

THE DOUBLE METHODOLOGY IN THE STUDY OF PERSONALITY AND ITS DISORDERS*

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The purpose of this presentation is to demonstrate how a double methodology is adopted in the study of personality and its disorders, how the duality of this methodology is not recognized by many, and how for many others such a problem does not even exist, because they follow exclusively one of the two possible methods.

This dilemma does not concern only psychiatry and psychology but many other disciplines. In fields related to our own, perhaps only the anthropologists have made an accurate study of this problem (3, 8, 9).

I shall start with some very brief and general historical data which, although certainly well known to the audience, I must mention in order to lead to the main thesis of this paper.

Each body of transmitted knowledge is at the beginning a collection of data, a description of facts. Phenomena are observed, described and accepted for what they are without attempts being made to go beyond their appearance. Such readiness to accept things as they are is due, first, to the fact that the pioneers in any field have so much work to do in collecting data that they cannot do anything else, secondly, to the fact that they have not yet developed the means to go beyond apparent facts. Psychiatry, too, has gone through this collective and descriptive stage represented by the pre-Kraepelin era and, to a large extent, by Kraepelin himself.

It is already at this point, when an attempt is made to go beyond the descriptive stage, that a double line of approach, a double possible methodology presents itself. I shall follow here the neo-kantian approach of Dilthey (5) and Windelband (14) and point out that already at this stage any field of knowledge may proceed in two directions which may be called the *scientific* or *nomothetic* and the *ideographic* method.

Maybe a brief definition of the two methods is appropriate at this point. The scientific or nomothetic approach studies phenomena in order to abstract the laws which rule these phenomena. The knowledge of these laws is considered necessary to enable the

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student to interpret, to predict, and eventually to alter the course of the phenomena, if it is desirable to do so. This approach is more concerned with quantities than with qualities, more with categories than with the individual. The ideographic or historical approach deals more with qualities than quantities, with specific entities and with the sequence of events more than with laws and classes.

Being a physician, raised in a positivistic, biologic fashion, Kraepelin, like most of his contemporary colleagues, found it natural to orient himself toward the scientific method. The next step in the scientific method, after collection of data, is *classification* or *taxonomy*. Kraepelin did this job remarkably well. His classification of mental diseases has remained essentially the same to this day.

But science does not stop at the stage of classification. Even the stage of classification is to be considered a very primitive one. The pursuit of the scientific method requires the search of laws ruling the phenomena which have been described and classified. It requires the discovery of the causes of the phenomena, the finding of a construct within which the phenomena are placed in a state of necessary integration, so that each part may be subsumed from the rest of the construct. For instance, in chemistry, after the first stages of description and classification of the elements, laws or constructs were discovered, like Mendeleev's periodical table which permitted to interpret and to predict, at least partially, the properties of the elements.

The pursuit of this method in psychiatry has, as a whole, been extremely unsatisfactory. The pursuers of the scientific method first tried to find organic interpretations of mental disorders, mostly in the biochemical and histologic fields. Some results, like those obtained for such conditions as general paresis and Alzheimer's disease, must be considered very modest when viewed in relation to the whole field of psychiatry. The same modesty must be seen in relation to the organic types of treatment which, although achieving at times dramatic results, must be adjudged symptomatic.

Researchers could have followed the scientific method at a psychological level and some of them attempted to do so, although not with great success. Watson's behavioristic approach which, at first, seemed to lead to great achievements, was eventually recognized as very limited. In its attempt to reduce everything to quantitative data, it omitted entirely the study of the most im-

portant aspects of the psyche, such as, consciousness and subjective experience.

Freud actually revolutionized the methodology in psychiatry and psychology. Unlike his predecessors and contemporaries, he was not so much concerned with how things are, but much more with how things come to be what they are. Freud was very much interested not only in finding the previous cause of an event, but also the purpose of the event. He did not follow only "mechanical causality" but also "teleologic causality." What the philosophers call teleologic causality became for the psychologist *motivation*. Phenomena like symptoms, dreams, defenses are seen as having a purpose, a goal, a certain direction which is part of the general directedness of life. Freud also gave emphasis in his approach to subjectivity of the experience rather than to the objectivity. Other authors, like Sullivan, Fromm and Horney have accepted and modified his methodology. But by revolutionizing the methodology, by accepting teleologic causality, by being interested primarily in development, by relying on the subjective experience, Freud actually abandoned the scientific method.

