Psychoanalytic Conceptions of the Passions *

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> **passion** n. 1. strong emotion; outburst of anger (flew into a passion); sexual love; strong enthusiasm (for thing, for doing), object arousing this. 2. (P~). the sufferings of Christ on the Cross ... (Sykes, 1982, p.749).

I

During the first of the four stages through which Freud's theory of resistance and repression gradually evolved "there were no fundamental passions, no irreducible forces determining our human nature. What mattered was simply what grew out of particular interpersonal encounters" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.27). In this period during the 1890's psychic conflict was conceptualized as tension between the "dominant mass of ideas constituting the ego" (Breuer & Freud, 1895, p.116) and any impulses, affects, wishes, ideas or memories which in some way threaten or contradict the self-concept. At this stage in Freud's thinking the *Ich* or "ego" referred not to the hypothetical control apparatus of his later structural ego psychology (Freud, 1923), but rather to the "I"--that is, the subject's sense of self, self-image or self-representation.

> How does the dominant mass of ideas become dominant? Freud is almost totally silent on this point during the early phase of his theorizing, yet his argument has some clear implications. What become dominant are what we might today think of as "proper" ideas, those which fit well with our view of ourselves as we would prefer to be. They are socially sanctioned ideas which fit well with our own values, standards, and morality (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.33).

In this first model, then, a socially conditioned self-image seeks to preserve

itself in the face of "incompatible ideas" (Breuer & Freud, 1895, p.167) through the repression of the latter. Social values and socialization pressures are associated with the repressing forces; and the repressed is very loosely defined as a range of "incompatible" psychological and emotional contents associated with various interpersonal situations. "The particular culture in which we live, its values and standards, is crucial in determining which affects we find acceptable ... [and] which cannot be adequately discharged. ... The theory is not specific as to the fundamental nature of the stimuli with which the psychic apparatus must deal" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.27).

In the second phase of his thinking regarding the nature of mental conflict, Freud shifts away from the model in which "The tension between one's impulses and the social structure into which one must fit is what determines repression" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.34) and begins, for a time, to conceptualize the repressing forces as biological rather than social in nature. Although the repressed contents are themselves still broadly defined and not yet conceived in instinctual terms, repression itself now comes to be seen as biologically based: "`defence' in the purely psychological sense has been replaced by organic `sexual repression'" (Freud, 1906, p.278).

In keeping with his radical modification of the so-called "seduction theory" of neurosis (Freud, 1896),[(1)] Freud now shifts the accent away from the role of the social environment in neurosogenesis unto biological factors in his conceptualization of both the nature of the repressed (infantile sexual drives and drive-related fantasies versus memories of abuse) and of repression (an "organic" repression versus one motivated by the socially conditioned self-image). "In the same way that seduction has been replaced by impulse, so has social restraint been replaced by innate aversion" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.35). In the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud (1905) writes: "One gets an impression from civilized children that the construction of these dams is a product of education, and no doubt education has much to do with it. But in reality this development is organically determined and fixed by heredity, and it can occasionally occur without any help at all from education" (pp.177-8).

In the third phase of development of the theory of resistance and repression, Freud (1905) introduced his first instinctual dualism, the sexual and the self-preservative drives ("love versus hunger") as distinct from his later (1920) dualism of the life and death instincts ("love versus hate"). After a period in which the repressed was conceived in largely non-instinctual and personalistic terms as composed of a wide range of situationally determined

affects, impulses, ideas and memories felt to be "incompatible" with the "ego" as self-image, Freud now becomes much more specific as to the instinctual nature of the repressed. Furthermore, as Greenberg and Mitchell (1983) point out, in suggesting that "what he had earlier termed the self-preservative instincts might be thought of as `ego instincts,' thus replacing the identification of the ego with the `dominant mass of ideas' with an instinctual definition" (p.37), Freud (1910) continues his tendency, evident in phase two in the concept of an "organic repression," to see instinctual forces at work on both sides of the repression barrier. "With this concept Freud defined the field of conflict (impulse versus repression) totally in instinctual terms" (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.37).

In the fourth and final phase of his development of the theory of resistance and repression, in his structural ego psychology Freud (1923; 1926) in one sense returns to his earliest model of psychic conflict as composed of socially conditioned forces in tension with "incompatible" elements of the personality. But whereas in the earliest model the repressed was conceived in unspecific, personalistic terms, it is now composed of the psychic manifestations of *Eros*, the sexual or life instinct on the one hand and *Thanatos*, the death-instinct or its outward manifestation as the aggressive drive on the other. Both serving and yet frequently opposing the sexual and aggressive drives is an "ego"--now no longer conceptualized in phenomenological or experiential terms but redefined as a hypothetical control apparatus--the task of which is to somehow reconcile the often conflicting demands of an "id" governed by the "pleasure principle" with a "superego" and "ego ideal" mediating what might be called a "morality principle" (albeit a primitive and often sadistic pseudo-morality) while seeking above all to adhere to the claims of the "reality principle."

Thus, from the earliest phase in which socially conditioned forces clash with a range of incompatible elements of our emotional life, to a second phase in which such elements are opposed by an "organic repression" and a third phase in which instinctual forces operate on both sides of the repression barrier, we arrive at the fourth and final phase (Freud, 1926) in which a socially conditioned ego resorts to a range of defensive operations in the face of anxiety. The latter is associated with a series of infantile danger-situations to which the ego feels itself exposed by the sexual and aggressive instinctual drives of the id, the reproaches and attacks of the superego, and the objective difficulties which face it in reality.

Although it is true up to a point to say that in this final theory Freud has produced a model of instinct versus society, it is important to avoid

succumbing to the "oversocialized" (Wrong, 1961) conception of the superego characteristic of the sociological assimilation of psychoanalytic ego psychology (e.g., Parsons, 1962; 1964). While the superego, for Freud, certainly did involve the internalization of social morality via the parental conscience, as "heir to the Oedipus complex" (Freud, 1923, p.36) the superego more fundamentally represents the turning against the self of id aggression toward the oedipal rival with whom the subject has come to identify.

