

## HUMAN DESTRUCTIVENESS: AN ESSAY ON INSTINCT, FOETAL EXISTENCE AND INFANCY

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(This concerns the theme of 'Warfare and Nuclear Arms'. Ed.)

The city of Nagasaki for the last eleven years has protested against the 188 different nuclear tests, but her protests have been totally ignored. Under the pretension of doing it to avoid war, the nations which possess nuclear weapons have expanded them more and more each year.

The world's arsenal of immensely powerful nuclear weapons is capable of erasing several times the whole of mankind. The danger of a technical or supervisory miss leading to an accidental ignition of a nuclear war is a strong reality. Is mankind entering the road of self-destruction? Time is pressing.

(From Peace Declaration issued by the Mayor of Nagasaki, 9 August 1980.)

Let the boy try along this bayonet-blade  
How cold steel is, and keen with hunger of blood;  
Blue with all malice, like a madman's flash;  
And thinly drawn with famishing for flesh.

Lend him to stroke these blind, blunt bullet-heads  
Which long to nuzzle in the hearts of lads,  
Or give him cartridges of fine zinc teeth,  
Sharp with the sharpness of grief and death.

For his teeth seem for laughing round an apple.  
There lurk no claws behind his fingers supple;  
And God will grow no talons at his heels,  
Nor antlers through the thickness of his curls.

Wilfred Owen: *Arms and the Boy*

### INTRODUCTION

Human destructiveness is a problem of the present so pressing that all others pale beside it, Freud (1915, 1929, 1933), Glover (1946), Fromm (1974) among many others have tried to analyse its components in depth. Is it possible to take these attempts at understanding the origins of destructiveness a step further? Can the connexion with instinct be extended?

Freud (1915) noted that the classification of instincts represented purely an *heuristic* problem. The question is, 'Which classification of instincts enables us to grasp various psychological phenomena most easily and with least contradiction?'

One can start from the premise that every organism must have the instinctual equipment—the internal programming—for the organism that it is. One aspect of this programming relates the organism, as an example of its species, to the setting in which the species has evolved. The *species instincts* have arisen in an evolutionary setting and are governed by external physical time (chronos), the alternation of day and night, the cycles of the seasons, the rise and fall of the tides. This component changes only by some process of genic mutation and natural selection. The species instincts are thus an extension of the evolutionary organization of structural aspects of anatomy and physiology into structures of behaviour (Merleau-Ponty, 1942). They are

confined by the rigidity and necessity of organic form (Monod, 1970). Evolved from the past, they are projected by the repetition of generations longitudinally into the future. The species instincts are thus *diachronic* in nature and are experienced as *compulsion* and *necessity*.

Also written into the genetic code are capacities equipping the individual with a range of responses related to dimensional variations in the expected environment mapped out during the evolutionary history of the species. The individual is governed by experiential time (*kairos*). The individual can wait for the right time to mobilize a range of aggressive actions, to attack a foe, to spring while stalking prey for food, to make a sexual advance towards a selected mate. *Kairos* is measured by this sort of epochal commencement and completion (Jaques, 1984). These instinctive capacities present the individual (but not the species) with *choice* and thus with the power of *decision*. The individual finds in these instinctive capacities the power of lateral expression, of unique development. The individual instincts are thus *synchronic* in nature.

In biology, a simple example of this distinction between species and individual instincts is provided by web-spinning spiders. Every member of the sub-species, within narrow limits, spins a specific web and can do no other—this aspect of behaviour is marked by a rigidity of pattern and by necessity of purpose. On the other hand, each individual spider displays a capacity to choose suitable positions to erect their web—to the human eye often suggesting a remarkable topological sense and engineering skill. This capacity for interpreting the environment is underlined by the way some spiders will collapse a web to re-erect it another place if the results are not good.

However the limits of internal time, of *kairos*, of choice and decision are contained and shaped dimensionally by external time, by *chronos*. Ordinarily the two types of instincts harmonize and *enrich* each other, being at odds only when certain limits are exceeded on either side. When they are at odds, one set of instincts may be said

to *contaminate* the other. For instance, rigidity and necessity originating from the species instincts may contaminate choice and decision exercised by the individual, resulting in inappropriate compulsive or repetitive behaviour (Freud, 1920). Conversely, aggression originating from the individual instincts may be turned perversely against erotic purpose and structure (Bion, 1959).