What Freud and the Neofreudians did was to apply the historical method to psychology and to call it psychodynamic. If we consider the following definition of history, given by the historian Bernheim (2) "History is the knowledge of the development of human beings in their activities as social beings," we understand immediately how this definition could also be applied to dynamic psychology and psychotherapy.

The dynamic therapist, like the historian, never treats an event as an isolated happening in time; he views every event as a result and as a cause of change. In this he does not differ from the scientist who sees in every event a ring in the endless chain of causes and effects. But whereas the scientist places the event into a category of similar events and tries to explain the event by attributing to it the properties which the whole category has, the psychodynamic therapist and the historian focus on the differences, on whatever is unique in the event.

But the uniqueness is generally connected with motivation, that vital characteristic which cannot be fully explained by mechanical causality. If Antony is madly in love with Cleopatra and thus alters the whole course of Roman history, and perhaps of Western civilization, the unpredictability of the motivation and of the con-

sequences has to be explained only in terms of the ideographic historical method and not of the nomothetic scientific.

As an offspring of the historical or psychodynamic method in psychiatry, one may consider another method of which we see early trends in Freud himself, in Jung, Fromm, and especially Horney. This is the characterologic method, which attempts to explain synthetically the inner life of the individual as an expression of a particular type of personality. More important than the temporal sequence are here the functional aspects of the traits and symptoms, all to be subsumed under a particular type of general functioning, or of personality. For instance, in the freudian context, the tendency to hoard is the expression of the anal character. The drive toward recognized success is, for Fromm, the expression of the marketing personality; the tendency to be submissive and self-effacing is, for Horney, the expression of a "moving-toward-people" personality. Mixed and therefore conflictful personalities are described by all these authors.

As the sociologist Mannheim (10) has emphasized, the characterologic method should not be confused with the classificatory or taxonomic. It does not put just a label on a person in order to classify it; it tries to go much further. It actually tries to explain the motivation, the whole behavior of the individual in terms of a global and enduring pattern, the personality, which gives a special stamp to every behavior manifestation of the individual.

This method corresponds in sociology and history to those methods which see every manifestation of peoples as related to a special type of society or culture, as manifestation of their *Weltanschauung*. In sociology, especially Mannheim, with his sociology of knowledge, has emphasized this point. In history, it corresponds to the interpreting of certain happenings as expressions of the prevailing, feudal, authoritarian, democratic system, etc.

There is no doubt that we owe a great deal to the introduction of the historical method into the field of psychiatry. With the (very important) partial exception of Sullivan, to whose complicated position we shall come back later in this lecture, we must say that the psychoanalytic profession has accepted the historical-ideographic method. The longitudinal character of the study, the temporal sequence, the detail, the motivation, the global outlook, the emphasis on the uniqueness, on the autonomy of the individual, are all characteristics which pertain to the psychoanalytic procedure.

But now, let us ask ourselves: Granted that these characteristics are very important and that their study is absolutely necessary, can we say that the only important method in psychology and psychiatry is the historical-ideographic one? Can we say that this method includes everything which is important to know about the human psyche?

To answer this question we must participate in the animated controversy between the advocates of the ideographic-historical method and the advocates of the nomothetic-scientific method. In what follows I shall try

first: to present the arguments in favor and against the two approaches, trying to maintain as much impartiality as I am capable of;

second: to present the position on this matter of the two major teachers of the William Alanson White Institute, namely Fromm and Sullivan;

third: to present some personal points of view, resulting especially from studies on schizophrenia.