It would be misleading to imply that Freud's conception of the passions could be limited to his final model of the sexual and aggressive drives and drive-related affects and fantasies as the fundamental motivating forces of human behaviour--or even, more broadly, to the conceptions which represent earlier phases of his evolution of this metapsychological model. For although this certainly represents the end-result of his developing metapsychology, Freud's thinking always exceeded such formalization. For many of his interpreters it is precisely those elements of his thought which exist "on the margins" of the main line of his theoretical development which represent the most interesting aspects of Freudian theory.

Hence, on the margins of his final ego psychological model in which the subject's passions are ultimately reduced to sexual and aggressive drives and drive-related affects and fantasies together with their various combinations or compromise-formations are such, by no means incompatible, notions as: the subject's desire to reestablish the oceanic bliss of primary narcissism (Freud, 1930, ch.1); to recapture the omnipotence and perfection of the "purified pleasure ego" (Freud, 1914; 1915) in which everything that is good or pleasurable is "me" while everything unpleasurable or bad is "not-me"; to find an object which always represents the "re-finding" of the primary object, the maternal breast (Freud, 1905, p.222); to finally circumvent the paternal prohibition and achieve the longed-for (and dreaded) incestuous consummation; to bask in the secure protection of an idealized, all-powerful father-image transferred unto the universe at large (Freud, 1927); or even to reestablish the Nirvana-like quiescence of inorganic life (Freud, 1920).

In focusing in the following on Freud's explicit metapsychological model of the passions there is no intention to deny the existence or importance of such additional narrative lines in Freudian theory. It is merely to insist that the dominant story cannot be dismissed merely on the grounds that it is manifest. In my view, its critique is warranted if for no other reason than that it enjoyed for many years a hegemonic position in psychoanalytic discourse, at least in North America.

II

For anyone schooled in the oversocialized conceptions of the subject as a social product and performer which have tended to predominate in social theory, the major initial appeal of psychoanalysis might well be in its guise as an id psychology and instinct theory.(2) It is interesting to note that this aspect of the theory has figured large in the academic assimilation of psychoanalysis, even while the analysts themselves were extending Freud's later initiatives in the areas of ego psychology (Anna Freud, 1936; Hartmann, 1939; 1964; Blanck and Blanck, 1974) and object-relations theory (Guntrip, 1971; Kernberg, 1976; Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983). Hence, psychoanalytic philosophers, such as Brown (1959) and Marcuse (1955), neglecting the alternative Freuds upon whom mainstream psychoanalysis was building, chose to focus exclusively upon Freud the instinct theorist and endeavored to modify the Freudian psychobiology in the direction of Rousseauean romanticism and away from the Hobbesian pessimism of the master.

More than three decades have now passed since Wrong (1961) first drew attention to the fact that the social sciences have tended to portray the personality as either all superego (the moral subject of internalized norms; Riesman's [1950] inner-directed subject guided by an internal moral gyroscope) or all ego (Goffman's [1959] manipulator of impressions; the diviner of and conformer to social expectations in pursuit of self-esteem through attaining status in the eyes of significant others; Riesman's "other-directed" radar personality). But far from transcending the social determinism and sociological reductionism which characterized these earlier schools of thought, it can be argued that more recent paradigms, such as structuralism and post-structuralism, have merely re-presented the old sociologism in a different, albeit a fashionably continental guise.

By offering a theory of instincts as countervailing forces in the personality clashing with the socially produced components of character and thus accounting for the experience of intrapsychic conflict, psychoanalysis has held great appeal for the critics of such sociologism. For now the socially internalized aspects of the self have to be seen as pitted against an unruly and essentially asocial and passionate instinctual core of the personality: the Freudian id. In the resulting conflicts between the ego-superego and the id,

many have found a plausible explanation for psychic conflict, various types of deviant behavior, the inner costs of outward adjustment, problems of conscious and unconscious guilt, anxiety and self-punishment and many other hitherto incompletely comprehended human phenomena.

In the words of Rieff (1959): "Freud, himself--through his mythology of the instincts--kept some part of character safe from society, restoring to the idea of human nature a hard core, not easily warped or reshaped by social experience" (pp.34-35). In this way, psychoanalysis was seen to offer a conception of nature (human nature) as a counterpart to culture, an instinctual individual self in tension with the social self and, hence, an initially appealing (and seductive) conceptualization of socialization as a struggle between the collective domesticating pressures and the willful and imperious drives of the "natural man." Here it seemed was a theory suited to the task of drawing attention to the pain and sacrifice entailed in submission to civilization, the socialized subject's enduring ambivalence regarding the bargain it reluctantly strikes with the social order, and the threat to individual liberty represented by the collectivity (Freud, 1930).

In the psychoanalytic dualism of culture versus nature and ego versus instinct (Yankelovich and Barrett, 1970), the libertarian thinker appeared to find a basis for his defense of the embattled individual and his critique of an oppressive and repressive social order. Such a defense of nature against the demands of culture could take the form, depending upon the theorist's view of human nature, either of a neo-Rousseauean call for the liberation of the healthy instincts of the "noble savage" (as in Reich [1973] and Brown [1959]), or of that far more subtle, ambivalent and tragic-ironic perspective which was Freud's own and which recognizes in human nature both the inclination toward libidinal exuberance and a degree of destructiveness incompatible with the existence of a viable human community (Freud, 1927; 1930; Herberg, 1957; Niebuhr, 1957; Kaufmann, 1963; Schafer, 1976). In this latter perspective both the terrible price exacted by civilization from the instinctual individual and the necessity for him to pay it are represented.

In the work of Marcuse (1955), there was an attempt to avoid the romanticism of the former view as well as the ambivalent conservatism of the latter through an elaboration of Freud's own distinction (1927, pp. 10-12) between a "basic repression" necessary for the very existence of civilized order and a "surplus repression" above and beyond this unavoidable minimum induced by the exigencies of class exploitation. But whereas Marcuse accepted Freud's view of the subject's sexual and aggressive passions as instinctual, he overlooked the fact that for Freud it

was sublimated or aim-inhibited (as opposed to simply released) Eros which was capable of binding aggression. Furthermore, Marcuse's whole attempt to relativize as a product of specific socioeconomic conditions human conflicts and discontents which, although they may not arise from "instinctual" sources are certainly irreducible to sociohistorical factors alone, is characteristic of that more subtle variety of romanticism (disguised as hardheaded realism), which is utopian Freudo-Marxism.

