

LOS ANGELES PSYCHOANALYTIC BULLETIN

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IS PSYCHOANALYSIS CURABLE?

by Jean Laplanche

Translated by Aaron J. Segal

It is often said that psychoanalysis is dying. Certainly, psychoanalytic terminology permeates our society: President Mitterand of France has spoken, without batting an eyelid, of his "nuclear superego" and "drive" has become a computer term. But with use has come overuse, and with overuse, ridicule. Psychoanalytic concepts seem to age poorly — the Oedipus complex has become an old tune and its slogans have made the rounds of the mass media for decades. Passed around by word of mouth among the general public, such terms have been regarded as signs of sclerotic, ideological, and unverifiable thought for quite a while by a segment of the intellectual and scientific community. Marxism and psychoanalysis have been dominant intellectual trends for too long — as a fashion, they are *passee*. Instead of engaging in a dialogue with psychoanalysis, neuroscience, biology, and cognitive psychology have been labelled *alternatives* to a vision of the world which supposedly reduces everything to "sex." As a fashionable subject, psychoanalysis is also a question of belief, and thus of disbelief as well. Every one claims to be competent to "*not believe in psychoanalysis*," as they might believe or not believe in astrology . . .

A segment of public opinion has similar objections to the psychoanalytic cure. Without doubt, certain aberrations in the practice of psychoanalysis have fed accusations of charlatanry, but those charges originated elsewhere: from the beginning, analysis was considered by "serious" people to be a subtle form of fraud which keeps patients dependent for years, a useless process, or at best one which obtains results by means of suggestion. The charge that psychoanalysis is merely a form of hypnosis which "doesn't let go" of those in its clutches continues to circulate. As if blatantly more restrictive therapeutic dependencies — such as certain indefinitely continued medical treatments — did not exist! Nonetheless, the accounts of a great number of analysands offer a counterweight to these accusations, if one takes the time to listen: one is then struck by the lucidity and freedom — far from both resentment and devotion — with which they testify to the profound changes that psychoanalysis has brought to their existence.

I have thus willingly painted a black picture of the situation which is shared by only one segment of common opinion. Though the forthcoming death of psychoanalysis is being announced, that prognosis has been around for ages, and the patient dies hard . . . It is true that our media-dominated civilization magnifies fashionable phenomena: the hybrid "psychoanalytic" doctrine which the media portrays does not satisfy the thirst for the sensational. "Surprise us!" is the catchword of critics (in psychoanalysis . . . but also in painting, in music and even in cooking . . .)

Psychoanalysis no longer surprises . . . Perhaps. But which psychoanalysis? To reduce it to a ridiculously simplified body of doctrines (castration, life instinct and death instinct, id, ego, superego, etc.), or even a simple psychotherapeutic procedure, might be to approach the question in the wrong way. Where then is the *discovery* of psychoanalysis, the *new* knowledge of man it proposes to offer? For that, let us listen to Freud. His definition gives priority to neither theory nor therapeutics, but rather to method: psychoanalysis is above all "a procedure for investigating otherwise nearly inaccessible mental processes."

Psychoanalysis therefore claims to discover new phenomena by means of a new instrument, just as the invention of a new type of telescope allows new objects such as quasars and black holes to be seen; it is then up to theories to attempt to offer satisfying explanations.

What are those new phenomena discovered by the tool of psychoanalysis? We label them with the word "unconscious," which is *already* a first theorization — beyond the terms intended to explain them, it deals with a group of marginal phenomena, taken for granted before Freud, which the psychoanalytic *method* treats as highly meaningful. A dream, a meaningless symptom (an unyielding nervous cough, a manner of organizing your desk in a certain way), a repeated behavior (you always put yourself in the same inextricable relationship with the same type of partner), or a slip which causes a laugh in the middle of a speech are stumbling blocks, lumps, and forms of concrete thinking in our daily life. Jacques Lacan has named them "formations of the unconscious," best expressing that surge of alien objects into even the most "rational" existence.

Alien . . . but impossible to explore with a *specific* method — that is what is constantly ignored and forgotten when even the most learned profess to evaluate psychoanalysis. It is admitted that when an orator slips in the National Assembly (King Sadam Hussein of Jordan), that stumble may have a meaning. When people speak currently of "Freudian slips," they illustrate the ambiguous success of psychoanalysis: certain slips, the easiest to interpret, are "psychoanalytic," others are not. In reality, what is "Freudian" is not the slip but the difficult and rigorous *method* which puts us on the track of a hidden, deeply buried sense, specific to a *particular* individual and "otherwise nearly inaccessible."

The psychoanalytic method is at the heart of Freud's discovery. It can be summarized in two terms: free association and transference. "Free association" was invented first. It consists of expressing every thought which comes to mind without voluntary selection and without silencing ideas that might appear unpleasant, uninteresting, or irrelevant. One realizes very quickly that thoughts, liberated from their conscious intentions, gravitate around points of attraction unknown to the subject. That discovery might be compared to the one which permits astronomers to begin from minimal disturbances in the orbits of observable planets, allowing them to decipher the existence of another celestial body still invisible to the telescope.

Soon, however, the other major element of the method intrudes: that free speech, unburdened of all daily preoccupations, is never alone. It is always addressed, potentially or actually, to *another*. Transference is, in essence, nothing other than this *addressing* of discourse to another (the psychoanalyst), through which the analysand reactualizes his dialogue with his oldest interlocutors.

To speak — freely — to someone: that proposal which may seem simple is nonetheless groundbreaking, overwhelming, unheard of for those who have not lived the experience. It is a profoundly liberating experience, which aims for autonomy by calling into question the most remarkable motivations. In a certain way, un-covering the unconscious is nothing other than reopening it: causing something which was once encysted and hardened in a relationship with "the other" to circulate anew.

To affirm 1) the psychoanalytic method, 2) the "objects" of the unconscious it allows us to identify, and 3) the unique communicative situation capable of putting those objects back into play which it provides as central elements of psychoanalysis is to indicate what continues to live in the discovery of Freud. To recognize these three elements is also to place both analytic theory and psychotherapeutic technique in a derivative, if not accessory, position, as Freud himself did.

Freud considered psychoanalytic theory to be a simple "superstructure." Without adopting so simple a view, it would be presumptuous to assert that a theory is imperishable. All thought worthy of that name is confronted with facts, experience, and the need for a certain internal coherence. All theories are mortal, and their finest death is to be recycled, reincorporated as a particular case of a vaster, more generalized perspective. Although psychoanalytic theories are mortal, it is misinformed to consider psychoanalytic thought to be devoted to sterile repetition: it is actually quite healthy, in full motion, and profoundly supple. Among its tasks, in my opinion, is finally taking into full account *how the human individual is constituted through his original relationships to others*.

Is psychoanalytic treatment, the therapeutics, only a simple application and

poorer cousin, so to speak, of psychoanalytic method? To phrase it thus is to pass quickly over the paradox of the psychoanalytic "cure": on the one hand, all psychoanalysis has consequences — most often deeply beneficial — for a person's existence, thus effects that can be called "therapeutic," on the other hand, the psychoanalytic process becomes engaging only from the moment when all the motivations for the treatment (symptoms, difficulties with others, marital problems . . . the desire to become an analyst, etc.) have been relativized, marginalized, and henceforth considered from a completely different perspective: their relationship to the unconscious desires of the analysand. It is in that sense that Lacan's formulation is justified, if it is truly understood: "the cure arises from an accumulation of abundance."

Beginning therapy involves a sort of fundamental misunderstanding. The patient comes to free himself of a specific, defined symptom, without seeking to change anything else: he finds himself confronted with desires and passions of which he had no suspicion. It is a deception in which the *symptom* itself is deceived, twisted, cut off from its base. Psychoanalysis is an eminently individual and singular process, a new *version* of the self, a genuine conversion which cannot be measured by objective, regular criteria like the suppression of a determined symptom. In competition with "public health," in the shadow of psychiatric criteria or criteria of social utility, psychoanalysis is beaten from the start: neither the number of patients that it can treat, the perseverance that it demands, nor the "existential" results that it inspires can be entered into the balance sheet of a "social security" system.

Here undoubtedly lies the misunderstanding in regard to the social status of psychoanalysis. As is normal, from the moment that it demands to be taken into account by public authority, it comes up against the need for a social utility which can be measured by precise, objective criteria. But the well-being of a person, the ability to take his destiny into his own hands, will never enter into a cost-benefit analysis.