The advocates of the scientific-nomothetic method feel that although it is true that psychoanalytic matters are important in their particularity, it is also true that nothing is completely known under the aspect of particularity. For instance, if John Smith is a man, I know many things about Smith, which will occur and which cannot occur to him, because John Smith is not only John Smith but also a man. I know, for instance, that sometime he is going to die, that he will never be affected by distemper because distemper is a disease which affects only dogs, etc. etc. The scientific method transposes to John Smith the characteristics of the category to which he belongs and, in this way, our knowledge of him is very much increased. The advocates of the all inclusive ideographic-psychodynamic method retort that whatever we learn from the scientific-nomothetic method is really not of historical, psychodynamic significance; it may refer to men only inasmuch as men are also things, but not to the humanity of man. This extreme position is taken by some historians. For instance, the well-known Spanish historian Ortega y Gasset (11) goes to the extreme of saying "that man has no nature; what he has is . . . history."

Another controversy between the scientific nomothetic and the historical-ideographic methods refers to the actual procedure of observation. The scientist feels that if his procedure is to have validity both the observer and the object under observation should

not change and, especially the object, should be in a state of isolation from disturbing variables. But in the psychotherapeutic situation, there is no isolation and both the patient and the therapist are in a process of change. As far as the patient is concerned, the change is actually what we want. As far as the therapist is concerned, we all know that the therapist is not only an observer, but a participant, who changes on account of the countertransference

To this criticism the advocates of the psychodynamic-ideographic method reply that it is actually this change, or rather changing, what is studied by the psychodynamic method. Whereas the scientific method crystallizes moments of times and studies them in a static cross-section situation, which actually does not exist but is abstracted in an artificial way, the ideographic-historical-dynamic method attempts to recapture the perennial change, the movement which is the essence of life. People and things always act upon one another; there is no state of isolation, of pure experimental condition, of pure culture, etc. . . . Even in the scientific procedure this is never achieved.

The critics of the psychodynamic method point out also some other limitations. The most important is that this method permits only the determination of degrees of probabilities but not of absolute certainty. For instance, if we know everything that is possible to know about the childhood and later life of a patient, we may make the statement that *probably* this patient, later in life, will develop schizophrenia or a homosexual pattern of behavior. We may say "probably" but not "certainly," with that certainty with which an astronomer, let us say, may predict an eclipse at such and such a time.

The historian also deals with probability and not certainty, when after studying the past and present conditions of a country, he predicts, let us say, a war or a revolution.

At most, the historian and the psychodynamic psychologist are able to determine the recurrence of certain patterns, like certain cycles of history which tend to repeat and certain patterns of behavior which tend to recur. But this recurrence is indicative only of a *relative empirical regularity*, not of universal laws, like for instance the law of gravity.

To this criticism the advocates of the psychodynamic method reply in two different ways, which are almost self-contradictory. One way consists in accepting the limitations of the ideographic-historical-psychodynamic method. All right, they say, let us ac-

cept these limitations of the historical method. In spite of these limitations, this method opens horizons which are psychodynamically very significant. The scientific method, too, has limitations. The scientific method produces a decomposition of the phenomena, which is artificial, a dissection which is the negation of life, a crystallization of the isolated elements. In the scientific procedure, we amputate the whole, by removing the accessory or concomitant parts, and never apprehend things as wholes and never see them in their totality. In its rigidity the scientific method follows certain dogmas which cannot be applied to the ideographic-psychodynamic method; it studies such problems as the following: *If* an event happens, *then* another event happens. In other words, it studies invariable associations. But in dynamic or historical matters, there are no invariable associations. Science tends to abstract from wholes only those properties which may be measured or to which can be attributed certain properties that numbers have. Only these measurable properties, that is, properties which may be translated into quantitative data, are studied by science which, therefore, has a limited scope.

But, even more than that, the extremist supporters of the ideographic-psychodynamic method feel that the scientific method tends to reduce the role of the therapist and of the historian to that of a technician. In a scientific world, it is only the discoverer and the inventor who are creative. All the others are technicians who repeat in a routine manner what the creative persons have introduced. In the historical, psychodynamic method, no procedure could be repeated in a routine manner. Every therapist and every historian is a creator.