But without entering any further into such philosophical and political arguments, it is sufficient to notice that, despite their profound ideological differences in other respects, these perspectives shared a common acceptance of some version of the Freudian theory of the instincts and, hence, rested upon an instinctivist view of human nature. Whether "natural man" was conceived in terms of innate innocence or innate depravity, or some combination of the two, and whether the solution was seen to be instinctual liberation or the more temperate path of sublimation and rational suppression, all these outlooks operated within the culture versus nature duality which Freud (1923) enshrined in his structural theory of the mental apparatus as the duality of ego-superego versus id.

According to Erikson (1950), Freudian theory embodies a *centaur model of man:*

> The id Freud considered to be the oldest province of the mind, both in individual terms--for he held the young baby to be "all id"--and in phylogenetic terms, for the id is the deposition in us of the whole of evolutionary history. The id is everything that is left of our organization of the responses of the amoeba and of the impulses of the ape, of the blind spasms of our intra-uterine existence, and of the needs of our postnatal days--everything which would make us "mere creatures." The name "id," of course, designates the assumption that the "ego" finds itself attached to this impersonal, this bestial layer like the centaur to his equestrian underpinnings: only that the ego considers such a combination a danger and an imposition, whereas the centaur makes the most of it (p.192).

While agreeing with Erikson's characterization, Guntrip (1971) regards the theory as "astonishing and unrealistic, in its assumption that human nature is made up, by evolutionary `layering,' of an ineradicable dualism of two

mutually hostile elements" (p.50). He takes the seeming plausibility of the centaur model as evidence both of "how far back in history human beings have suffered from split-ego conditions" (p.51) and of "how tremendous has been the struggle to disentangle the two elements in Freud's original thought, the physiological and biological impersonal-process theory of id-drives and superego controls, and the personal object-relational thinking that has always been struggling to break free and move on to a new and more adequate conceptualization of human beings in their personal life" (pp. 51-2).

Suffice it to say that these premises--the instinct theory and the centaur model--upon which so many towering philosophical and political *weltanschauungen* have been erected are, to say the least, highly questionable. Freud (1933) himself half recognized this when he wrote that "The theory of the instincts is so to say our mythology" and admitted that "Instincts are mythical entities, magnificent in their indefiniteness" (p.95). His statement that whereas "In our work we cannot for a moment disregard them, yet we are never sure that we are seeing them clearly," surely justifies our skepticism concerning the psychoanalytic "biologizing" of human passion. There is no need to deny the embodied nature of our humanity or the existence of certain innate or "instinctual" behavioural patterns released by environmental stimuli of various types (Bowlby, 1969-80), in order to reject the outmoded biologism of Freud's hydraulic conception of the instinctual drive grounded in a somatic source as the basis of human motivation.

Having attempted to preserve the instinct theory for a considerable time, I am familiar with the standard ploys. As many writers have pointed out (e.g., Fenichel, 1945, ch. 2; Waelder, 1960, ch. 5; Parsons, 1962; Hartmann, 1964, ch. 4; Carveth, 1977a; 1977b), Freud did not use the German word *instinkt* implying fixed and unchangeable animal "instinct" but the term *trieb* conveying the idea of an impulse or drive influenced in aim and object by the social environment. Certainly psychoanalysis is all about such social, especially familial, influences upon the "instinctual drives." However, when Freud (1915a, p.122; 1915b, p.177) states that an instinct, though having its source somewhere in the body, can only be known via its attached mental representation, we are led to suspect that the mental representation which supposedly betrays the presence of an instinct might well be the essence of the phenomenon: that what Freud refers to in his concept of instinct is nothing other than motivated human action of an affective sort carried on either overtly or in imagination and either consciously, preconsciously, or unconsciously.

Freud described human passion and desire as if they were fundamentally grounded in biologically-based drives of sex and aggression. Owing to his commitment to nineteenth-century scientific materialism and positivism (Yankelovich and Barrett, 1970), Freud sought to "materialize" human purposes by somehow grounding them in physiology. While recognizing that many of such "instinctual drives" were entirely learned or acquired and describing the interpersonal situations and events that shaped them in aim and object--and, in addition, implicitly understanding that a range of our passions arise from our existential predicament as time-binding beings burdened with consciousness of our mortality (Freud, 1930)--Freud still felt the need to speculate about their alleged somatic sources and claim for them the sort of material as opposed to psychological reality that, despite his establishment of the idea of *psychic reality*, remained for the positivist the only form of the really real. While this approach appeared to have a certain plausibility insofar as the sexual drive was concerned given conventional (but in my view highly questionable) assumptions about the physiological sources of human sexuality, it ran into serious difficulty with respect to the aggressive drive for which no convincing somatic sources could be identified.

In recent years, the argument has been revived (e.g., Bettelheim, 1982, among others) that the view of Freud as a positivist, mechanist, and reductionist is a distortion of his essential humanism brought about by Strachey's attempt to transform Freud's "soul-study" into a medically respectable positive science of psychoanalysis by the miracle of free translation. The argument has its appeal, but it won't wash. Although I myself have supported the theoretical strategy of deliteralization or metaphorization of concretized psychoanalytic concepts (Carveth, 1984b), from a scholarly point of view it is simply too easy to set aside Freud's positivism, materialism and mechanism in favour of a humanistic reading which interprets such concepts as the instinctual drive metaphorically as referring to human passion and desire in the broadest sense. This, no doubt, is what Freud *should* have meant and, perhaps at times, what he did mean. But it is nevertheless quite clear that he often meant his materialistic metapsychology to be taken quite literally. Like the cultural milieu in which he worked, Freud suffered from the problem of "two souls in one breast": the romantic-humanist lived in continual tension with the positivist-reductionist. The result is the "mixed discourse" (Ricoeur, 1970) or "broken speech" of psychoanalysis.

Far from being a merely semantic distinction and philosophical nicety, this difference between the conception of human motivation as biologically

based instinctual drive or as meaningful personal action is theoretically crucial and has wide-ranging implications. Take as merely one example the nature of human sexuality. It is evident that the conventional way of thinking of sexuality as primarily a bodily, animal, biophysiological and instinctual phenomenon, rather than as a primarily mental or psychological process, has obscured the fact that in this metaphor-mad, symboling animal, far from "bubbling up from the body," human sexuality is more accurately a process that "trickles down from the mind."