Certain psychoanalysts claim first and foremost to be therapists. Society's response is clear: so be it! But first put all that in a little "order." Putting psychoanalysis in order is nothing other than a predictable consequence of the deepest tendencies of modern States: to regulate everything in terms of pre-established needs and norms; exactly those norms which the psychoanalytic method insists on calling into question to unveil their foundation — the secret desires of everyone.

The days of psychoanalytic practice are probably "numbered," if it seeks to secretly palm off on the public powers, institutional or governmental, something to which the latter are indifferent — free speech in which an individual attempts to take his destiny into his own hands. For the sake of order and putting itself in order, psychoanalysis will have "lost its soul" without even gaining reimbursement for its sessions from a third party or

insurance system. It is well-known that they no longer even reimburse medication, prescribed to relieve discontent.

Psychoanalytic theory is threatened by its own diffusion, which is transforming it into a discounted ideology. Psychoanalytic theory is also threatened if it violates its own principles by making itself accountable to a third party — various public and institutional powers — for its practices, its techniques, and its results.

As a *method* and as a *situation*, psychoanalytic practice will probably survive the forces of mass society, mass media, and the centralized state as they expand to dominate the individual. The insights it has opened into the individual unconscious, its genesis and manifestations, will remain *provocative* sources for theoretical speculation and *profoundly moving* discoveries for those who have the courage and the good fortune to experience them. As long . . . as long as the days of the unconscious itself are not "numbered" in the future that "civilization" is preparing for us.

A SIGMUND FREUD LETTER ON THE JEWISH HOLY PLACE IN JERUSALEM

by Peter Loewenberg, Ph.D.*

Freud was a member of the Board of Governors of the Hebrew University and supported the Jewish settlement in Palestine, but he had no tolerance for holy places or sacred sites in the contemporary practice of religion. An unpublished letter written sixty-one years ago regarding the holy places in Jerusalem expresses Freud's ambivalence toward Zionism and the worship of sacred sites. In 1929 Arab riots in Palestine opposed the Zionist settlement and particularly Jewish right of access to the Wailing Wall, the remnant of the foundation of the Second Temple considered holy by orthodox Jews. The Palestine Foundation Fund (Keren Hajessod) solicited letters from prominent Jewish figures around the world, including Sigmund Freud, seeking support of the right of Jews to access to the wall.

Freud's answer to Keren Hajessod, Vienna, was:

I cannot do what you wish. I am unable to overcome my aversion to burdening the public with my name and even the present critical time does not seem to me to warrant it. Whoever wants to influence the masses must give them something rousing and inflammatory and my sober judgement of Zionism does not permit this. I certainly sympathize with its goals, am proud of our university in Jerusalem, and am delighted with our settlements' prosperity. But, on the other hand, I do not think that Palestine could ever become a Jewish state, nor that the Christian and Islamic worlds would ever be prepared to have their holy places under Jewish control. It would have seemed more sensible to me to establish a Jewish homeland on a less historically burdened land. But I know that such a rational viewpoint would never have gained the enthusiasm of the masses and the financial support of the wealthy. I concede with sorrow that the unrealistic fanaticism of our people is in part to be blamed for the awakening of Arab distrust. I have no sympathy at all for the misdirected piety which transforms a piece of Herod's wall into a national relic thereby challenging the feelings of the natives.

** I am grateful for the aid of Rina Freedman, Fredrick Redlich, and Ora Band with the translations.*

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Now judge for yourself whether I, with such a critical position, am the right person to stand forth to comfort a people deluded by unjustified hope.¹

The cover letter from Keren Hajessod, Vienna, to Jerusalem was equally interesting and explains why this letter of Freud's has remained unpublished. It is from Dr. Chaim Koffler of the Keren Hajessod, Vienna, to Dr. Abraham Schwadron, a right wing Zionist who had a famous autograph collection in the Jewish National and University Library. It reads:

The letter of Freud, with all its genuiness and warmth for us, is not propitious. And since there are no secrets in Palestine, the letter will certainly find its way out of the autograph collection of the University Library into the public eye. If I cannot be of service to the Keren Hajessod, I at least feel myself bound not to do damage. Should you wish to personally see the handwriting, then to return it to me, I will send the handwriting to you via a tourist, Dr. Manka Spiegel, who is travelling to Palestine, and who will later return the letter to me.

This letter bears a fascinating handwritten postscript in Hebrew in which Schwadron responds to Koffler:

It is true that in Palestine there are no secrets . . . but I have not become naturalized The collection is without help as it was . . . it is in splendid isolation . . . it has no contact with the public, except for special things . . . it contains many manuscripts and pictures from all points of view: not to be shown and not to be handed over to anyone and as for me . . . a non-Zionist, that is to say precise and exact . . . a sense of responsibility . . . I "order you like the celestial messengers" [Daniel 4:14] to hurry . . . I promise you . . . *in the name of the library* that "no human eye shall see it" [Job 7:8] . . .

With full responsibility . . .²

Following this Biblical command, Freud's letter was sent to Jerusalem and the promise of non-publication was kept. Although Freud was wrong about his prediction — the Jewish state does exist — as he was often wrong about other political assessments, such as that the Austro Fascists would restrain the Nazis, sadly his interpretation about the conflict over the holy sites has as much resonance today as it did sixty years ago. Freud was not a political Zionist and he did not believe in sanctifying stones.

1. Freud to Dr. Chaim Koffler, Keren Hajessod, Vienna, February 26, 1930, *Schwadron Collection*, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.

2. Dr. Chaim Koffler, Vienna, to Dr. Abraham Schwadron, Jerusalem, April 2, 1930, *Schwadron Collection*, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.

A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

by David James Fisher, Ph.D.

I would like to cordially invite you to participate in a special forum to be run in the next issue of the *Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Bulletin* on THE WAR IN THE PERSIAN GULF AND ITS AFTERMATH: PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVES.

I have formulated a number of questions that you may wish to address in your piece.

1. What can psychoanalysis contribute to the understanding of the meaning of war in general and/or the recent war, its causes and consequences, in particular?
2. Can Psychoanalysis help to decipher forms of Arab and American nationalism? Aspects of religious fanaticism that are mobilized in war?
3. What kinds of critical perspectives can psychoanalysis provide to grasp the powerful and primitive impulses, fantasies, and emotions unleashed by war? Does psychoanalysis have a sufficient enough understanding of altruism and idealistic states of mind?
4. What can psychoanalysis provide in developing a critical understanding of the destructive capabilities of modern science and technology?
5. Can an analytic perspective be used to *a)* grasp the group psychology and the manipulation of the masses at war through the sophisticated uses of the media and of propaganda techniques in the respective countries at war? *b)* Can psychoanalysis lend itself to the explanation of the upsurge of mindless and simple-minded patriotism and of mass emotion, used to prop up militarism in American, Iraq, and Israel? *c)* Can analysis lay bare the ways in which this war has deflected individuals and nations from pressing domestic issues?
6. Can psychoanalysis expand its understanding of war neuroses and war trauma to illuminate the suffering of the contemporary troops and civilian populations?

7. George Bush has personalized the war, calling Saddam Hussein a "lying son of a bitch." He vowed to "kick the ass" of Saddam. Hussein's rhetoric suggests that he viewed the war from a distinctly defensive, even paranoid point of view; think, for example, of the phrases "the mother of all wars," and his vow to have American troops "swim in their own blood." What can modern psychoanalysis provide to help understand the ways in which political leaders make decisions based on highly subjective styles of exercising power or asserting themselves? How can such an assessment account, for example, for a number of Hussein's miscalculations?

8. War brought into our living rooms everyday on T.V. can have a numbing effect on the spectator. Can psychoanalysis provide some insight into how individuals distance themselves and nations desensitize themselves from the death, injury, and atrocities of war? Can analysis explain the effects of this war on children and adolescents?

9. Can modern psychoanalysis explicate the excitement and depression generated by the beginning and quickness of the hostilities? Can it illuminate the individual and mass anxieties, the individual and collective sense of catastrophe?

10. Jewish and non-Jewish psychoanalysts often express special feeling of closeness to and empathy for Israel. Can the analytic instrument help to decipher the various modes of identification — religious, ethnic, cultural, political, historical, etc. — expressed toward Israel, including within the analytic community? How does the memory of the Holocaust and recent upsurges of anti-Semitism and of Israel-bashing contribute to this attitude toward Israel?

11. A psychohistorian has described the war in the Persian Gulf as a shared emotional disorder, somewhat akin to post-traumatic stress disorder. He diagnosed a number of factors, including severe depression unrelated to current life events, suicidal wishes, intrusive images of terrifying figures torturing children, hyper-vigilance toward imagined enemies, feelings of unreality, detachment, and estrangement? Does the war in the Persian Gulf and its aftermath fit that model?