As I mentioned before, there are, however, some people who defend the psychodynamic and historical method in a completely different way. These people state that the limitations of the psychodynamic-historical method are due only to the fact that we do not know all the variables. Were we to know all the facts, we could be able to predict how the patient is going to turn out, just as an historian would be able to predict a war with absolute certainty if he would know all the facts which were involved in the decision of waging a war, from the economy and military power of the enemy to the philosophic outlook of the rulers and the convictions of each individual citizen. But it is impossible to know all the facts. Such knowledge would require computations of millions or rather billions of variables which act upon one another. The solution of such

mathematical problems is not possible, in spite of cybernetics and computing machines. Instead of trying to find the algebraic sum of all the innumerable factors, the psychodynamic therapist and the historian select a few facts as representatives of quantitatively undeterminable conditions. For instance, certain incidents which have occurred in the childhood of a patient are taken as representative of the whole childhood, or of certain periods of the childhood.

In other words, people who emphasize the fact that we do not know all the variables, deny that the psychodynamic method is an historical one, and affirm that it is scientific. Freud himself thought that his method was scientific and would have resented a statement to the contrary. Like all the scientists, he was induced to formulate laws, similar to the laws formulated in mathematics and physics. For instance, he and his orthodox followers considered as valid as a law the statement that every psychoneurosis was derived from an unsolved Oedipus complex. Actually, this is a generalization but by no means a law. Freud should have said that in his Viennese culture, at the turn of the century, many neuroses were caused by what he called an unsolved Oedipus complex.

The staunch supporters of the ideographic method attack this reasoning. They feel that in the understanding of psychodynamic mechanisms it is not the mathematical knowledge of all the variables, which counts, but a certain emotional intuitiveness which also many artists, writers, and uneducated people possess. These staunch supporters of the ideographic method, direct their criticism to the founders of psychoanalytic schools, too, when they feel that these founders have abandoned the pure historical method. The critics state that psychoanalysts have vainly attempted to build general theories of personality and neuroses which would include all the facts. These analysts are comparable to some historians, like Spengler and Toynbee, who have tried to explain events as manifestations of underlying structures.

The builders of psychiatric and historical systems see in their creation an architecture which sustains all the things which they are investigating. The critics see in them a skeleton without flesh. The builders see in their system an enduring pattern and an interrelation of apparently unrelated things; the critics see in them an aesthetic illusion. According to the latter, big theories are artifacts. They have a certain beauty and therefore satisfy the aesthetic sense which searches for repetition, for cycles and symmetry in a world

which is instead under the continuous urge of creative and unpredictable drives. As Spengler's, Toynbee's and other builders' systems are destined to crumble, in similar way Freud's theory of personality, with its division in id, ego, and superego will collapse. The systems built by Jung, Horney, Sullivan, etc., will also collapse. In a realm of knowledge which is not scientific all the architectures will fall, only the individuality of the human being will emerge in the context of the human community. In other words, to use existentialistic terminology, there is no essence but only existence.

Now, that we have given an account of this controversy from a general point of view, we shall examine in particular the thinking of the William Alanson White School on this subject. What is Fromm's position? Fromm's position seems to me clear, unequivocal. He has enhanced completely the ideographic-historical method and has paid little attention to the scientific-nomothetic. If we study his writing carefully, we see that he has consistently taken this attitude. His fervor and zeal in his position make him integrate into his psychodynamic teachings a great deal of material coming from other predominantly ideographic subjects, like history and sociology. His emphasis on the uniqueness, on the individuality, his characterologic trends, are all features pertaining to the ideographic method. His approach to psychologic problems is predominantly ideographic. Let's take for instance his study of dreams. Fromm (6) maintains that what we should aim at is not an *interpretation* of dreams, as Freud did, but an *understanding* of dreams. This word "understanding" rather than "interpretation" reveals his whole allegiance to the ideographic method.

Plato, too, thought that the two highest forms of knowledge are understanding and interpretative reason. Understanding is the intuition of the single particular: interpretative reason, instead, according to Plato, is what put things into interrelated systems. Thus Fromm feels that the language of dreams and myths has to be understood in its own right, not interpreted, that is not related to or translated into another language.

Fromm's characterological trends, also are part, as we have mentioned, of his striving for unity, and are ideographic. His existentialistic leanings have to be interpreted in the same way.