Contrary to the misleading implications of such psychoanalytic terms as those of the oral, anal, phallic and urethral *zones*, rather than *meanings*--terms that imply that a human passion arises from its somatic vehicle rather than expressing itself through the body as the instrument of a human project (Sartre, 1943; Fairbairn, 1952)--it is quite evident that the real somatic origin of Eros in *animal symbolicum* (Cassirer, 1944) lies somewhere in the cerebral cortex. For therein lies the material foundation for the multifaceted erotic imagery and complex and subtle personal and interpersonal plots, in the service of which we enlist our bodies as props, and so exploit their capacity for sensual and sexual responsiveness in our pursuit of purposes that range from the temporary loss of an intolerable individuality, to aggressive domination or masochistic submission, to friendly play, the reproduction of the species, or the pursuit of self-esteem.

Fortunately, Freud and his followers have always demonstrated a healthy capacity to disregard the biologistic metapsychology in the interests of psychoanalytic psychology and to prevent abstract theoretical preaching from seriously hampering concrete analytic practice. If this were not the case and analysts actually took the instinct theory seriously, analysis would necessarily cease whenever it encountered what it believed to be the manifestations of an irreducible and unanalyzable instinctual drive. The hermeneutic psychoanalytic enterprise, this relentless probing for subtle and secret meanings and motives would, if metapsychology were valid, be rendered futile in the face of the instinctual "bedrock" (Freud, 1937) of human nature.

But the fact that metapsychology is antianalytical has seldom deterred the analyst from analysis. Hence, rather than interpreting a young man's passion for a married woman as a natural expression of the sexual instinct, analysis is alive to possibilities such as that what appears to be a sexual passion for a woman might, in addition, reflect an aggressive aim toward the cuckolded man, or even a homosexual wish for sexual contact with the man by means of the bridge provided by the woman he possesses. Things are often not

what they seem. Aggression often disguises itself as love and vice versa. Psychoanalytic psychology teaches us this; psychoanalytic metapsychology obscures it.

Despite their many other differences, theorists as diverse as Sartre (1939; 1943), Fairbairn (1952), Lacan (1977) and Kohut (1977) all tend to agree that the human body, rather than being the natural source of instinctual drives, is an ensemble of means for the expression of diverse ends--some of which may entail the most "unnatural" uses of this vehicle or even its destruction. Far from being instinct-dominated creatures, human beings are meaning- and metaphor-ridden animals (Bruyn, 1966; Burke, 1968; Carveth, 1984b; Duncan, 1968; 1969; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Mills, 1939; 1940)--which is to say that communication and communion are constitutive of the very structure of *Dasein* or human *being-in-the-world* (Heidegger, 1927). While certainly *also* seeking pleasure, the human subject is nevertheless--at least in health--essentially oriented toward the other and fundamentally motivated to seek attachment (Bowlby, 1969-80) to a good or "optimally responsive" (Bacal, 1985) object or "selfobject" (Kohut, 1977) as the essential foundation for a viable sense of self. In this view, the Freudian model of the person as an essentially narcissistic pleasure-seeker reluctantly oriented toward others as necessary means to the end of instinctual discharge is a description of a pathological state of disintegration--however accurate such a picture of our "fallen" humanity may be.[3]

Despite his so-called "return to Freud," Lacan (1977) in one sense offers what amounts to a self psychology through his "narcissization" of human desire. For Lacan, unlike Freud, desire is not for the object as a means to the end of consummatory instinctual discharge. On the contrary, as distinct from organic "need" human desire is "the desire of the other"--that is, my desire is to be desired by the other, to be, as it were, the apple of his/her eye. This is not essentially different from Fairbairn's object-relations psychology in which "libido" is fundamentally object-seeking, or from Kohut's psychology of the self in which the subject's desire is fundamentally for mirroring and empathically attuned responsiveness from its "selfobjects".

III

It is interesting that, while overtly embracing Freud's concept of the death instinct in his metapsychological explanations of the roots of human self-

destructiveness, most of the illustrative clinical material presented by Menninger (1938) in *Man Against Himself* seems clearly to emphasize the role of what he himself calls "thwarting" in the early development of the patient. He writes that:

> Unendurable thwartings lead to unendurable resentment which, lacking the opportunity of a justification or the proper psychological set-up for external expression, is repressed, directed inward, absorbed for a time by the administration of the ego but with the ultimate result of an overtaxing of its powers of assimilation. This is an elaborate way of saying that unmastered self-destructive impulses insufficiently directed to the outside world or insufficiently gratified by external opportunities are reflected upon the self, in some instances appearing in this form of constantly maintained anxiety which, in the end, produces the very result which had been anticipated and feared, namely annihilation (p.319).

Naturally, Menninger himself would most likely have said that such thwartings are not themselves the *cause* of the aggression which, turned against the self, results in self-destruction of various types. For him, thwarting merely interferes with the normal binding of Thanatos by Eros, resulting in an environmentally caused failure of instinctual fusion resulting in unmodulated hate derived, not from thwarting but from the death drive, being turned against the self. However, it is possible to argue, against Menninger, that the environmental failure or thwarting of the child does not merely lead to failure to bind innate aggression, but evokes aggression as a secondary reaction to frustration. This, of course, is the frustration-aggression hypothesis which, in varied forms, informs the thinking of many of those who reject the Freudian and Kleinian notions of a death drive and of a primary aggressive drive.

In re-reading Menninger one is reminded that there exist two, quite distinct, versions of the classical drive-structure theory. Even after Freud embraced the death-instinct in 1920, the mainstream Freudian tradition continued to view the sexual drive as the main focus of repression and symptom formation (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983, p.32). As late as 1926 Freud could write: "We have always believed that in a neurosis it is against the demands of the libido and not against those of any other instinct that the ego is defending itself" (p.124). In contrast, Menninger (1963) and his co-workers

clearly saw sex as more the solution than the problem. Like the later Klein (1986), Menninger felt that the real root of humanity's difficulties lies in human aggression, in the problem of hate. Sex, for Menninger, only becomes a problem when it is pathologically infected by aggression. The antidote to hate is love. In Menninger's version of the drive-structure model the defences are directed primarily against aggression or aggressively infected sexuality.