This picture of the interplay of the species and individual instincts; of the interplay of the specific distinguishing qualities of one (rigidity and necessity) with the special distinguishing qualities of the other (interpretation choice and decision) can be used as a general model in biology and by extension in psychoanalytic theory.<sup>1</sup>

#### INSTINCT AND DEATH

Rilke said that 'death is the other side of life'—as the moon possesses a dark side which is still part of the totality of its being. This metaphor has more than poetic force. For it fits well with the observation by Schrodinger (1944) that life is defined by being anti-entropic. For entropy is the force of death—the universal leveller. All living things struggle against the tide of entropy but paradoxically the energy for life is derived from entropic process itself. Life is anti-entropic but it rests on entropy which is directed towards death. *Life feeds on Death to defy Death*.

If an intentional aspect of life is seen to be directed towards increasing the rate of biological entropy—speeding up the progress towards death—then this may be more logically regarded either as a *perversion* or as a '*giving-up*'—a surrender, a defeat, a depression. Freud's special use of the term 'death-instinct' must have contained some component of his personal struggle against cancer.

Freud (1920) saw life as emerging from inanimate matter and returning to it. He saw the conservative function of *instinct* as assuring that the organism shall follow its own path to death,

<sup>1</sup>The following analogy may illuminate the concepts of enrichment as against contamination between instinctual sources of psychical energy—in electrical engineering when two alternators are run in parallel (to supply say a grid system) out of phase potentials due to faulty design or operation set up wasteful secondary currents circulating *between*

the machines. In extreme cases these currents may rise to such an extent that one alternator attempts to 'capture' the other and drive it as a motor; the violent mechanical stresses and/or rise in temperature that result may destroy one or both machines.

and to ward off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those which are immanent in the organism itself. The living aim of the organism is 'to die only in its own fashion' (p. 39). Life consists of an energetic struggle to avoid this aim becoming short-circuited by contingent dangers. Taking 'instincts as tendencies inherent in living substance towards restoring an earlier state of things' (Freud, 1923, p. 259), the death instinct becomes that tendency in the organism which holds it to its own life pattern and *appropriate* death. In this sense it may be seen as a manifestation of the *life-drive* of the individual organism—in defence of its own life-pattern. To speak of *appropriate-death* instinct would keep the point in view:

This instinct is at work in every living creature and is striving to bring it to ruin and to reduce life to its original condition of inanimate matter . . . The death instinct turns into the destructive instinct when, with the help of special organs, it is directed outwards, on to objects. The organism preserves its own life, so to say, by destroying an extraneous one. Some portion of the death instinct, however, remains operative *within* the organism . . . if these forces are turned to destruction in the external world, the organism will be relieved and the effect must be beneficial. This would serve as a biological justification for all the ugly and dangerous impulses against which we are struggling (Freud, 1933, p. 211).

On the other hand —

Aggressiveness may not be able to find satisfaction in the external world because of real obstacles. If this happens, it will perhaps retreat and increase the amount of self-destructiveness holding sway in the interior . . . It really seems as though it is necessary for us to destroy some other thing or person in order not to destroy ourselves, in order to guard against the impulsion to self-destruction. A sad disclosure indeed for the moralist! (Freud 1933, p. 205).

Freud (1923) used the term *Eros* to cover the libidinal, sexual or life instincts which 'form living substance into ever greater unities, so that life may be prolonged and brought to higher development' (p. 258). Clearly this may be equated with derivatives of a *life-drive* devoted to the perpetuation of the *species*. The energy of *Eros* is at first directed narcissistically and then later involved in the libidization of sexual aim and object.

Later, Freud (1923) clouded this distinction

between instincts aimed at preserving the life pattern of the *individual* and instincts aimed at preserving the *species* by linking the two sets of instincts with pairs of opposites in other frames of reference, such as catabolism and anabolism, hate and love.

#### ORALITY, SADISM AND CONTROL

Sadistic *perversion* of either *Eros* or the appropriate-death instinct may be seen in terms of *libidization* of aggression or the '*aggressivation*' of erotic drives. Both may involve a '*turning against the self*' (Freud, A., 1936) to be expressed as masochism. Freud (1905) saw perversions as the negative of neuroses and Glover (1964) as the negative also of some psychotic formations. In this sense perversions may represent efforts at avoiding otherwise unmanageable anxiety and guilt. 'Judged by the common factor of aggression, sadism and masochism, although differing in ego and object relationship, nevertheless constitute a sort of continuum, the middle point of which can fairly be described as sado-masochism' (p. 154).