It is much more difficult to determine the position of Sullivan. A man who speaks of selective inattention, of security operations, of parataxic distortions, is certainly psychodynamically, teleologically and ideographically oriented. However, Sullivan did not

entirely accept this historical-ideographic position. One thing bothered him, and indeed is one thing which has bothered all the thinkers since the dawn of our Western civilization. This is the problem of the individual, of the particular. Sullivan seems not to accept the existence of individuality; he, therefore, rejects an extreme ideographic position, like that of Fromm and Horney, and wants to remain in a scientific frame of reference. To what extent he rejects the concept of individuality, is difficult to ascertain. At times, he seems to mean that, since we are all in a system of inter-related and interpersonal forces, there is really no isolated entity or individuality; we are all participating in a large interrelated whole. Now, if this is all he means, this concept would be acceptable even to ideographic thinkers. But it seems that he means more than that; that he actually does not believe in the uniqueness of the participants in the interrelated whole, or in the uniqueness of the whole, or in the uniqueness of the whole personality. In fact, although Sullivan speaks of enduring patterns of response, he does not seem to believe even in the concept of total personality. He writes (13), "For all I know every human being has as many personalities as he has interpersonal relations." In the same article he speaks of the viewpoint of personal individuality as "an inescapable illusion." Thus Sullivan, like Freud, although advocating the historical-ideographic method, does not reject the scientific method. Like Freud, however, he remains somewhat obscure on this point, inasmuch as he cannot integrate the two methods.

Thus, as far as Fromm and Sullivan are concerned, we find ourselves in this situation: in Fromm's orientation we find consistency and clarification but, at the same time, simplification. We have to give up almost entirely one of these two methods. In Sullivan we find an acceptance of both methods, but not a complete integration of them. It could be that, had untimely death not interrupted his work, Sullivan would have made great advancements toward this integration.

If we think now of the current trends in the psychoanalytic schools of thought, we must conclude that up to now the ideographic method has been and seems to continue to be in the ascendancy. Since the beginning of the psychoanalytic era the greatest achievements have occurred in the field of ideographic psychodynamics. The orthodox Freudian school as well as the schools of Adler, Horney, Fromm and Sullivan himself, have enlarged the under-

standing of personality by following chiefly the ideographic method. The recent trends, which tend to incorporate existentialism and Zen-Buddhism, two extremist ideographic schools of thought, seem to tend more and more toward the ideographic method.

My own point of view in this matter has been influenced by anthropologists. Kroeber (8) states that anthropology is both science and history, and I feel that similar attitude must be taken for psychiatry, psychoanalysis and all the social sciences. Now, since there is no doubt that the ideographic method has won so many sweeping victories in psychoanalysis, a person who wants to maintain the point of view that both methods are important must concentrate on the defense of the nomothetic-scientific method which has been so badly neglected. This, of course, does not mean that the speaker attempts to minimize the ideographic method, but that he suggests an adoption of both of them.

We have already seen that the scientific method has failed in psychiatry because it has resorted chiefly to histology and biochemistry and has attempted to bypass the psychologic level, except for the pseudopsychology of behaviorism. But it is on a psychologic level that the scientific method must assert itself. In some psychoanalytic groups this need has already been felt for some time and pertinent studies have been made. In orthodox freudian circles these investigations have been grouped under the label of "ego psychology." In other words, these investigators have tried to force their findings within the framework of the libido theory. This seems to me a difficult task. I have found it more useful to adopt some conceptions of other authors, like Piaget, Cassirer and Susanne Langer, than those of the freudian ego-psychologists, and have consequently come to consider every psychologic phenomenon, like everything else in nature, under two different aspects: form and content (1).

Whereas the content is studied best by the ideographic-historical-psychodynamic method, the form is studied better by the nomothetic-scientific-epistemological method. Or, for those who retain orthodox freudian terminology, it may be said that whereas the content is better studied by id and superego psychology, the form is studied better by ego psychology. At present, in my opinion, it is in the study of the forms that the scientific-nomothetic-epistemologic method must reassert itself.