Regarding Freud's (1920) relatively late introduction of the death-drive and its outward manifestation as the aggressive drive, Menninger et al. (1963) write:

> This sudden and belated discovery of evil is a psychological phenomenon Freud never analyzed. Its most famous exemplar was Gautama Buddha, from whom--according to the story--the sight of evil was artificially hidden until the day of his enlightenment. The British philosopher C.E.M. Joad, who long held to the hypothesis of a single life force, recorded his similar insights thus: "Then came the war, and the existence of evil made its impact upon me as a positive and obtrusive fact. All my life it had been staring me in the face; now it hit me in the face.... I see now that evil is endemic in man...." (p. 115).

In overtly embracing a drive theory of sex and aggression on the level of metapsychology, even while unintentionally offering some clinical support for a theory of environmental failure or thwarting as the cause of psychopathology, Menninger remained caught on the horns of the nature/nurture dilemma that has bedevilled psychoanalytic thinking from the beginning and still haunts it today, despite almost universal acknowledgement that it rests on a false dichotomy. Menninger et al. (1963, pp.119-120) review five theories of human nature ranging from, at one extreme, the monistic theory of human nature as all-bad (which they attribute rather unfairly to Hobbes); to, at the other extreme, the monistic theory of humanity as all-good (the "See no evil/Hear no evil/Speak no evil" position) which they imply no known theorist has been so naive as to embrace.

Between these paranoid-schizoid (all-bad or all-good) extremes and moving toward the depressive position (Klein, 1986), or that of self and object constancy (Mahler et al., 1975), but with a marked bias toward the all-good

pole, lie two environmentalistic approaches which I do not see their grounds for distinguishing. In each of these, human destructiveness is acknowledged but explained (or explained away) on the basis either of a theory of the corruption of the natural goodness of the "noble savage" by society as in Rousseau and Marx--the question as to how society becomes corrupt when human beings are naturally good being left unclear--or through a theory which views the child's destructiveness as entirely secondary to frustration, abuse or deprivation.

In these types of environmental or sociological reductionism and their psychoanalytic counterparts (the works of Fairbairn [1952], Guntrip [1971] and Kohut [1977] come to mind, with the writings of Miller [1984] representing the almost monomaniacal extreme of this tendency), the fact of evil is seen, but its inevitability and deep roots in our very nature are denied. Rejecting such naively environmentalist theories of aggression in which "there are no bad boys, only bad parents" (p.120), Menninger et al. (1963) embrace the Freudian and Kleinian position of instinctual ambivalence, Eros versus Thanatos, which Freud (1937) himself acknowledged to be a modern equivalent of the pre-socratic philosopher Empedocles's theory of the universe as the outcome of the clashing forces of *philia* (love) and *neikos* (strife).

The strength of Freud's, Klein's and Menninger's position on this issue lies in its rejection of the sort of theoretical splitting which regards human nature as either all-bad or all-good. Unfortunately, it grounds its vision of human ambivalence (both good and evil) in a dual drive theory which, from a Judeo-Christian point of view, is unacceptable both in its biologism and in its gnostic dualism or Manichaeism. Naturally, I am not arguing that instinctual dualism is unacceptable because it deviates from biblical teaching. Rather, it is that, in demythologized form (Bonhoeffer, 1953; Bultmann, 1958; 1961; Macquarrie, 1973; Tillich, 1952), the Judeo-Christian anthropology with its implicitly existential understanding of the human situation as irreducible to the terms of heredity and environment is simply more subtle, sophisticated and insightful, on psychological and philosophical grounds alone, than any psychoanalytic anthropology I know of--except for certain readings of Kleinian and Lacanian theory which are to a degree at least compatible with an existential, if not a specifically biblical, framework.

According to Nietzsche (1886; epigram 146): "Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And when you look into an abyss, the abyss also looks into you" (p.89). Hence, one

ought to choose one's enemies carefully, for in the course of the ensuing struggle, one inevitably comes to resemble them. There is no doubt that in their attempts to preserve monotheism ("Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord" [*Deut*.6:4]) against the dualistic Manichaean heresies, various tendencies within both Judaism and Christianity came to be infected to various degrees with the very dualism they sought to reject. One need only think for a moment of those tendencies in which the devil, rather than being merely a fallen angel, takes on a status almost equal in power to that of the Almighty; and in which the human being, rather than being created "in the image of God" with a body that, as a part of the creation, is fundamentally good is conceived, on the contrary, as an intrinsically corrupt creature--not through a fall into sin through the prideful exercise of free will as the Bible essentially maintains, but (in the gnostic distortions) through his very involvement as a material and biological being in a creation that is itself represented as essentially evil.

Setting such gnostic distortions aside, the main tendency of Judeo-Christianity is clearly discernable (Niebuhr, 1941). However, in tracing human destructiveness to the essentially asocial and antisocial sexual and aggressive drives (which even as *trieb* as opposed to *instinkt* Freud [1915a] insists arise from a somatic source); in its mind/body dualism and centaur model of man in which, as in Plato, reason (ego) and morality (superego) constitute the human rider who seeks to tame the appetites of its "beastly" counterpart (id); in its representation of the system unconscious or the id as "a chaos, a cauldron full of seething excitations" (Freud, 1933, p.73), a kind of swamp needing to be drained for the sake of civilization ("Where id was, there ego shall be. It is a work of culture--not unlike the draining of the Zuider Zee" [Freud, 1933, p.80]); and in its metapsychology (or metaphysics) of Eros versus Thanatos--Freudian psychoanalysis represents one of the major expressions of the gnostic heresy in our time. It represents a regression from the essentially more mature level of object-relations reflected in the Judeo-Christian anthropology which transcends both paranoid-schizoid splitting as well as dualism by recognizing both the fact and the inevitability of evil but, at the same time, subsuming it within a superordinate affirmation of the fundamental goodness of the creation, by understanding it (evil) as a consequence of a universal and inevitable "fall" from innocence into narcissism intrinsic to the emergent, existential structure of human selfhood.