12. A recent banner at an anti-war rally in San Francisco, carried by a psychoanalytic group, read, "Psychoanalysts are not neutral about everything." Ought psychoanalysts, either as concerned citizens living in a democracy, or collectively through official organizations, publicly oppose this particular war?

Please feel no obligation to address any or all of my questions, I welcome your own unique perspective and I very much look forward to your contribution.

PSYCHOANALYTIC NOTES ON THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

by Seymour W. Friedman, M.D.

My interest in writing this article was based on my interest and concern about our country being thrust into a war that I felt was unnecessary and could exact huge sacrifices from innocent people. It was sharpened by my knowledge from having followed the investigative work of the Christic Institute, of the role of the CIA and its covert actions in the evolution of the war and in the powerful role secrecy, duplicity, and deceit has played in shaping the structure and policies of our government. In addition, I have been fascinated by the way people at large so easily succumb to the lies and deceptions of our leaders with a thoughtless apathy that I feel threatens the integrity of our social and political life. I felt that such phenomena could be understood best from a psychoanalytic perspective of thinking about the origins and development of forces that control our lives. The call from the LAPSI Bulletin for papers on the Persian Gulf War gave me an opportunity and incentive to organize my thoughts into an article.

My psychoanalytic orientation is based not strictly on one theory or another but is a compilation or integration of various concepts derived from Classical Drive theory, Ego psychology, Object Relations and Developmental theory that I have found useful and productive in understanding the unconscious and inner worlds of children, adolescents, and adults who have made up my clinical practice for over 40 years of psychoanalytic clinical work with children, adolescents, and adult patients.

The Persian Gulf War was represented to the American public, the U.S. Congress, and to the world by the Bush Administration as a noble and military enterprise for the purpose of "punishing the naked aggression" of the mad dictator Saddam Hussein of Iraq against the tiny state of Kuwait. President Bush's additional claim that this was a moral war fought for the purpose of restoring the sovereignty and democratic rights of the people of Kuwait, to save the world from the dominating militaristic ambitions of Saddam Hussein, and to protect the American "way of life" was a rhetorical justification that was farthest from the truth when the underlying purposes and evolution of the forces that made the war inevitable are exposed to examination, understanding, and the "naked truth."

What the Bush Administration did not declare and which was closer to the truth, according to a meticulously researched and highly creditable position paper released by the Christic Institute Board of Directors entitled *Covert Operations, the Persian Gulf War and the "New World Order"*, was that "Operation Desert Storm" was waged by the Bush Administration neither to restore the human rights and democratic aspirations of the Kuwaiti people nor to shield Saud Arabia and Israel from Iraqi attack, but that its real aims were quite otherwise. And among its real purposes were the achievement of leadership in the Persian Gulf and to ensure U.S. access to oil and U.S. control over oil prices; to enable U.S. leadership over a "New World Order" to exercise a policy of interventionism and exploitation of third world resources; to escalate U.S. militarization; and to distract public attention from a worsening domestic situation that threatened to imperil Bush's chances for re-election.

This policy analysis details the role that almost 40 years of covert Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) policies and practices have played in destabilizing the Middle East by manipulating and disturbing the balance of power especially between Iraq and Iran and creating the current crisis by illegal arms sales and modes of influencing, advising, and manipulating government operations peculiar to their secret duplicitous skills that made this region open and vulnerable to the recent conflict.

The Persian Gulf crisis that resulted in the military action to ostensibly solve the crisis according to many prominent scholars, investigative journalists and politicians, and documented by secret notebooks, reports of secret meetings, GAO reports, etc., was "manufactured" by the Bush Administration in order to create the appearance of a crisis occasioned by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in order to hide its real significance as the inevitable and purposeful outgrowth of over 40 years of CIA covert activities and illegal operations in arms dealings and destabilizing interventions in the political, military, and economic life of the countries thus targeted and in the international relations of the Middle East.

Contradictions between the United States' public and secret foreign policies is not a new revelation to the American public. And in the instance of America's dealings with Iran and Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war documented by the congressional report and official CIA transcripts of secret meetings it was evident that the U.S. public policy was to improve relations with Iraq which it was secretly arming to enhance its military power while at the same time it secretly shared military intelligence on Iraq with Iran with the agreement that the U.S. would help to promote the overthrow of the Iraqi head of government in order to counter the threat of Hussein's increasing military power.

The stage was set for the overthrow of Hussein by military intervention even

before Hussein invaded Kuwait and provided the U.S. with a "moral" excuse to take military action against Iraq. According to a CIA official transcript of a secret tape-recorded meeting held in Frankfurt, Germany in October 1985, CIA operatives decided that having made Hussein so powerful militarily he would have "to go."

The Persian Gulf War could be said to have been predetermined by 40 years of CIA covert activities and was undertaken by President Bush with the appearance of active intervention for moral purposes. He was led by internal secret forces to act without belief in an alternative solution that economic sanctions offered. Under the influence of a "manufactured" crisis he felt unable to wait for sanctions to work but felt impelled to act more immediately and with force, thus bringing a war into the world. A passive compliant attitude towards secret foreign policy actions was deviously turned into the appearance of a decisive action under the guise of a powerful moral and necessary but not reasonable action for which it was claimed there was no other alternative to solve the crisis than to wage war on Iraq.

These revelations strongly support the contention that the real foreign policy of the U.S. government has been not what it has publicly declared it to be but the working of the secret operations and covert activities of the CIA under the influence of the secret government of the National Security state to which the public generally has reacted with apathy, indifference, or ignorance.

That rulers, politicians, and governments have employed secrecy, deceit, lies and half-truths in the exercise of their majestic, autocratic, and political power has been known from time immemorial, is nothing new, and has always been known to people at large. But what is of amazing and confounding curiosity is the phenomenon that knowing all this, society at large, even with the advance of democratization of its political life, has never been able to combat this insidious tendency of political power to seduce its subjects into passive compliance and acceptance of its even sometimes blatant deceptions and duplicitous actions and attitudes. Rather, on the contrary, the autocratic, deceitful, self-serving manner in which leaders and governments have exercised their power without caring consideration for the needs of the people who they piously declare to protect and to serve, has been reacted to by society at large, with a variety of attitudes of which the most prominent has been indifference to and denial of caring that these practices are carried out with impunity, resulting in the ever present state of apathy that prolongs itself indefinitely. These attitudes have become institutionalized in the culture of our society analogous to the way psychic structures get formed, adopted, and are crystallized in the mental apparatus of the human mind.

Although every war, as was the Persian Gulf War, despite real needs to employ aggression to carry out its militaristic ends, is presented to the public

as a patriotic and nationally indispensable venture for the security of the state and for the sake of supporting a noble cause, the underlying anxiety and fear generated by the confrontation of society with the actual and real danger of the war, feeling mainly and consciously as the prospect of being faced with the loss of life, and secondarily of property, stems from underlying forces that can be understood from a psychoanalytic perspective that for many people would seem to be a far cry from the reality of war.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, anxiety about the Persian Gulf War can be said to be about the discomfort and frustration that results from the experience and feeling that you, as an individual, have no assurance that you have been told the truth about the need for this war, and that everything that is said and done by the working of governmental propaganda is mired down in the mud of duplicity, deceit, and lies for the benefit of vested power interests that have no relation to or relevance for your own uncared-for needs.

The way that society at large reacts to the war that has been thrust upon it by its government is very reminiscent of and analogous to the way a child experiences the truth or untruth of the parents' claims and actions before it has developmentally achieved its mature individuation when it must by psychological necessity perceive its parents according to the way it must have its dependent needs met and fulfilled by the parents.

Just as culture does not emerge spontaneously but is created by human beings to meet their needs, so society develops its culture derived from and as an extension from the ways and patterns adopted by the individual person in the process of developing its personality and character from their origins in intrapsychic processes and forces to mature socialized life in the external world. And it is according to their personality and character development that their needs are met and their lives are lived as mature human social beings.

What is formed structurally from intrapsychic processes that eventuate in personality and character development becomes institutionalized in the society and culture externally as attitudes and patterns of behaving, thinking, feeling and relating. And what has become institutionalized in the society and culture are those mutual attitudes and relationships of the child to the parents. The first need-fulfilling, protective, care-taking, and morally guiding significant figures with whom the child adopts and retains his basic relationship to authority figures in his life are its parents, barring changes that come to be made under unpredictable circumstances or by the most potent instrument of personality and character that is possessed by psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

The way people react to the claims and declarations of government and to its actions is largely determined by the way the child reacted to the power and authority of its parents in the process of its personality and character development when patterns, attitudes, and ways of relating became more or less finalized.