#### TRANSFORMATION AND METAMORPHOSIS

The French evolutionary biologist Alfred Giard (1898), for whom a personal chair had been created at the Sorbonne in 1887, drew a precise distinction between the usage in biology of the terms transformation and metamorphosis. One speaks of a *transformation* when the form of an animal or an organ changes gradually, thanks to the multiplication of the biological components and to their differentiation, the elimination of the old elements taking place uniquely by the interplay of secretory and excretory functions. *Metamorphosis* occurs when the change of form of the animal results from the destruction of an organ or a set of organs by the regression and death of the biological components of which they are composed and the utilization of the degenerated material thus produced for the reconstruction of new organs or for the further development of previously existing organs. In line with this distinction, *mutatis mutandis*, it seems appropriate to apply the term

*transformation* to the physical changes to the mammalian foetus that accompany the process of birth, while *metamorphosis* seems more accurately to reflect the type of endopsychic change required of the human foetus on being launched through the transition of physical birth into the complex process described by Mahler (1975) as *psychological birth*. (For further discussion see Blomfield 1985.)

#### PLACENTAL PARASITISM

Some years later Giard (1913), developed the notion of the mammalian foetus as a '*placental parasite*'.

In the very earliest evolution of mammalian sexuality, Giard envisaged an intermediate stage of obligatory parasitism being woven into the reproductory life cycle, one stage of the organism taking refuge in and feeding off the body of the preceding generation.

As Giard suggested, foetal life shows many of the qualities of parasitic existence, the foetus depends entirely on the placental attachment for fluid, food, gaseous and waste exchange and temperature control. The foetus has no cognizance of, nor ruth for, the host, its biological intentionality is directed solely towards survival.

At birth, the change is from solitary parasitism to potential social interaction; from submerged inwardly directed isolation to being an exposed, outwardly directed, air-breathing animal, dependent upon a flimsy and partial indirect control of its environment. Control is mainly through a potential to elicit appropriate responses from mother or mother-substitute. Most importantly, however one sees it, the foetal stage provides the matrix from which the subsequent stages of development are formed.

#### PLACENTAL PARASITISM AS A DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

Mahler (1975) has described the first post-natal developmental stage in terms of '*normal autism*', a brief period during which the newborn baby is protected by a '*stimulus barrier*' from being overwhelmed by a strange unstructured environment. There is a subsequent

'*hatching*' into a state of symbiotic interaction with the mother. This symbiotic union (Benedek, 1949) contains the work of '*separation-individuation*' carried out on many levels, and in many frames of reference, continuing through the sub-phases of '*differentiation*' and '*practising*' to a capacity for '*rapprochement*' and a '*consolidation*' of separate existence. Mahler (1975) brings the whole process under the rubric of '*psychological birth*'.

The topic of parasitism and parasitology appears to be under-represented in the literature of general biological and evolutionary theory. It is ignored also in most accounts of individual development. This gap may be significant and represent in fact a lacuna—a *béance*—in human consciousness. A *béance* which might lead one to suppose that the insulating function of the stage of '*normal autism*' (Mahler 1975) includes a defensive *foreclosure* (*repudiation*) (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973) which in effect defensively blocks off the *parasitic intentionality* of the foetal stage.

Lacan (1956) drew attention to a specific usage by Freud of the term '*Verwerfung*' as indicating a specific exclusion of a fundamental signifier from the subject's *symbolic* world. These repudiated signifiers do not appear as a 'return of the repressed' in ordinary parapraxes, slips of the tongue, unconscious acts and so on but may re-emerge in '*the Real*' as hallucinatory experiences. *Foreclosure* (*Repudiation*) is thus a specific 'gating' mechanism whose failure is involved in the origins of psychosis.

This type of defensiveness in relation to parasites is shown in the way they are frequently regarded with repugnance, or even horror. They are brushed off or expelled as far as possible, not only physically but also mentally. Where they are used as a source of metaphor often it is to illustrate a negative and destructive dependence regarded with repugnance. If *Life* is defined in energy terms as anti-entropic (Schrodinger, 1944) parasitism represents an evolutionary short-cut in the struggle against *Death*. A parasite breaks into the metabolic processes of the host and in effect steals some of the host's biological achievement, for example a blood-sucker steals nutrients already broken down into easily assimilable form, as well as structural aspects of the host in the form of the blood cells. Parasites thus use their prey or host to do

biological work for them; feeding on the biological energy of the host they increase the host's mean entropy and are thus in league with death.