Freud's (1914) critique of narcissism, his insistence upon the necessity to develop beyond narcissistic object-choice and to achieve a capacity for mature object love (for "in the last resort we must begin to love in order not

to fall ill, and we are bound to fall ill if ... we are unable to love" [Freud, 1914, p.85])--together with his related commitment to science which also represents a demand to overcome narcissism, to distinguish between fantasy or projection and empirical actuality, between what we want to believe about reality and what is really real (Freud, 1933, lecture 35)--might well have constituted the basis for his understanding of human destructiveness. Unfortunately, instead of developing a conception of aggression (as distinct from vital assertion) as composed essentially of narcissistic rage in the face of both the unavoidable narcissistic injuries intrinsic to the human condition as such, together with the *surplus frustration* arising from environmental failure of various types, he opted instead for a drive-theoretical explanation which essentially biologizes human destructiveness and attibutes it to our animality rather than our humanity.

Despite attempts to displace the blame for Freud's regrettable biologism unto Strachey's translation of *trieb* as "instinct" instead of "drive," the fact remains that the *triebe* are, for Freud (1915a), ultimately grounded in a somatic source. The very concept of the *triebe* as existing on the "frontier" between the psyche and the soma is an instance of Freud's dualism and his centaur model of man: the aims and objects represent the human side and the somatic source the animal. However shaped in aim and object by social influences, human motivation, in this view, including human destructiveness, arises fundamentally from the body--that is, from our animality.

By way of contrast, in a Judeo-Christian anthropology informed by and demythologized in terms of Heideggerian (1927), Meadian (1934), and Lacanian (1977) perspectives, both human desire and destructiveness are seen to arise primarily from our uniquely self-conscious, ontological predicament as language-animals who, beginning with entry into the symbolic order (certainly by eighteen months, if not considerably earlier), must live with the often painful awareness of our separateness, vulnerability, incompleteness and essential helplessness in the face of ultimate extinction. There is no need to resort to varieties of existentialism which as one-sided philosophies of free will deny the biological, environmental and unconscious determinants of human experience and behaviour, or which embrace a nihilistic attitude of despair which denies the possibilities of human love, joy and fulfillment--thus privileging crucifixion over resurrection, Good Friday over Easter Sunday--in order to recognize the origin of many of our uniquely human passions and desires, as well as of our various defensive strategies, in the tragic and fearful dimension of human existence.

IV

I find it curious that Karl Menninger, whose psychoanalytic writings frequently contain a Christian subtext, should in his theory of evil have fallen into a fundamentally non-Christian, gnostic dualism which departs from Judeo-Christian monotheism both by embracing two "gods" (drives, principles or forces) of equal power and by abandoning the biblical understanding that, unlike the fundamental goodness of the creation, evil is not a primary phenomenon, but represents humanity's "fall" from the good brought about by the sin of pride, described in psychoanalytic discourse (Freud, 1914) as (secondary) narcissism, the overcoming of which in favour of mature object love it is our developmental task--and our moral responsibility--to achieve.

I assume it was Menninger's lifelong devotion to Freud that distracted him from what, in certain contexts, he saw clearly enough. For example, writing in *Man Against Himself* of the forces which inhibit our capacity to love and in this way mitigate our hate, Menninger (1938) writes that:

> First and foremost among the inhibitions of the erotic development are the stultifying and deadening effects of narcissism. Nothing inhibits love so much as self-love and from no source can we expect greater ameliorative results than from the deflection of this love from a self-investment ... to its proper investment in outside objects. ... Narcissism chokes and smothers the ego it aims to protect--just as winter protection applied to a rosebed, if left on too late in the spring, prevents the roses from developing properly, or even growing at all. Thus again psychoanalytic science comes to the support of an intuitive observation of a great religious leader who said, "He who seeketh his own life shall lose it but whosoever loseth his life for my sake shall find it." We need only read in place of "for my sake" an expression meaning the investment of love in others, which is presumably what Jesus meant (pp.381-2).

In refering to a convergence between psychoanalytic science and Christian

religion, Menninger points to the so-called U-tube theory of inverse libidinal investment in objects or the ego which Freud held during the years between 1914 when his original instinctual dualism (sexual versus self-preservative or ego-instincts) broke down on the shoals of narcissism until his introduction in 1920 of his final instinctual dualism of Eros versus Thanatos. Thus, for six years Freud was forced, despite himself, to abandon his preferred instinctual dualism or Manichaeism for a libidinal monism and an ethic privileging object love over narcissism which has clear parallels to the Judeo-Christian monotheism toward which, for a host of personal reasons (Vitz, 1988), he was intensely ambivalent.

The U-tube theory has been the subject of much criticism. Fromm (1947, pp.123-145), for example, argued that, contrary to its implication that the more one loves oneself the less able one is to love others, the facts are just the reverse: only the person who loves himself is able to love others. However, this dispute is easily resolved if one posits that whereas Fromm is speaking about something like the true self (Winnicott, 1960) and about a sense of authentic self-worth, Freud (1914) is speaking about libidinal investment, not in the true self, but rather in the self-image.

Even after the introduction of the structural theory in 1923, the term "ego" in Freud's writings often referred, as we have seen, not to the hypothetical construct of a control apparatus, or to the self, let alone the authentic self, but rather to what Lacan (1977, ch.1) referred to as the "specular ego" or self-image. If, giving Freud the benefit of the doubt, we interpret him to mean that the more energy and attention we feel we have to devote to shoring up or polishing our "images" (because, as we would now say, they are so prone to devaluation or fragmentation) the less we have available to invest in other people, then his U-tube theory begins to take on a good deal of plausibility. In theological terms, it is even recognizable--like Lacan's Catholicized version of psychoanalysis--as entailing a critique of the idolatry of the self reflected on the individual level in narcissism and, on the collective level, in the anthropocentric outlook characteristic of secular humanism.

Menninger's critique of narcissism is founded on the idea that "when love is largely self-invested the gradual flow of the softening, fructifying essence of the erotic impulse over the stark arms of aggression ... is stayed" (p. 382). In other words, self-invested libido is unavailable to bind and neutralize the aggressive instinct. Interestingly, however, Menninger's own metaphors are suggestive of a very different, non-instinctual view of the origins of human destructiveness. He writes:

> It is as if the personality were like a growing tree over whose dark bare branches as we see them in winter there creeps the soft verdure of spring and summer, clothing the skeleton with living beauty. But were such a tree to be so injured near the base that the sap flowed out in large quantities to promote the healing and the protection of this stem injury, an insufficient supply would be left for the development of the foliage of the branches. These, then, would remain bare, stark, aggressive--and dying, while the sap fed and overfed the basal wound (p.382).