It time of war the relationship of the individual and of society at large to the authority of the government and to its leaders is heightened beyond normal circumstances, and by processes of regression or by return of the repressed, denied dependent attitudes of the child to the parents, early childhood dependent attitudes make themselves felt by the people at large with expected exceptions. Likewise the need for the leader's support from the people is heightened to accept his leadership and authority by means of trust, confidence, adoration, or other forms of overestimated approval, and by belief in his capacity to be leader.

So it was that in the Persian Gulf War propaganda devices were adopted to heighten the acceptance of the war by a significantly large proportion of the skeptical and incredulous public and a belief in the leader's ability to lead the efforts of the war. A prominent and early device was the touting of the slogan "to support our troops" which by unspoken innuendo meant that if you did not support the troops who were sacrificing their safety, lives, comfort and relationship with their home and their loved ones for the sake of protecting your own comforts and way of life, you were not supporting the war — and if you did not support the war you were unpatriotic and a traitor to your country. The obvious aim of this slogan was to create guilt, shame, and self-debasement in those who did not acquiesce with the demands of those who prosecuted the war. This propaganda device was highly reminiscent of the parental ploy of inducing guilt and shame in the child who did not acquiesce to their demands and did not acknowledge their worth and value as good parents.

It can be said psychologically that the Bush Administration, having become embroiled in prosecuting a war under false pretenses, was doubly in need of eliciting the support and acceptance of the public at large, operating on a foundation that had little substance to support their claims, justifications and rationalizations for the moral purpose of the war "to stop naked aggression," and having little going for it except raw and superior technological military power. It was not for no purpose that it would have to resort to guilt-inducing devices to gather support for the war efforts, if only to rid itself of its own guilt and fear that the war would not be won, by projecting its guilt upon the minds of the public who in time of war were unavoidably more dependent upon the leader for support of their own fears, anxieties, and heightened dependent needs. In the last analysis the Bush Administration's call to "support the troops" was a call for support for President Bush himself which he needed in order to carry out a war that despite his touting the noble cause that was fighting "to stop naked aggression" and to stop the monstrous actions of an all-powerful madman, at bottom had no moral support and was indeed rooted in deception, subterfuge, and illegal covert actions in much of which he was at the clandestine center of its operations. This deception, when uncovered, is obvious, transparent, and blatant but invisible or indifferent to

those for whom institutionalization of deception and subterfuge denies them the capacity to see and to react to it accordingly.

The institutionalization of these covert attitudes in politics, manifested by the public indifference to or passive compliant acceptance of the presence of their duplicitous practices can be traced psychoanalytically back to the stage of child development when the child discovers that his basic trust in parents has been betrayed and violated resulting in a narcissistic injury of immeasurable traumatic proportions and depth that exerts a crucial effect and influence upon his character development and his relationship to the authority figure who in later life has always to be dealt with and to be accountable to. Some such children become leaders, the masses become followers, and all relate to and from authority in accordance with the way truth and reality; reality, fantasy and untruth have to be integrated into the substance of their lives.

It is not so much that the child loses trust in the reality and quality of the parents' love and caring, but that he loses or distorts the capacity to discern between reality and fantasy, between reality and illusion, between truth and untruth and between the real and false images and selves of the Self and of the Self of the parent, later transferred to the perception of the image of the authority figure. And more often than not he resigns himself to accepting the false self of the parent in order to protect himself from the loss of the presence of the needed parent, without the attachment to whom the child is threatened with being thrown into an intolerably feared state of abandonment.

Years of doing psychoanalytic and psychoanalytic psychotherapeutic treatment with children and with adults with severe character disorders have repeatedly and regularly brought to my attention the significance of the core conflicts occurring in early child development that have influenced and even determined the capacity of the individual to relate with realistic perceptions and judgments or with illusion to the image of the adult authority figure as it impacts upon the satisfaction of significant needs for protection, caring, and support for their self-esteem in their life.

One such conflict revealed in child analytic work has to do with the child's struggle to retain a positive image of the caring, loving, and competent qualities of the parent in the face of flaws and failings that the child experiences emotionally about the parents' caring, loving, and nurturing capacities and qualities.

In the long term analytic and analytic psychotherapeutic work with adults with severe character disorders the most painful moment in the patient's therapeutic life is the time he or she discovers the realization that the trust, regard, acceptance, and belief that he or she had for so long held for the parents' loving and caring feelings for him or her had turned out to be an illusion based on an idealization of the parents or on a need to deceive oneself

in order to ensure the possession of the indispensable protection and caring that was needed as a defense against the state of abandonment, or as indispensable nurturing and support for the development of one's identity and optimal sense of self.

The capacity to discern the truth and reality of the parents' caring, loving, and protective, and nurturing capacities and practices from the untruth of their projected images greatly influences the capacity of the individual to distinguish between reality and fantasy, truth and untruth, and to make judgments and decisions that make for appropriate reactions and actions in relationship to the reality of the situations faced in life and with regard to figures in positions of authority.

In time of war this process is accentuated and intensified by the state of regression to these core conflicts that create anxiety, fear, and uncertainty that is so prevalent in the nature of war, and for an increased need for trust and confidence in the leader to help them manage their anxieties.

The Persian Gulf War and its antecedents was noted for a period of vigorous debate and expression of differences of opinion regarding the validity of entering upon the war or of relying on economic sanctions to put an end to Saddam Hussein's brutal and repressive dictatorship. As political and economic as were these differences of opinion it could be said from a psychological and psychoanalytic point of view that the vigor of the debate was spurred not so much from political and economic issues as from the underlying anxiety that beset the participants in the debate over crucial decisions that had to be made based on a foundation of covert actions, deceptions, falsehoods, and indecisive and conflicting reasons for the validity of the war and its basis causes and purposes in which the leader himself could not emerge a clear and absolutely trusted and unflawed leader.

And for the sake of psychoanalytic argument it could be said that although the debate was couched in political and economic terms, the real debate unconsciously was being held over the reluctance, fear, and anxiety of the U.S. Congress to confront the presidential power of the Bush Administration with its deceptions and moral incompetence to lead a nation in time of war just as the child in its infantile dependence upon the parents is fearful of seeing the parent in the image and perception the child emotionally feels and believes the parents to be in their parental failings.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WAR
IN THE PERSIAN GULF
FROM THE PSYCHOANALYTIC PERSPECTIVE

by James S. Grotstein, M.D.

The recent war in the Persian Gulf must evoke in virtually every psychoanalyst a sense of helplessness as a vicarious participant and shocked observer in a cataclysm which is now gradually fading into yesterday's history and tomorrow's mythology. In the wake of that experience of helplessness there rises the inescapable desire to master its awful awesomeness under the protective wraps of our professional scrutiny, all to the purpose of preventing its recurrence. But what practical instruments have we at our disposal?

At our disposal are the instruments of (a) active intervention in the form of facilitating dialogue¹ between combatant groups and (b) reflecting upon our knowledge of individual and group psychology to understand the phenomenon of charismatic leadership and its blind following.

It is striking that the theme of orphanhood keeps reappearing in Muslim mythology and current events — to which I would add that orphanhood dovetails with a currently highlighted phenomenon known as child abuse and the post-traumatic stress syndrome.

We now know that Saddam Hussein never knew his father, was hated and rejected by his mother, was raised by a discontent cashiered army-officer uncle, was an outcast to his peers, was sadistically cruel to animals (although he loved his horse and grieved when it died), and carried a gun with him from an early age. Could we not tentatively postulate then that, from the perspective of psychohistory, Hussein's charisma represents a confluence of his own tragic orphanhood. Might it have been that, having been cruelly orphaned, he unconsciously made a Faustian pact with the Devil in order to

¹ John Mack and Rita Rogers, as consultants to the State Department, helped arrange the Camp David Treaty between Egypt and Israel. Similarly Vamik Volkan actively participated in the truce between the Cypriot Greeks and Turks. On a more involved basis Gardner Murphy was consulted by the Government of India to "analyze" it.

survive, turned his back on his innocence, and employed his self-sacrifice, his martyrdom as a disingenuous bid for power with and over his orphan brethren in order to use their leverage to extract revenge from the Establishment parents (Grotstein, 1991a, 1991b)? Might this not have been aided and abetted by the ill-informed and perfidious economic and geopolitical interventions of Great Britain and France earlier and currently the United States, all of whom then became equated with the ancient Hebrew Abraham who sent their founder Ishmael and his mother Hagar into the desert? Now that we are aware of the long-term effects of child abuse and of its consequences as multiple personality and post-traumatic stress disorders, etc., and with our realization that virtually all the destructive tyrants of history, especially Hitler, were ill-launched, we now have an obligation more than ever to intervene in the nursery, if not in the pregnancy, of potential world destroyers.