Let's take an example. A schizophrenic woman hears an

hallucinatory voice which tells her repeatedly, "You are a prostitute." If we try to interpret this phenomenon with the psychodynamic-historical-ideographic method, we shall learn many things, which are of the greatest therapeutic importance. First of all, we shall examine this phenomenon not in isolation but in relation to the whole life and whole personality of the patient. This study will tell us that before becoming overtly psychotic this person was self-effacing and self-accusatory. The voice is a symbolic reproduction of the voice of the significant adult who repeatedly injured the self-esteem of the patient. Before the psychotic outbreak, this voice of the significant adult was introjected and experienced as feeling of inadequacy and guilt. Now it is projected again into the external world. By being projected, this feeling of worthlessness and guilt is not experienced any longer as coming from the self, but from the symbolic persecutor. There is thus a defense, an attempt, although a vain one, to raise again the self-regard. An experience occurs which is a little more tolerable than what the patient underwent before. All this is very important and therapeutically valid. But is this interpretation all inclusive? Obviously not. For instance, it does not explain the fact that similar feelings of inadequacy and guilt which remain as such in the average person do not acquire this form. In the neurotic they may appear as compulsions or phobias. In the depressed patient they may assume the form of suicidal depression or of manic denial.

The answer that our patient was subjected to more violent traumata than the neurotic or that she had a specific constitutional vulnerability are not complete answers. As a matter of fact, I am sure that many of us are willing to accept both these explanations. We know from their life history that schizophrenics, as a rule, have been subjected to more violent traumata than neurotics, and, at our stage of knowledge, we cannot deny nor affirm a constitutional vulnerability. But this does not explain the essence of the hallucination. In other words, the psychodynamic-ideographic method will explain the psychic conflict but will not explain the form which the psychic conflict will assume. But it is the form that distinguishes the schizophrenic condition from others.

Now, what does the scientific study of the psychologic form "hallucination" tell us? Undoubtedly, not all that we would like to know; but a few important things which may open new avenues of research and may enrich our psychodynamic understanding. *First*, it tells us that a particular mental content which is susceptible

to being studied psychodynamically, has assumed the form of perception. A high conceptual construct, a large constellation of thoughts and feelings, in our case predominantly of guilt and self-effacement, has assumed the form of a simple perception, a real perception, not a faked one. In fact, electroencephalographic studies of experimentally induced visual hallucinations have demonstrated the same changes as when normal visual perceptions occur (4). Possibly, future researchers will demonstrate similar alterations for auditory hallucinations.

Second, the voice seems to the patient to come from the external world, in spite of absence of a real auditory stimulus. How is this to be explained? This point which seems so difficult to understand is, on the other hand, easy, if we see it under the category of the phenomenon of perception. As a matter of fact, not only in hallucinations but in every perception, there is a projection to the external world. For instance, in front of me I see a group of people. The visual perception of a group of people will occur in my cerebral cortex, in proximity of the calcarine fissure. At the same time, however, that my cortex perceives this visual image, the image of the group of people is by my nervous system projected to the external world. Now, why and how the perceiving baby learns to project his first experiences is not to be discussed here. The important thing is not that the hallucinatory voice is projected externally, since this projection is implied in the category of perception. What is important is the fact that an abstract complex has been perceptualized.

Third, how could it be that such a large abstract complex, like the one about disparagement, self-effacement and guilt, with which thousands and thousands of feelings and thoughts could be associated, has been reduced to a simple auditory perception, to the little sentence, "You are a prostitute."?

Here we must explain very briefly a fundamental concept. In the biologic scale we find that expansion of form goes together with expansion of content. From the simple level of unconditioned reflexes to the level of the high symbolic processes of the human being we find a crescendo in both form and content. Now, in psychopathology, especially as a result of the disintegrating effect of anxiety, we find the following characteristics: both forms and contents tend to assume less advanced types, for instance, infantile and immature aspects. But in conditions of more severe psychopathology, as in schizophrenia, not only both content and form

tend to assume simple types, but also there is a discrepancy between form and content, in the sense that the form acquires a much more elementary type than the content. For instance, we have seen that in our patient who hallucinates the complex of guilt and self-effacement has taken the type of a symbolic reproduction of an infantile expression, as far as the content is concerned, but has assumed a much more elementary type, as far as the form is concerned: a highly abstract concept and complex has become a simple auditory perception.