On the other hand the life histories of parasites in general show an extraordinary dedication to their own *survival*, achieved by intricate pathways—seemingly bizarre to human consciousness. A high degree of specificity may be present—a biological 'strategy' evolving hinging on structural elements leading to increased probability of finding the right host at the right time. Parasitic intentionality is focused on survival at the expense of an 'other'—an 'other' whose individual identity is irrelevant beyond the question of suitability as host. No cognizance or ruth for the host as an individual is present.

Parasites are either devoid of certain biological capacities which they rely on the host to provide, or they undergo a progressive degeneration of faculties linked with their degree of parasitic dependence. At the same time parasites progressively modify the host's metabolism so as to reduce the host's capacity for rejection. It is common in the alternation of generations for a 'larval' form to be inserted between sexually reproducing adult forms. The fact that a parasite gives up faculties that might enable it to be free-living in exchange for dependence on the selected host represents a trade-off in entropy. In this sense Faust's bargain with the Devil is written into biology at the most primitive level (Blomfield, 1985).

#### CLINICAL PARASITISM

Two previous papers (Blomfield 1982, 1985) drew on the evidence from a clinical case where psychoanalytic exploration had revealed a cannibalistic impulse somehow to devour analyst/mother from the inside, so as to leave 'only a dead husk'. The internal parasitic, persecutory attack on the patient's own ego became externalized in the transference and revealed in a raw and primitive destructiveness.

Psychoanalysis may thus reveal that one part of an analysand's psychic structure can derive its energy parasitically from some 'other'—an aspect of the self or another individual.

Attention was also drawn to the fact that

parasitic relationships are commonly observed in everyday life and may be painfully obvious in clinical settings such as family, marital or group therapy. Some families show an extraordinary aptitude for attaching themselves to a number of social agencies at the same time, each agency remaining unaware of the other links. The attitude of 'until death do us part' lived out by one of the partners in some marriages is closer to cannibalistic need than to affectionate fidelity. As Bowlby (1969) has pointed out, dependency is a different dimension to attachment. This distinction may become very clear in group-analytic therapy (Foulkes, 1964) where awareness of the contrast between attachment and dependency becomes a mark of progress at the work-group level (Bion, 1961).

#### TWO DEVELOPMENTAL CRISES

A. *Instinctual metamorphosis* is the first of two primitive developmental crises whose interaction forms the thesis of this paper. From time to time, starting with Rank (1924) the '*trauma of birth*' attracts attention as a potential primary source of anxiety. Freud (1926) in his critical discussion of Rank's argument remarks that *the foetus* 'can only be aware of some vast disturbance in the economy of its narcissistic libido' (p. 135). Giard's view of the mammalian foetus as a 'placental parasite' and his concept of the process of biological metamorphosis together make it possible to interpret Freud's remarks more precisely. We have taken it as axiomatic that any animal must have the instinctual 'programming' appropriate for the organism that it is. The metamorphosis of instinctual intentionality appropriate for the organism '*foetus*' to that appropriate for the organism '*baby*' must indeed be a '*vast disturbance*' and represent a developmental crisis of the first order. This view puts the '*trauma of birth*' in a different perspective. It is not the dramatic sequence of physical events nor the beautifully co-ordinated steps of physiological transformation from submerged solitary existence to potential social life that is the source of both troublesome anxiety and potential creativity. Rather it is the even more exquisitely timed internal re-programming of the basis of psychic

life. This re-programming may not always successfully prevent some contamination of the instinctual programme for 'baby' by the earlier one for 'placental parasite'.

But why should this play a major role in the development and differentiation of the human mammal and not with other mammals—at least not so obviously. For the answer to this question at least hypothetically it seems we must look at a physiological dimension that does differentiate us in early life quite sharply from most of our fellow milk-drinkers. A dimension pointing to another crisis not only of vital importance in itself but one that interacts with and prolongs the vicissitudes of the instinctual metamorphosis.

B. *Delayed myelination/le corps morcelé/paranoid-schizoid position.* As Sherrington (1906) emphasized in his classic study, the nervous system has a basic integrative function. Its intentional organization is such that stimuli give rise to patterns which can become holistic components of experience. An ability to distinguish between holistic components gives rise to a discriminatory or analytic function.