An important aspect of the situation which emerges from the psychohistorical approach of leaders is the hypnotic force, the charisma with which these malignant narcissists ensorcell their willing subjects. Tustin (1981) has helped us understand this problem with her conception of the "hard object," a more primitive version of and different than the transitional object, one which is used by autistic children to "plug their holes" by which she means that these patients feel comforted, not by softness or tenderness, but by hardness. They identify with hardness in order to give themselves a sense of solidity and safety. It is not too far a stretch of the imagination to suggest that both Hitler and Saddam Hussein were personified hard objects who plugged the "black holes" of Germany's and Iraq's ennui and demoralization.

The instrument of mass psychology also needs our urgent attention. The contributions of Freud (1921) to group psychology, followed by those of Bion (1961, 1970), are noteworthy. Both helped us understand how the group appoints the leader by the projection of their collective ego ideal. Bion, going further, clarified that the leader is idealized and deified in order to "treat" the group's depression. He also clarified the inevitability of the formation of resistance ("basic assumption") groups which undermine or sabotage the collective function of the group.

There have been other approaches to the study of mass psychology. The Frankfurt School has approached the study of groups and masses using traditional classical models for the individual (Adorno, 1978). More recently, there has been a development of Kleinian thinking in this direction from people who are stepping in the tradition of Bion (Alford, 1989). They see intra- and international crises (they do not mention the Gulf War specifically) as manifestations of what Klein (1940) calls the paranoid-schizoid position in the individual but applied to mass psychology. Along with the experience of persecutory anxiety in the group there is the attribution of danger to an

external group in order to produce cohesiveness within the group. Polarization and total agreement with the aims of the group (Establishment) then takes place.

Individuals within the group who disagree with the ideals of the group are thought of as subversives and are either exiled, jailed, or executed. This produces an even more enforced solidarity and even more persecutory anxiety about the leadership and the establishment themselves, but this anxiety again is projected onto an outside group, the "enemy." If there is no legitimate enemy, an enemy must be found in order to unite the group. In this regard, it is interesting to contemplate the fact that even though psychoanalysis does understand the concept of "stranger anxiety," there is no clear-cut psychology that has been spelled out for the real enemy of the individual or the group. Even in the Oedipus complex, for instance, father is the son's persecutor because of the projective identification of the son's rivalry with and hatred of him. One of the unstated goals of analysis is to help the individual patient be able to distinguish between a *persecutor* (which always is projective identification of aspects of him/herself into the object) and the *enemy*, which is never to be confused with her/himself.

A culture, nation, or group which experiences defeat, humiliation, ennui, apathy, or loss of its former grandeur (whether actual or mythical) seems to be aroused by the drum beats of a charismatic leader's demonic hardness, especially if he is able enough to address the martyrdom of his group and is gifted enough to appoint the credibly correct "enemy."

I should now like to return to the issue of the psychology of the malignant narcissistic or psychopathic leader. Oftentimes these leaders, in addition to being ruthless, cruel, sadistic, and psychopathic opportunists, seem to conform to the "brother role" rather than the "father role." This was particularly true with Hitler, but also of Lenin and Stalin. The latter two had executed the czar, the father, and became the "big brothers" to the victimized masses. Hitler had followed in the footsteps of the kaiser and also of von Hindenberg, clearly fathers to the German nation. The role of the brother as leader comes about as a default of the authority and credibility of the parent group. It is a breakdown of the proper oedipal role of the father. The *nom de pere* goes into foreclosure. Abelin (1980), in talking about the role of the father in facilitating the separation and individuation in the toddler during the rapprochement subphase, describes two triangulations, the later one is the well-known *oedipus complex* itself, but the other earlier one is what he terms the "*Madonna complex*." By that he means a triangulation which involves one child in rivalry with another child for mother's love. It is not clear whether the other child is actual or imaginary. I personally believe that it can be both. Melanie Klein has alluded to this in terms of her belief in the universality of the infant's epistemaphilic desire to invade mother's body because of envy of her "internal children," the blessed ones who do not have

to be born but are allowed to remain inside their mother all the time — *as the sacred and blessed children with a birthright!* The point of the matter is that the Madonna complex seems to be the seed of the development of another grouping in the family constellation, the first being the father-mother-child grouping and the other being the sibling group, which in turn is the seed for peer group relationships. The role of the oldest child then becomes of enormous importance in this group. We see its importance particularly in large families which are also dysfunctional and/or abusive. From my experience in analyzing individuals and in speculating about groups, I have been able to conclude, as does *Scripture*, that people — and groups — seem to believe that they are mythically descended either from the blessed Abel or the damned Cain. The birthright and entitlement of the former is intact and unquestioned; that of the latter is always an issue — and its psychoanalytic name is "envy!"

Ultimately, the cause of world distress, such as the Gulf War and other international catastrophes, has to be seen as the persecutory anxiety of nations and groups which is truly looking for a messiah to quell their fears. The practical messiah which can be offered is the nation or cultural group which has truly achieved the transcendence of the depressive position and is able to bear the pain of its brother and sister as it lends help without naivete or compromise. We psychoanalysts must be informed, intervening Samaritans because we *are* our brother's and sister's keeper — but we must intervene now in order to contravene our children's — and their children's — murder!

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SOCIETAL BREAKDOWN; NARCISSISM AND WAR

by Joseph Natterson, M.D.

Sometimes I feel that I have exhausted my reserves for coping with disappointing socio-political events. My despair at such times seems complete and unalterable. Pessimism over mankind's future prevails. In all instances, my focus is on the fact that people are or will be destroyed or damaged. Currently, I am struggling to digest and metabolize the estimated 100,000 - 300,000 deaths and countless injured in Arabia during the past six months. My initial response seemed unbearable — I was stuffed with and surrounded by blood, brains, shit, viscera, and all the rest. It filled me. No space existed in me for any other meaning. I could practice my profession, participate in family life, exercise, and work on final details of my book. These life activities retained their reality, but it was as though I and they had been soaked in the tincture of dehumanization. Their innocence and mine were profoundly compromised.

My hideous indigestion has now abated, I can now watch, read about, and listen to generals, senators and presidents, without severe nausea, although still with acute dislike. The net effect upon me has been a subtle but significant numbing of my moral sensibilities.

Is this current abomination the ultimate blow to faith in the promise of a non-violent approach to humanity's major problems? Or am I, in my mid-60's, finally starting to grow up and admit the ugly facts about human beings and their social institutions? I only wish it were the latter, but I fear it is the former. We are animals, and I can admit that we are what we are, but did we really have to become worse than we are?

When the crisis erupted last summer, I could not understand what was so uniquely menacing; everyone else seemed to understand. Once again, I trusted the wisdom of others, instead of having faith in the logic of my soul. Perhaps they were right: Saddam was the reincarnation of Hitler, the sanctity of national boundaries had to be protected, a threat to our oil and hence to our national life existed. Still, we could curb aggression without war. So I wrote letters, made phone calls, argued with my acquaintances, simple-mindedly

thinking it would make a difference. Instead the dogs of war strained and snarled ever more ferociously. Only during the few days of mounting bellicosity just before the air war was unleashed did I achieve the crucial insight: the basic decisions were made last summer and fall. We had all been treated to the grandest and most spectacular political theater. The politicians, priests, and petitioners (like me) had created the exciting and suspenseful first act of the mass entertainment: would there be a war or not?

Then came the second act, the supreme Nintendo game; everyone (not me) watched happily transfixed as our smart bombs and all our high tech gadgets performed unerringly. We won every game, we were united, the post Vietnam malaise was finally cured — and the agency of this cure was the searing, mutilating, annihilating of thousands upon thousands of human beings. We enjoyed the effects, while the attendant suffering was utterly invisible and unconscious to us.

Since I am a low tech type, I preferred less popular metaphors, mine were Biblical. I reflected that ours was some kind of perverse celebration of the approaching end of mankind's bloodiest, most gruesome century and of the imminent conclusion of the millennium. So, we marked the event by carpet bombing the Garden of Eden, the cradle of civilization.