Here, in addition to suggesting that narcissism prevents love from neutralizing hate, is the suggestion that hate itself stems not from an aggressive instinct, but from a basal wound to the self which narcissism seeks to cover and to heal. Here, of course, we are in the domain of the contemporary "psychology of the self" (Kohut, 1977).

Now I, for one, am just as happy Menninger did not exchange his drive theory of aggression for such an environmentalist alternative. For while I reject Freud's and Menninger's biologism, I find the opposing environmentalism equally one-sided and naive. Such is the grip which binary oppositional thinking has over the human mind, that an enormous difficulty is faced by anyone who seeks to get psychologists to comprehend a theory of human nature which refuses not only to embrace nature at the expense of nurture, or vice versa, but which also refuses the pseudo-sophistication of the *both* nature *and* nurture position, in favour of a theory which, while not denying the contributions of either biological or environmental factors, resorts to an *existential* perspective which posits a uniquely human situation or predicament irreducible to heredity and environment.

I take this as evidence that, despite our arrogance, we psychosocial scientists are as yet far from achieving the sophistication of the theological tradition we have tended to despise. Menninger himself, who certainly did not despise this tradition, was nevertheless unable to fully utilize its insights in a psychoanalytic context. If he had, he would have been forced to abandon both his explicit metapsychological embrace of the biologistic theory of the death drive, as well as his implicit clinical leaning toward an environmentalistic theory in which aggression is merely a secondary reaction to early "thwarting" of the child--as well as any pseudo-

sophisticated explanations in terms of the interaction of heredity and environment (the both/and position which, while refusing to privilege one pole of the dichotomy over the other, fails to transcend the binary opposition)--in favour of the Judeo-Christian understanding of sin.

V

In the biblical perspective, human destructivenss has little to do with man's animality. Despite our misrepresentation of human evil as "bestial" the fact is that animals are incapable of evil--precisely because they lack the cognitive capacity for that uniquely human type of empathy which, in enabling one to imagine what it is like to be the other, establishes the psychological basis for both sadism and sainthood. Nor does human destructiveness arise from the natural drives of the body which, however assertive they may be in the service of survival, do not primarily seek the destruction or suffering of the self or others, although these may at times be unavoidable byproducts of survival aims. Neither, fundamentally, does it have to do with environmental thwartings which, although certainly exacerbating the problem, do not cause it.

Rather, in the biblical framework, human destructiveness is intimately associated with the problem of idolatry, the worship of images (*Deut*.5:8) of the self or others. In this view, sin arises from a universal and inevitable "fall" into narcissism (idolization of the self or the other) which every child is fated to undergo, even in the presence of the most "optimally responsive" (Bacal, 1985) "selfobjects" (Kohut, 1977) imaginable. It entails the turning away from or misuse of the distinctively human capacity for empathy with others in favour of the idolatrous worship either of the self (the manic, grandiose and sadistic strategies) or of an idealized other (the hysterical, depressive and masochistic solutions).

Freud's (1914; 1915a) concept of secondary narcissism; Klein's (1986) conception of the manic defence and the subject's relative imprisonment within its own projections; Lacan's (1977) conception of narcissism as fixation upon the "specular ego" formed in "the mirror stage"; Winnicott's (1969) conceptions of infantile omnipotence and the early period of relations with "subjective objects" prior to access through relations with "transitional objects" to the world of "objective objects"; and the early Kohut's (1971) conception of a "grandiose self" all suggest the inevitability of the egocentric illusion of the self as the centre of the universe--"His

Majesty, the Baby, as once we fancied ourselves to be" (Freud, 1914, p.84). Even if we reject, as I do, the notions of primary narcissism and primary omnipotence--for, in my view, *ignorance of impotence is not omnipotence*--in favour of a view of grandiosity and omnipotence as secondary, manic defences in the face of early anxieties of various types, we may nevertheless insist on the inevitability and universality of such defensive omnipotence, or its inversion in the idealization of the other rather than the self, in the face of the unavoidable anxieties intrinsic to the human condition, however much these may be intensified by environmental or selfobject failure of various types.

Here we have the beginnings of a psychoanalytic interpretation of what in religious myth is the doctrine of "original sin." This has always referred to the sin of pride or self-centredness--narcissism on the individual plane and anthropocentrism on the collective. Of course, what needs to be added to this account is recognition of the fact that in addition to the traditionally "masculine" pattern of idolatrous worship of the self (god-playing), there is the traditionally "feminine" strategy of defensive idealization (god-making) in which the god-image is transferred to an idol to whom the subject surrenders her agency and responsibility.[(4)]

When the idea of original sin is subjected to psychoanalytic demythologization and understood to refer to such idolatries of the self and others, it ceases to be "original" in any literal, developmental sense. For--*pace* gnostic Christians, Freudians and Kleinians--far from being sinful at the beginning, the infant is in a state of "original innocence," which I think is what is implied in the myth of Eden in the first place; it is "asleep in the bosom of the Father" or Mother (i.e., the early selfobjects). If in original sin the human creature either usurps the position of the Creator (Niebuhr, 1941), or subordinates the self to another creature as Creator, then from a developmental perspective it is clear that for either self-aggrandizement or self-abasement to occur it is first necessary for a self to be developed to be idolized or negated.

Although, since Stern's (1985) differentiation of several different "senses of self" the sense of a verbal self can no longer be equated with the self as such, there are nevertheless grounds for identifying the so-called "rapprochement" subphase of separation-individuation (Mahler et al., 1975) as a kind of "fulcrum" (Blanck & Blanck, 1979, p.72) in cognitive and emotional development.[(5)] If I had to pinpoint developmentally the normal, as opposed to the pathogenically premature (Tustin, 1986), timing of "the

fall," the period around eighteen months would appear to be the most likely candidate. The fact that Freud's (1920) observations of his grandson's *Fort!/Da!* game took place when the latter was at the age of eighteen months, which corresponds with Piaget's (1955) timing for the beginnings of symbolic functioning and the emergence of "object permanence" and with Mahler's (1975) timing of the "rapprochement crisis," strikes me as evidence for the important "existential" transformation that occurs around the time of the child's accession to "the word." ("In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" [*John* 1:1].)