In line with the above discussion, Wallon (1931) emphasizes the fact that the notion of psychic life implies an adequate organization involving discrimination between simultaneous and successive reactions and their inner and outer origins set against a virtual or latent background of a sense of one's own personality and that of others. 'An indispensable ... condition is that there be the possibility of relating activity turned towards the external world and that which is more immediately linked to the needs and activities of the body. Now the state of the nervous system at birth is opposed to this, as the observations of the anatomist C. von Monakow show. There is no functional integration of these two activities until the nervous fibres of the vestibular system are myelinated. This concerns the ventral node, the trapezoid body, the superior olive, the motor areas. The joining begins to take place only after the third month; it goes on till the sixth month and is not finished before the twelfth' (pp. 709–10).

Object-formation and object-relationship are thus based on a primacy of perceptual organization (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1964). Both

depend on aspects of the phenomenon of *closure* as a central phenomenon in experience—both in perception and thought. Human gestation has an extra-uterine phase. The human infant is born, as it were prematurely, with incomplete myelination of the central nervous system. The possibility of many complex actions and sensory experiences dependent on *appropriate closure* are delayed until after the first year of life (Spitz, 1965). At any moment only certain *synchronic patterns* are possible—in the infant and young child these may be developmentally inappropriate.

This forms the background to the description by Wallon (1931) of the experience of young children of 'the body in pieces' (*le corps morcelé*) an experience to be replaced in due course with the experience of bodily integrity (*le corps propre*) as anatomical completion makes integration of the body possible. Wallon notes that disturbances in this essential coenaesthetic background to psychic life may produce *un delire d'influence*, 'where the patient feels there are no boundaries between himself and others, so that he believes his acts, words and thoughts are perceived and imposed by others ...' (p. 706).

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Klein had 'first placed the crucial development from part-object to whole-object relationships (following Abraham) at about six months, later moving it back to three months, marking the onset of the depressive position' (Meltzer, 1978, p. 8). There is thus a close correlation between Klein's and Wallon's observations made in quite different fields of reference at different times.

In terms of integration the shift is an expansion of synchronic possibilities—possibilities of individual expression. These lie along the axis of diachronic development—possibilities of evolutionary change. Both are affected by the vicissitudes of instinctual metamorphosis from solitary foetal life to interactive symbiotic union with mother.

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present in varying degree in other species, it is their peculiar interplay that gives rise to their potential as sources of primary anxiety underlying the uniqueness of Man's potentials and distress.

#### CRISIS AND CATASTROPHE

In theoretical discussions of infant and child development, the interplay of these two developmental challenges is usually overlooked, although each may be given passing reference as a separate issue. The instinctual metamorphosis involved in the transition from foetal life as a 'placental parasite' to that of 'baby' in symbiotic relationship with the mother is complicated by the integrative hurdle presented by the delay in myelination of the nervous system and the associated experiential transition from '*le corps morcelé*' to '*le corps propre*'.

Both these obstacles may be seen as presenting a stimulating challenge and a source of pathology. Their interaction lies at the centre of an evolutionary turning point distinguishing Man from other species. Ontologically their interplay precipitates crisis points for each individual. In so far as the march of integrative function fails in the two dimensions we are discussing—synchronic and diachronic—there is a shift from a challenging crisis towards a threatening catastrophe.

On the synchronic dimension a failure, or regression, in integrative development may be described in terms of transitional problems between the experience of *le corps morcelé* and *le corps propre* or in terms of the inner world of object-relations between the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions. These vicissitudes form an important topic in the Kleinian literature.

On the diachronic dimension of instinctual intentionality the threat may arise from a disturbance in the *transformation/metamorphosis* at birth, for example by—

(a) Some defect in the process of metamorphosis itself so that unassimilated elements of the earlier parasitic organization become inclusions in the later organization producing the possibility of some form of atavistic regression. (For an informed and scholarly discussion of atavism see Eisler, 1949.)

(b) The 'return' of foreclosed signifiers resulting in hallucinatory distortions of The Real or delusional distortions of The Imaginary (Lacan, 1966). That is to say *psychotic illness*.

(c) Less threatening symbolic deviations or distortions in the ordinary pathway of symbolic function. That is to say *perversion* or *neurosis* (Fenichel, 1946).

The situation is summarized in *Diagram 1* (p. 28) where the two developmental challenges and the pathways of instinctual transmission are set out schematically indicating the possible psychopathological outcome; the dominant, or 'normal' symbolic pathway being indicated in heavier lines.

Naturally the synchronic, integrative, hurdle presented by the transition from the *paranoid-schizoid* position to the *depressive* position is a factor in every situation, including *psychosis* and *atavism*. The diagram vastly over-simplifies the transition.