As a psychoanalyst, I feel uneasy about applying analytic methods or concepts to all of this. However, I intended the preceding comments to be analytically informed. Let me try to write more formally: I believe the Persian Gulf calamity is symptomatic of a global crisis of overpopulation, diminishing resources, pollution of all kind, extreme inequities in the development and fulfillment of human needs within and between nations. Ethnic, racial, class, and religious antagonisms further complicate the basic problems. Institutions and our leadership (everywhere) reflect the anachronistic, contradictory, and myopic aims and processes causing and being caused by the above issues.

Jim Mann (*L.A. Times*, January 7, 1991) wrote of "... U.S. forces going to war at a time in history when the world is in a state of almost unprecedented flux." Mann described the move as "an extraordinary gamble," the risk being taken in order to achieve a world "dominated by the United States and its military power."

In a similar mode, Thomas Ferguson (*The Nation*, January 28, 1991) indicated that U.S. policy is dictated by the urgent need for control of Mid-East petrodollars and implying that our real enemies in the Gulf War are the prospering giants Germany and Japan, with the suffering indigenous people the unfortunate pawns in this desperate economic competition.

These plausible analyses, based on might and money, imply an intense defensive national narcissism. The leaders can enjoy the high stakes global poker without the horrible personal risks. The general public, which bears

the cost and the physical risks, needs more personally relevant motives for being at war. Hence, the demonization of Saddam Hussein and his evil henchmen who become a menace to us and the other "good" people, such as the Kuwaitis, et. al. So the leaders and the led are suitably supported by different but appropriate narcissistic defenses. And we continue stumbling blindly toward catastrophe.

Boring subjects like education, improved political awareness of the whole public, a healthier domestic economy, and elevation of our cultural level are all pertinent. A wiser public would demand wiser and more honest political and military policies.

Such a public would require leaders who prefer hard humanitarian work to the excitement of global gambles, and this same enlightened public with its enhanced maturity would never settle for the shabby national narcissism that currently prevails.

Although I deplore analogizing from individual psychology to group processes, such as treating a nation as a person, I cannot resist the temptation, with all its hazards, at this time. The immensity, density, and complexity of a modern society carries great dangers of inner fragmentation with systemic breakdown, as subsystems within the social organism strive desperately to function and survive — with less and less regard for the well-being of the whole system. This internal warfare induces guilt and mounting unease. Superficial, reassuring, but basically dishonest motives and goals, such as those dispensed so sickeningly during the Gulf crisis, give the illusion of integrity and security to the nation-state. These are the narcissistic processes to which I have been referring. These presumed processes are mediated through the millions of individual and group perceptions and interactions that as a whole are organized into the societal process.

I continue to hope that our huge, dysfunctional and alienated society can move away from its disabling narcissistic defenses, but I am not sanguine. Our leaders, too, are locked into the destructive spiral. But we have seen so much willful, cynical deceit at the highest levels that it seems reasonable that at least the intellectuals of this country penetrate the narcissistic fog and then demand that our leadership abandon courthouse and corporate politics in a time of mounting danger.

Mass violence damages human life at all levels, including the intra-psychic. I believe that my anguish over the recent war is atypical only in my degree of awareness of the psychological events occurring within me. Most people, I believe, are unprepared for this subjective experience. They undergo massive regression and become dominated by narcissistic concerns. Splitting, denial, and projection become necessary to support their narcissistic rationalizations, which fall into two categories. The first is a sophisticated version and it consists of what I've referred to above as the thrill of

international poker, buttressed by the spirit of triumphalism. The naive type expresses itself as the crusade by good America and its allies against the demoniacal enemy. This second version is massively stimulated by the messages of the media. The more disordered and dysfunctional the society, the more likely is leadership's resort to narcissistically motivated aggression. This policy enables leaders and followers to avoid the necessary but unpopular task of analyzing and curing the disease within our society.

ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES:
A CULTURAL MIRROR (ALMOST)
OF THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

by Rudolf Ekstein, Ph.D.

Different nations have fairy tales that tell us about the culture, what kind of culture it was. *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* takes place in Baghdad. This story was written endless years ago. I read the story when I was a little boy, and, by chance, when the war broke out in the Persian Gulf, I remembered the story. How I dreamt, "Someday I will go to Baghdad." And I will go to these countries because I met the fairy tale world, and I will experience the magic of that time. And it is this country that we now want to enter, always having in mind that behind the fairy tale is truth. Is it sociological truth? is it historical truth? or, most important for me as an analyst, is it psychological truth about the inner conflicts that people have in this kind of culture, this kind of civilization?

So I will take the story now and I want to read it in a special way — I will interrupt myself often; and the reader can listen to it in a special way: namely, in this situation, as if you listened to a whole culture tell you a story. Such as you listen to a person who comes to complain about his life and to try to work with you toward self-understanding. Also, rather than saying it says something about each individual, it says something about the total culture, it says something about the structure.

And now the story, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, from *The Arabian Nights*. We are back in Arabia now. At that time, though, it was not Arabia, it was Persia. The old name.

IN A TOWN IN PERSIA there dwelt two brothers, one named Cassim, the other Ali Baba. Cassim was married to a rich wife and lived in plenty, while Ali Baba had to maintain his wife and children by cutting wood in a neighboring forest and selling it in the town. One day, when Ali Baba was in the forest —

That is the poor one, remember, the one who had nothing. We are introduced right away — a class society, Karl Marx would say. But I want you to occasionally go beyond Karl Marx and not only look at the sociology, the social facts of that society.

— he saw a troop of men on horseback coming toward him in a cloud of dust. He was afraid they were robbers, and climbed into a tree for safety. When they came up to him and dismounted, he counted forty of them. They unbridled their horses and tied them to trees. The finest man among them, whom Ali Baba took to be their Captain, went a little way among some bushes, and said: "Open, Sesame!" so plainly that Ali Baba heard him. A door opened in the rocks, and having made the troop go in, he followed them, and the door shut again of itself. They stayed some time inside, and Ali Baba, fearing they might come out and catch him, was forced to sit patiently in the tree. At last the door opened again, and the Forty Thieves came out. As the Captain went in last, he came out first, and made them all pass by him; he then closed the door, saying: "Shut, Sesame!" Every man bridled his horse and mounted, the Captain put himself at their head, and they returned as they came.

Now then, you see, there is a social situation described: he watches from afar, far up, from the tree, and of course cannot help but wonder: "What did they do in there?" He wanted to be a discoverer. It is not unlike every child in every family who sees sometimes — forgive me that I become for a moment Freudian — that the door closes after they have said, "Open the door," and then they disappear, those two people; could they be his parents that I am talking about? Then they come out again, and the door closes up for a while and he wonders what happened there. He is curious. He wants to discover. Ali Baba wants to know what is there to be discovered.

Then Ali Baba climbed down and went to the door concealed among the bushes, and said: "Open, Sesame!" and it flew open. Ali Baba, who expected a dull, dismal place —

In that way I think he is different from young people who want to know what goes on in the bedroom.

— was greatly surprised to find it large and well lighted, and hollowed by the hand of a man in the form of a vault, which received the light from an opening in the ceiling. He saw rich bales of merchandise — silk, stuff-brocades all piled together, and gold and silver in heaps, and money in leather purses. He went in and the door shut behind him.

Now of course, danger! He suddenly looked up: one could discover him on this course. And we find now the ambivalence in he who tries to discover the secrets of those who are on top. And sometimes when you try to find out, you find, even though you can open the door, that suddenly the door is locked. What he finds in there: enormous riches.

He did not look at the silver, but brought out as many bags of gold as he thought his asses, which were browsing outside, could carry, loaded them with the bags, and hid it all with fagots. Using the words: "Shut,

"Sesame!" he closed the door and went home. Then he drove his asses into the yard, shut the gates, carried the moneybags to his wife, and emptied them out before her. He bade her keep the secret, and he would go and bury the gold.

He does now the same thing that the thief does. It is very interesting: when we identify a little bit with those thieves and also go stealing — because, after all, the gold was not his — we do then the same. We identify with the aggressor. Nothing new.