This discrepancy is seen very well in schizophrenia. In other conditions we see less discrepancy, inasmuch as both content and form withdraw. For instance, in phobic reactions the complicated and, to a certain extent, abstract phenomenon of anxiety becomes transformed in the simple mechanism of fear. Feelings of inadequacy and fears of interpersonal relations, like doubts about being loved, may become transformed into a concrete fear, like fear of horses. In other cases, anxiety about ability to love and to be loved becomes transformed into the simpler fear of sex. Children who cannot get love and affection from their parents and do not know what they want, say that they want toys. Neurotic parents also give food and toys for something else they cannot give. In these reductions of forms and contents we see a mechanism which is the opposite of the one described by Freud. In these cases, it is not the infantile strivings which on account of their own strength re-emerge violently with their original forms and contents, but it is the inability to live at a high level of interpersonal, symbolic relationships, which brings about a retreat to lower forms and contents. Similar things could be repeated for many unclassifiable patients, in whom, because of their inability to live in accordance with their potentiality, it occurs what seems a trivialization of life, or an emergence of "faulty habits," as Adolph Meyer would say.

But let us go back to our schizophrenic patient, the woman who hallucinates. What happens when the complex of disparagement, self-effacement and guilt is reduced to the sentence, "You are a prostitute?" Since, of course, at the level of perception, no abstract concepts are possible, a visual or auditory image must concretize the concept. Here the same thing occurs which occurs in dreams and in fine art. A perceptual fragment of the large context is what is experienced. The voice, "You are a prostitute" is a part of the experiential history of the patient, of the large context of scolding and self-effacement.



The unity of this context is thus broken. But here something of stupendous significance happens. Although the unity is broken, this little fragment, this infinitesimal part, will stand for the whole context. Thus the unity which was destroyed is immediately restored; it re-emerges symbolically because the little part is emotionally equivalent to the whole. The voice, "You are a prostitute" will stand for the whole life, for the whole tragedy of the patient. And from this point we could go into the fascinating field of symbolism, but time does not permit this.

From what I have said, I hope I have been able to express how important I think is the study of forms or formal mechanisms. The term "formal" is unappealing to many, inasmuch as it seems to indicate something static, conventional. But it is not really so. The study of forms leads us to the very vital, ever-surprising, ever-changing world of transformations. As I have indicated, many analysts are studying these problems today. Among these studies Schachtel's (12) works on amnesia are of the greatest importance. Schachtel, although not rejecting the freudian ideographic-dynamic point of view that we forget because we do not wish to remember, adds a new scientific-nomothetic approach. We do not remember our infantile experiences, because we do not have any longer the same forms, or as he says, the same schemata. In the Horney's school, Harold Kelman (7) has recently devoted a great deal of work to the study of forms.

I want to conclude this talk with the anticipation of a criticism. Some of you may feel that this division in form and content, science and history, is a repetition or a surrogate of Descart's division in body and soul, or one of the many derivatives of the cartesian impact on our Western civilization. Perhaps it is; I am not sure. I admit that unity rather than duality appeals to the aesthetic sense of man. Actually, the opponents of quality have nothing to offer. They reach unity just by dropping one of the two parts or denying its existence. I hope, too, that one day such synthesis will be reached, at least at a philosophic level. But at the present time a duality must be maintained at a psychologic level. It is in maintaining such a double approach that I see one of the main difficulties of the psychologist, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst today.

Borrowing a now popular metaphor from the philosopher Martin Buber, I should say that the student of personality today is like a man walking on a narrow ridge. If he leans too much on one of the two sides, he may fall.

I hope that the audience will have indulgence for my amateurish literary leanings, if I try to enlarge this metaphor and say that the student of personality is like a man on the narrow ridge of a mountain situated between two oceans. He may easily fall, but if he does not fall, he will see two infinite seas, perhaps ultimately fusing in the converging horizon.

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