#### THE CHALLENGE OF CRISIS

The two post-natal discontinuities overlap each other. The beginning of symbolic organization in the chaos of the *paranoid-schizoid* position in fact coincides with the new-born's metamorphosis from placental-parasite to 'baby' in the stage of normal (developmental) autism. It seems possible that the massive struggle towards integration stimulated by the challenge of these developmental discontinuities may have been the evolutionary driving-force in *Homo Sapiens* that led to accelerated development of the secondary processes. Linearity is immanent in speech and language, one word necessarily following another. The capacity for spatial and temporal organization is thus coincidental with the development of human language. Following Lacan (1966) the concurrent formation of *the unconscious* can then be understood as 'the dark side' of language. The onward movement of consciousness mobilized around the secondary process is accompanied by the unconscious accumulation of abandoned signifiers which are still organized, or organize themselves, in the mode of the primary process; that is to say are still governed by displacement, condensation and polarization/splitting.

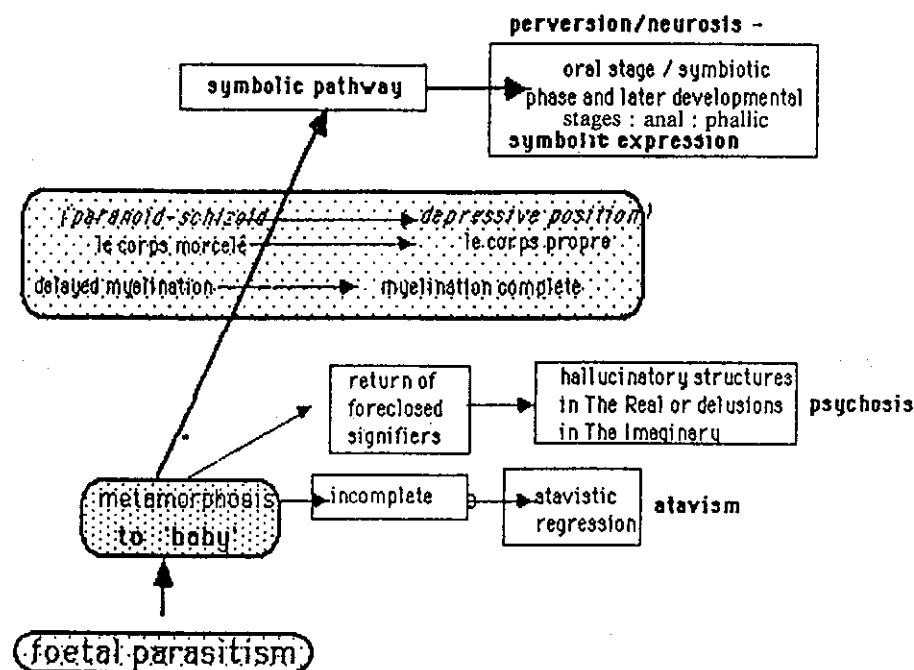


Diagram 1

As Lacan has punned, each of us is a *speaking-being* (*parle-être/par lettre*) and in this Lacan is in line with Whitehead's (1928) view of Man as a symbolic animal, with his symbolic function being formed at a cosmic interface of *causal efficacy* and *presentational immediacy*. The struggle towards integration by symbolic function at this interface may be seen as marking the turning-point of *Homo Sapiens'* differentiation from other species. From this turning-point our evolution was entwined in an increasingly complex elaboration of symbols. Ontologically each human individual rediscovers man's nature in the process of his *psychological birth* (Mahler, 1975).

#### PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PROCESSES

Ernest Jones remarked that Freud's distinction between primary and secondary processes was perhaps his most fundamental contribution to psychology. The primary processes of displacement, condensation and (I would add) polarization/splitting enter into the organization of experience through symbol

construction. In the transition from infancy to childhood, phonemes, words, sentences, phrases, assertions, propositions and themes develop both intensional structure and extensional definition through creative primary process—the word, for example, sharing directly in the significance of the situation it comes to stand for and coming to have a symbolic connexion with it. On the other hand, vocalizations necessarily follow one another; symbolic expression in the evolution of language thereby allowing the linear organization of the expression of an awareness of sequence, of dimension, of space and time and the location and comparison of one experience with another. This secondary process and its analytic capacity, rests on and is constantly *enriched* by the primary processes: enrichment in the poetic sense.