"Let me first measure it," said his wife. "I will go borrow a measure of someone while you dig the hole." So she ran to the wife of Cassim and borrowed a measure. Knowing Ali Baba's poverty, the sister was curious to find out what sort of grain his wife wished to measure, and artfully put some suet at the bottom of the measure. Ali Baba's wife went home and set the measure on the heap of gold, and filled it and emptied it often, to her great content. She then carried it back to her sister, without noticing that a piece of gold was sticking to it —

Very interesting, isn't it, when you ask yourself: Even though they are relatives, how honest are they to each other? How much do they try to figure out: What goes on behind the door? What is this really all about? And do it sometimes with trickery. All of us are honest enough to know that sometimes we do things with trickery when we want to find something out about relatives and friends, and we whisper to each other in order to know what the full truth was. And to think of relationships with total honesty is, to be sure, a religious demand; and sometimes we wonder if even those who give us that demand, the religious leaders, the priests, the ministers, the rabbis, whoever they are, whether they always honestly tell us or whether they only ask us to be honest. Here we find already a society where a lot goes on in secret. And there is deception. And of course I am asking you why that fairy tale in Western society, whether it is now in Vienna where I grew up or whether it is Los Angeles or New York or wherever, would have so much appeal? And I think the appeal has to do with the fact that there is hidden truth. The hidden truth, however, is so interesting because we can sort of play with the truth: it is, anyway, only a fairy tale; we allow ourselves, a little bit, to understand how other people are, and, maybe occasionally, to play with the idea, I am really not that different.

— which Cassim's wife perceived directly when her back was turned. She grew very curious, and said to Cassim when he came home: "Cassim, your brother is richer than you. He does not count his money, he measures it." He begged her to explain this riddle, which she did by showing him the piece of money and telling him where she found it.

You realize, the way the story starts, there are two brothers, and the poor one will get rich, and the woman of the other brother tells him about the secret;

and we start to see now jealousy and envy between the two brothers. We see how family life slowly develops in the way that you know it does. Told to us by a fairy tale. But I say to you, it is much more than a fairy tale. It tells you more truth than the *Los Angeles Times*.

Then Cassim grew so envious that he could not sleep, and went to his brother in the morning before sunrise. "Ali baba," he said, showing him the gold piece, "you pretend to be poor and yet you measure gold." By this Ali Baba perceived that through his wife's folly Cassim and his wife knew their secret, so he confessed all and offered Cassim a share. "That I expect," said Cassim; "but I must know where to find the treasure, otherwise I will discover all, and you will lose all."

The struggle in the family begins. And it is all a fairy tale. That is what we tell our children when we read them fairy tales.

Ali Baba, more out of kindness than fear, told him of the cave, and the very words to use. Cassim left Ali Baba, meaning to be beforehand without him and get the treasure for himself. He rose early next morning, and set out with ten mules loaded with great chests. He soon found the place, and the door in the rock. He said: "Open, Sesame!" and the door opened and shut behind him. He could have feasted his eyes all day on the treasures, but he now hastened to gather together as much of it as possible; but when he was ready to go he could not remember what to say for thinking of his great riches. Instead of "Sesame," he said: "Open, Barley!" and the door remained fast.

That is the way it goes, isn't it? He must come to a crisis point. Conceived to be an open way to riches — you know, such as when Hansel and Gretel come to that beautiful house that was made of all kinds of things that one can eat, and they are caught by the witch — he is now caught. He is locked up. And he must think of what will happen, I suppose, when the forty thieves will come.

He named several different sorts of grain, all but the right one, and the door stuck fast. He was so frightened at the danger he was in that he had as much forgotten the word as if he had never heard it.

In other words, he has lost the magic. In each of these fairy tales there is a piece of magic. And we do not need to know much psychology to know that he lost it because he wanted to steal all of it — not only away from the thieves, but he wanted to steal it away from his brother because he was envious. But if you have a bit of conscience, then you must forget the magic.

Of course, this is important for us: a society that lives on trading, and the social structure is such that you are not safe because the country is full of thieves; you have to hide what you possess, you have to keep secrets, you cannot even tell your relatives. It is a society which is described as directed by paranoia. We are not completely different, you know. In America I learned

that income and many other things are kept secret: Do not tell! No question about it. You do not tell. What does this do, the bargaining that goes back and forth between people? You do not want them to know, just like when you are playing cards and you do not show the cards. Life has become a game between people. We have now the poor brother and the rich brother. The poor brother tries to hide but finally tells the secret; but the rich brother forgets the part of the secret that will make it possible for him to take the money and run. He is now caught in his own trap — his own guilt and his own greed. Cassim has put himself into a prison.

About noon the robbers returned to their cave, and saw Cassim's mules roving about with great chests on their backs. This gave them the alarm; they drew their sabers, and went to the door, which opened on their Captain saying: "Open, Sesame!" Cassim, who had heard the trampling of their horses' feet, resolved to sell his life dearly, so when the door opened he leaped out and threw the Captain down. In vain, however, for the robbers with their sabers soon killed him. On entering the cave they saw all the bags laid ready, and could not imagine how anyone had got in without knowing their secret. They cut Cassim's body into four quarters, and nailed them up inside the cave, in order to frighten anyone who should venture in, and went away in search of more treasure.

We enter now a world where torture and murdering, a thousand or two thousand years ago, was a part of living. And they put him on the cross and divided him into four — and I am not speaking about Jesus Christ and the Romans, but I speak about this old Arabian tale — to frighten the others and to make sure that they will remain rich, they will have all, they will possess all, and everybody else who tries to get to it must die. Has this happened two thousand or a thousand years ago, or am I describing the world of today? Even if you have nothing more to go by but the *Los Angeles Times*, it is the world of today, as one realizes if one has some kind of encompassing picture between the lines of the newspapers and what happens in some of the cities in Iraq, and what happens when some try to escape to Jordan, and what happens when some ask, "Please, let us go to Turkey," and the Turks say, "No, we cannot take unless the West is willing to take." And is the West willing to take? Are we willing to take a hundred thousand refugees? I know the time when I wanted to come to America, a refugee — it was American tourists who helped me. We know how difficult it was and how many never came and were murdered and died in gas chambers. That is the situation they described here, isn't it?

As night drew on Cassim's wife grew very uneasy, and ran to her brother-in-law and told him where her husband had gone. Ali baba did his best to comfort her, and set out to the forest in search of Cassim. The first thing he saw on entering the cave was his dead brother. Full of

horror, he put the body on one of his asses, and bags of gold on the other two and, covering all with some fagots, returned home. He drove the two asses laden with gold into his own yard, and led the other to Cassim's house.

You can imagine this culture. Family life long, long ago. You keep from the world what really has happened. And you live in a country or in a culture full of intrigues, of life, of deceit, of bargaining, and the wish to get rich — regardless of what the outcome will be. (Also, I do not know whether they are talking about America and some of the cases in courts of men who tried to become millionaires and had stolen all of it.)

The door was opened by the slave Morgiana, whom he knew to be both brave and cunning. Unloading the ass, he said to her: "This is the body of your master, who has been murdered, but whom we must bury as though he had died in his bed. I will speak with you again, but now tell your mistress I am come." The wife of Cassim, on learning the fate of her husband, broke out in cries and tears, but Ali Baba offered to take her to live with him and his wife if she would promise to keep his counsel and leave everything to Morgiana; whereupon she agreed, and dried her eyes. Morgiana, meanwhile, sought an apothecary and asked him for some lozenges. "My poor master," she said, "can neither eat nor speak, and no one knows what his distemper is." She carried home the lozenges and returned next day weeping, and asked for an essence only given to those just about to die. Thus, in the evening, no one was surprised to hear the wretched shrieks and cries of Cassim's wife and Morgiana, telling everyone that Cassim was dead.

But first she disguised the story. she wanted it published that he was dead, but she changed the story around. It is sort of like this strange thing that happened in the home of one of the Kennedys recently; and one has to try now to change the story around and ask, what really happened? And here it goes.

The day after Morgiana went to an old cobbler near the gates of the town who opened his stall early, put a piece of gold in hand, and bade him follow her with his needle and thread. Having bound his eyes with a handkerchief, she took him to the room where the body lay, pulled off the bandage, and bade him sew the quarters together, after which she covered his eyes again and led him home.

So he did not know what he was doing, that he was to help to disguise the murder.

Then they buried Cassim, and Morgiana his slave followed him to the grave, weeping and tearing her hair, while Cassim's wife stayed at home uttering lamentable cries. Next day she went to live with Ali Baba, who

gave Cassim's shop to his eldest son. The Forty Thieves, on their return to the cave, were much astonished to find Cassim's body gone and some of their moneybags. "We are certainly discovered," said the Captain, "and shall be undone if we cannot find out who it is that knows our secret.

A hostile army against their family — what can they do?

"Two men must have known it; we have killed one, we must now find the other. To this end one of you who is bold and artful must go into the city dressed as a traveler, and discover whom we have killed, and whether men talk of the strange manner of his death. If the messenger fails he must lose his life, lest we be betrayed."

You realize how the interpersonal life goes in cultures of that sort: You must find out who it was who had discovered your secret! If you do not find out, you lose your life. Do you think Saddam Hussein read that story? He must have. Here described is the background of that kind of civilization.

