility'. In these regards, our laws have become more sensitive and humane and are helped by psychiatry. But psychiatry is not concerned in just trying to hospitalise crime. Insider trading may arise from an excess of greed. It is criminal. The drunken rapist is a criminal.

The psychiatric disorders most likely to be found related to crime are personality disorders, drug and alcohol dependence and mental handicap. The homeless, unemployed and socially isolated are likely to be those who repeatedly offend. Thus we classify and try to see each case on its merits. It seems to me that none of the deadly sins has gone away. Insofar as the law reflects ancient moralities, these are still in place.

It has probably never been easy to be a human being. Perhaps our era, for all its anxieties has an advantage in standing on the shoulders of history and in some of our linguistic achievements. In our consciousness, we can be concerned with the problems of freedom, alienation, of responsibility. We can see that a rigid psychic determinism can lead to a lack of a sense of personal responsibility and to helplessness. On the other hand, what has been called Existential Freedom – just being, here and now, seems to lead to abandoning all other knowledge. Psychoanalysis, for all its flaws and contradictions, has given us the deepest account of introspection that we have ever known. Somehow we need to achieve a creative tension between being in the world with all its brilliant colours and perfumes and yet being able to give the right names to the streams of feeling that burst in on us from our individual histories. Human tensions are not only between past and present, but go on always between right and wrong.