Ordinary language (Ricoeur, 1978) thus involves a structured interplay between the levels of word, statement, proposition and plot. Metonymy, synecdoche and metaphor reveal the underpinning of displacement, condensation and polarization/splitting which operate in the unconscious matrix of available signifiers. This is a manifestation of *Eros*—of creativity—in the

realm of thought. The relationship between instinctual sources and the primary and secondary processes may be displayed in a schematic way—

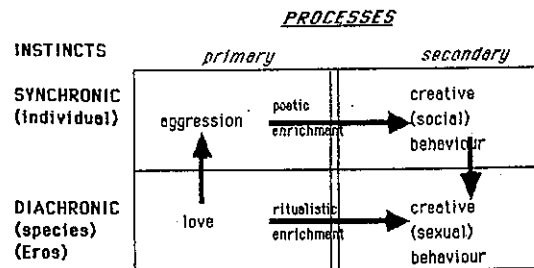


Diagram 2

There is an enriching process (indicated by the single-headed arrows) between the synchronic individual instincts and the diachronic species instincts (*Eros*) which is carried over, and expressed, in the enriching process between the primary and secondary processes. The mutual biological influences could, and do, operate also in the opposite direction (see for example Immelman, 1975).

Where destructive derivatives of the individual (appropriate-death) instincts are operative and contaminate *Eros* then the primary processes in their turn contaminate rather than enrich the secondary. This further step in the argument is shown in the next diagram where the double-headed arrows simply indicate destructive interaction:

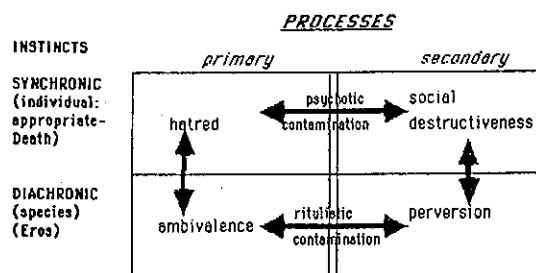


Diagram 3

For example, 'fighting' in very many species is either sexual or territorial, aggression enriching the species instincts. Tinbergen (1951) points out that 'it is a very striking and important fact that "fighting" in animals usually consists of threatening or bluff . . . real fighting, in the sense of a physical struggle, is . . . seldom observed . . .

The compromise that has developed is to have releasers that intimidate without causing damage. This is why sexual fighting is often accompanied by an elaborate display of "gladatorial vestments" (p. 177).

This sort of instinctual enrichment builds into the male a capacity for appropriate withdrawal when outside his territory or far from his female. Tinbergen goes on: 'One reason why wholesale slaughter in modern warfare is so relatively easily accomplished is to be found in the modern long-range arms that prevent one witnessing the action of lethal weapons. Our instinctive reluctance to kill is strengthened by the sight of a dying man in mutilated condition . . . Our instinctive disposition has not changed with the rapid development of mechanical long-range killing apparatus' (pp. 177-178).

While Tinbergen over-simplifies the issues, the example he gives serves to show how alteration in context or surround can change instinctual enrichment to contamination. At the level of the processes, contamination may be said to occur where primary processes, singly or in combination, distort or undermine the intentionality expressed through the logic of the secondary process, with a destructive or perverse outcome.

To reiterate, the evolution of language generated the 'active unconscious' (Lacan, 1966) in man. Conscious and unconscious components in everyday experience can be seen in terms of the interplay between the primary and secondary processes enriching or contaminating, the one or the other. This theme of enrichment versus contamination may be seen as originating in the interaction, already described, between sets of instincts.

*Eros* seeks opportunity; Man as the species 'speak-being' can make best use of mutative changes in a situation rich in ambiguity. But survival demands certainty. Ambiguity becomes a threat; it must be destroyed by closure. At the individual level inability to endure uncertainty wipes out the possibility of creative change. The confusion of instinctual aims results in a false equation of *survival, certainty* and *control*.

Fromm (1973) proposed that 'the core of sadism, common to all its manifestations, is the passion to have absolute and unrestricted control over a living being, whether an animal, a child, a man, or a woman' (p. 289). Fromm goes

Perfection, of a kind, was what he was after,  
 And the poetry he invented was easy to understand;  
 He knew human folly like the back of his hand  
 And was greatly interested in armies and fleets;  
 When he laughed, respectable senators burst with  
 laughter,  
 And when he cried the little children died in the  
 streets.

W. H. Auden. *Epitaph on a tyrant.*

#### SUMMARY

Human destructiveness threatens survival. How is this related to instinct? Freud distinguished Eros from the instinct of the individual *to die only in its own fashion*, this appropriate-death instinct being turned outwardly as aggression, with instinctual energies interacting creatively or destructively.