In the thought of Mead (1934), the ability to "take the role of the other" and in this way discover the other as a subject, not merely an object, simultaneously enables one to discover oneself as an object (i.e., to become "objective") by viewing oneself, through empathy, from the standpoint of the other. For Mead, these capacities for role-taking and reflexive role-taking arise with and are dependent upon symbolic functioning. ("And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked" [*Gen.* 3:7].) Mead's analysis of psychosocial, as distinct from biosocial, communication on the uniquely human level of symbolic interaction has, in my view, provided the socio-psychological foundation for the biblical doctrine of charity. It is because being human necessarily entails the ability to take the role of the other that to refuse to be guided in one's treatment of others by one's capacity to imagine *being* them--that is, to identify with their feelings and to care--is the essence of sin.

VI

However inappropriately they theorize the insight in biologistic rather than existential terms, the mainstream psychoanalytic theories of Freud, Klein, Winnicott and Mahler at least enable us to understand that, however exacerbated by environmental failure, there is a basic level of disturbance that is an unavoidable feature of the human condition, even where parental selfobject responsiveness has been ideal. In contrast, the environmentalism of much contemporary post-Freudian and post-Kleinian psychoanalytic thinking has prevented it from recognizing the higher wisdom achieved in both the psychoanalytic and the biblical traditions in this regard.

The sad fact is that every human being is destined to undergo a kind of "fall from paradise," from an original state of innocence, faith and trust into some degree of existential anguish, self-consciousness, frustration, reactive

narcissistic rage and consequent persecutory anxiety or guilt leading either to a defensive pretention to omnipotence or a parasitic dependency, or both, in the face of the fearful reality of separateness and death. Even under the best circumstances imaginable, reality is sufficiently frustrating and frightening to generate both "masculine" defensive grandiosity (the pathological extremes of which are seen in narcissistic disorders) and "feminine" defensive clinging (the extremes of which are seen in "borderline" conditions), each of which must be transcended if healthy emotional development is to occur.

Whereas contemporary self and object relations theory offers understanding of the environmental conditions necessary for the transcendence of both defensive grandiosity and clinging and for development of confidence in the integrity, value and viability of the authentic self, it has tended to view the problems of the self as entirely pathological rather than existential. Since it downplayed or abandoned altogether the early Kohut's (1971) notion of a normal "grandiose self" that must experience optimal disillusionment,[(6)] self psychology, for example, has embraced an increasingly romantic outlook in which environmental failure is no longer seen as exacerbating or failing to alleviate a universally human problem but as the entire cause of the difficulty in the first place. Naturally, it attempts to mask the naivete of this position by stressing that some degree of environmental failure (and, hence, defensive grandiosity and dependency) is inevitable. However, this merely assists in the evasion of the deeper truth that, even if the selfobject environment were perfect, the reality of separateness and death is enough in itself to drive us more than a little crazy.

Self psychology recognizes the inevitability of empathic failure on the part of both the parents and the analyst, but its theory provides no adequate account of why such failure is inevitable. As it stands, the theory implies such failures result from the parents' or analyst's own pathology resulting from his caretakers' failures of him, and so on back through the generations. In contrast, a psychoanalytically demythologized version of the Judeo-Christian doctrine of "the fall" accounts for this inevitability, but not in terms either of environmental or biological reductionism, but rather in light of our uniquely human condition and of the existential structure of human selfhood.

There is a sense in which self psychology has failed as yet to achieve the depressive position. Lacking any tragic perspective--despite Kohut's (1977) reference to the psychology of "Tragic Man"--it remains caught up in an

excessive, paranoid-schizoid tendency to blame. For where "the fall" is not acknowledged, a "fall guy" (or girl) must inevitably be found. Of course, recognition of the tragic dimension of human existence in no way requires one to be blind to the ways in which inevitable human suffering fails to be mitigated or is made worse by the ways in which we chronically fail in our "response-abilities" to one another.

Summary

In contrast to the naturalistic mystification of the passions in biologistic terms by Freud and in environmentalistic terms by much of post-Freudian and post-Kleinian self and object relations theory, an existential psychoanalytic perspective might yet enable us to recall their true origin--above and beyond the "surplus frustration" characterizing individual lives--in the "passion" which it is the fate of each of us to have suffered and to have to suffer.

Notes

In: O'Neill, J. (Ed.) (1996). *Freud and the Passions.* University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, chapter 2, pp. 25-51.

1. The fact that, until fairly recently, a theory specifying the cause of neurosis as the sexual abuse of children has been known in psychoanalytic discourse as the "seduction theory" is not without significance.

2. The following section draws upon a previously published essay (Carveth, 1984a).

3. To say that we are essentially oriented toward the other, as both Meadian (1934) social psychology and various object-relations theories (Greenberg & Mitchell, 1983) insist, is in no way to deny or devalue the importance of solitude (Storr, 1988). It is merely to recognize, with Winnicott (1958), that the very "capacity to be alone" depends on having so internalized a positively responsive other that in solitude one does not *feel* isolated or uncomfortably alone.

4. It should go without saying (but obviously does not) that "masculine" and "feminine" are placed within quotation marks to indicate that they are not being employed here in any essentialist sense. While there is no necessary connection between being male and playing god, or being female and worshipping, as Gilligan (1982) has pointed out, fundamental attitudes and orientations of this type are profoundly en*gender*ed in our patriarchal society.

5. This is not the place to enter into a discussion of the critique of the idea of an early phase of undifferentiation between self and object which Freud's, Winnicott's and Mahler's thinking assumes. Whatever Freud may have meant by "primary narcissism" and Mahler by "autism" and "symbiosis," by "secondary narcissism" and the "subjective object" Freud and Winnicott do not mean to refer to absolute undifferentiation at all; they are refering to a state in which the *cognitively* differentiated object is *emotionally* experienced primarily through projections of the subject's own phantasies and self and object representations and predominantly in terms of the subject's pressing needs. And they mean to contrast this sort of narcissistic object-relation to one in which the subject is more able to get beyond such projections and egocentric demands for need-satisfaction and to recognize and make empathic contact with the real *otherness* of the object.

6. For the reasons given earlier, unlike the early Kohut (1971), I regard the grandiose self as a defensive formation, but also as both univeral and inevitable in light of the univeral need to defend against the frustrations and terrors of the human condition, even when these are not pathologically intensified by significant selfobject failure and other factors.

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