The *metamorphosis of instinct* in the transition from one type of biological existence to another, from foetal *placental parasite* to *baby* is complicated by the delayed myelination of the nervous system. Transition from *le corps morcelé* to *le corps propre* coincides with *paranoid-schizoid* and *depressive* positions in the *internal reality* of the infant.

Transitional *ambiguity* stimulates progression from *primary process* to *secondary process* in the symbolic order with instinctual *enrichment* or *contamination* repeated between the processes.

Parasitic need means that *survival* for the individual is equated with *control* and *certainty*, eroticization leading to a sadistic authoritarianism which amplifies socially by *recruitment* through *identification with the aggressor*.

#### TRANSLATIONS OF SUMMARY

La destructivité de l'homme menace sa survie. Quels sont ses rapports avec la pulsion? Freud a distingué l'Eros de cette pulsion de l'homme à *ne mourir que de sa propre façon*, cette pulsion de mort *appropriée* étant retournée vers l'extérieur sous forme d'agressivité, les énergies pulsionnelles jouant de manière créative ou destructrice.

La *métamorphose de la pulsion* au cours de la transition

d'un type d'existence biologique à l'autre, du *parasite placentaire* au *bébé* se trouve compliquée par la myélinisation différée du système nerveux. La transition du *corps morcelé* au *corps propre* coïncide avec les positions *schizo-paranoïde* et *dépressive* dans la *réalité interne* de l'enfant.

L'*ambiguïté* transitionnelle provoque la progression du *processus primaire* au *processus secondaire* dans l'ordre symbolique avec *enrichissement* pulsionnel ou *contamination* répétés entre ces processus.

Le besoin parasite signifie que la *survie* pour l'individu équivaut au *contrôle* et à la *certitude*, l'érotisation conduisant à un autoritarisme sadique qui s'amplifie par *recrutement* au moyen de l'*identification à l'agresseur*.

Menschlicher Zerstörungssinn bedroht das Überleben. Wie ist er mit dem Instinkt verwandt? Freud unterschied Eros vom Instinkt des Individuums, *nur auf seine eigene Art und Weise zu sterben*, dieser *angemessene* Tod Instinkt welcher nach außen hin zur Aggression gemacht wird, wobei instinktive Energien auf kreative oder destruktive Art zusammenwirken.

Die *Metamorphose des Instinkts* im Wechsel von einer biologischen Existenz zur anderen, vom fötalen *plazentalen Parasiten* zum *Baby*, wird durch die verzögerte Myelination des Nervensystems kompliziert. Der Übergang von *le corps morcelé* zu *le corps propre* fällt mit *paranoid-schizoiden* und *depressiven* Positionen in der *internen Realität* des Kindes zusammen.

Übergangsbezogene *Ungewissheit* stimuliert den Fortschritt vom *primären Prozeß* zum *sekundären Prozeß* in der symbolischen Anordnung, wobei instinktive *Anreicherung* oder *Verunreinigung* wiederholt zwischen den Prozessen stattfindet.

Parasitische Notwendigkeit bedingt, daß Überleben für das Individuum mit *Kontrolle* und *Gewißheit* gleichbedeutend ist, wobei Erotisierung zu einem sadistischen Führerprinzip führt, welches sozial als *Rekrutierung* durch *Identifikation mit dem Aggressor* verstärkt wird.

La destructividad humana amenaza la sobrevivencia. ¿Cuál es su relación con el instinto? Freud distingue a Eros del instinto que presenta el individuo que le hace tender a *morir solamente a su modo*; este instinto de muerte *apropiado* se vuelve hacia afuera en forma de agresión y las energías instintivas interactúan de modo creativo o destructivo.

La *metamorfosis del instinto* en la transición de un tipo de existencia biológica a otro, de *parásito placentario* fetal a *bebé*, se complica por el retardo en la mielinización del sistema nervioso. La transición entre *le corps morcelé* y *le corps propre* coincide con las posiciones *esquizo-paranoide* y *depresiva* en la *realidad interna* del infante.

La *ambigüedad* transicional estimula la progresión de *proceso primario* a *proceso secundario* en el orden simbólico con la repetición de un *enriquecimiento* o una *contaminación* instintiva entre ambos procesos.

Para el individuo la necesidad parasitaria significa que la *sobrevivencia* equivale a *control* y *certidumbre*; una erotización que lleva a una actitud sádica que se amplifica en lo social a través del *reclutamiento* mediante la *identificación con el agresor*.

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