One of the thieves started up and offered to do this, and after the rest had highly commended him for his bravery he disguised himself, and happened to enter the town at daybreak, just by Baba Mustapha's stall. The thief bade him good day, saying, "Honest man, how can you possibly see to stitch at your age?" "Old as I am," replied the cobbler, "I have very good eyes, and you will believe me when I tell you that I sewed a dead body together in a place where I had less light than I have now."

The robber was overjoyed at his good fortune, and, giving him a piece of gold, desired to be shown the house where he stitched up the dead body. At first Mustapha refused, saying that he had been blindfolded; but when the robber gave him another piece of gold he began to think he might remember the turnings if blindfolded as before. This means succeeded; the robber partly led him, and was partly guided by him, right in front of Cassim's house, the door which the robber marked with a piece of chalk. Then, well pleased, he bade farewell to Baba Mustapha and returned to the forest. By and by Morgiana, going out, saw the mark the robber had made, quickly guessed that some mischief was brewing, and fetching a piece of chalk marked two or three doors on each side, without saying anything to her master or mistress. The thief, meantime, told his comrades of his discovery. The Captain thanked him, and bade him show him the house he had marked. But when they came to it they saw that five or six of the houses were chalked in the same manner. The guide was so confounded that he knew not what answer to make, and when they returned he was at once beheaded for having failed.

He made a mistake. He trusted the thieves. What was he, himself? A man

ready to cooperate with thieves; and he was punished. You see how the fairy tale of that timé, if you want to call that a fairy tale, secretly puts into it morality. It seems as though it is all about murder, but it is also about morality because it is a cautionary tale: if you do that, then you will be punished; if you give away your friends just to make money, you will be punished — we will end your life.

Another robber was dispatched, and, having won over Baba Mustapha, marked the house in red chalk; but Morgiana being again too clever for them, the second messenger was put to death also.

A few more like that and whoever is the Captain of the robbers, of those forty thieves, will create opposition in his own land. You know, such as we assume, in countries like that, that he who makes too much use of murdering the opposition finally increases the opposition. That is the way it always goes.

The Captain now resolved to go himself, but, wiser than the others, he did not mark the house, but looked at it so closely that he could not fail to remember it. He returned, and ordered his men to go into the neighboring villages and buy nineteen mules, and thirty-eight leather jars, all empty, except one which was full of oil. The Captain put one of his men, fully armed, into each, rubbing the outside of the jars with oil from the full vessel. Then the nineteen mules were loaded with thirty-seven robbers in jars, and the jar of oil, and reached the town by dusk. The Captain stopped his mules in front of Ali Baba's house, and said to Ali baba, who was sitting outside for coolness: "I have brought some oil from a distance to sell at tomorrow's market, but it is now so late that I know not where to pass the night, unless you will do me the favor to take me in." Though Ali Baba had seen the Captain of the robbers in the forest, he did not recognize him in the disguise of an oil merchant.

It is kind of a pre-capitalist society. Oil? Did I hear oil? But it was not the kind of oil that we talk about, so do not worry about the past.

He bade him welcome, opened his gates for the mules to enter, and went to Morgiana to bid her prepare a bed and supper for his guest. He brought the stranger into his hall, and after they had supped went again to speak to Morgiana in the kitchen, while the Captain went into the yard under pretense of seeing after his mules, but really to tell his men what to do. Beginning at the first jar and ending at the last, he said to each man: "As soon as I throw some stones from the window of the chamber where I lie, cut the jars open with your knives and come out, and I will be with you in a trice." He returned to the house, and Morgiana led him to his chamber. She then told Adballah, her fellow-slave, to set on the pot to make some broth for her master, who had gone to bed. Meanwhile her lamp went out, and she had no more oil in the house. "Do not be uneasy," said Adballah, "go into the yard and take

some out of one of those jars." Morgiana thanked him for his advice, took the oil pot, and went into the yard. When she came to the first jar the robber inside said softly: "Is it time?"

Any other slave but Morgiana, on finding a man in the jar instead of the oil she wanted, would have screamed and made a noise; but she, knowing the danger her master was in, bethought herself of a plan, and answered quietly: "Not yet, but soon." She went to all the jars, giving the same answer, till she came to the jar of oil. She now saw that her master, thinking to entertain an oil merchant, had let thirty-eight robbers into his house. She filled her oil pot, went back to the kitchen, and, having lit her lamp, went again to the oil jar and filled a large kettle full of oil. When it boiled she went and poured enough oil into every jar to stifle and kill the robber inside. When this brave deed was done she went back to the kitchen, put out the fire and the lamp, and waited to see what would happen.

In a quarter of an hour the Captain of the robbers awoke, got up, and opened the window. As all seemed quiet he threw down some little pebbles which hit the jars. He listened, and as none of his men seemed to stir he grew uneasy, and went down into the yard. On going to the first jar and saying, "Are you asleep?" he smelled the hot boiled oil, and knew at once that his plot to murder Ali Baba and his household had been discovered. He found all the gang were dead, and, missing the oil out of the last jar, became aware of the manner of their death. He then forced the lock of a door leading into a garden, and climbing over several wells made his escape. Morgiana heard and saw all this, and rejoicing at her success, went to bed and fell asleep.

At daybreak Ali Baba arose, and, seeing the oil jars there still, asked why the merchant had not gone with his mules. Morgiana bade him look in the first jar and see if there was any oil. Seeing a man, he started back in terror. "Have no fear," said Morgiana; "the man cannot harm you: he is dead." Ali Baba, when he had recovered somewhat from his astonishment, asked what had become of the merchant. "Merchant!" said she, "he is no more a merchant than I am!" and she told him the whole story, assuring him that it was a plot of the robbers of the forest, of whom only three were left, and that the white and red chalk had something to do with it. Ali Baba at once gave Morgiana her freedom, saying that he owed her his life. They then buried the bodies in Ali Baba's garden, while the mules were sold in the market by slaves.

The Captain returned to his lonely cave, which seemed frightful to him without his lost companions, and firmly resolved to avenge them by killing Ali Baba. He dressed himself carefully, and went into the town, where he took lodgings in an inn. In the course of a great many journeys

to the forest he carried away many rich stuffs and much fine linen, and set up a shop opposite that of Ali Baba's son. He called himself Cogia Hassan —

What a coincidence. What is his name? Hussein? This one is Hassan?

— and as he was both civil and well dressed he soon made friends with Ali Baba's son, and through him with Ali Baba, whom he was continually asking to sup with him. Ali Baba, wishing to return his kindness, invited him into his house and received him smiling, thanking him for his kindness to his son. When the merchant was about to take his leave Ali Baba stopped him, saying, "Where are you going, sir, in such haste. Will you not stay and sup with me?" The merchant refused, saying that he had a reason; and, on Ali Baba's asking him what that was, he replied: "It is, sir, that I can eat no victuals that have any salt in them." "If that is all," said Ali Baba, "let me tell you that there shall be no salt in either the meat or the bread that we eat tonight." He went to give this order to Morgiana, who was much surprised. "Who is this man," she said, "who eats no salt with his meat?" "He is an honest man, Morgiana," returned her master; "therefore do as I bid you." But she could not withstand a desire to see this strange man, so she helped Abdallah to carry up the dishes, and saw in a moment that Cogia Hassan was the robber Captain, and carried a dagger under his garment. "I am not surprised," she said to herself, "that this wicked man, who intends to kill my master, will eat no salt with him; but I will hinder his plans."

She sent up the supper by Abdallah, while she made ready for one of the boldest acts that could be thought on. When the dessert had been served, Cogia Hassan was left alone with Ali Baba and his son, whom he thought to make drunk and then to murder them. Morgiana, meanwhile, put on a headdress like a dancing girl's, and clasped a girdle around her waist, from which hung a dagger with a sliver hilt, and said to Abdallah: "Take your tambourine, and let us go and divert our master and his guest." Abdallah took his tambourine and played before Morgiana until they came to the door, where Abdallah stopped playing and Morgiana made a low curtsy. "Come in, Morgiana," said Ali Baba, "and let Cogia Hassan see what you can do"; and, turning to Cogia Hassan, he said: "She's my slave and my housekeeper." Cogia Hassan was by no means pleased, for he feared that his chance of killing Ali Baba was gone for the present; but he pretended great eagerness to see Morgiana, and Abdallah began to play and Morgiana to dance.

After she had performed several dances she drew her dagger and made passes with it, sometimes pointing it at her own breast, sometimes at her master's, as if it were part of the dance. Suddenly, out of breath, she snatched the tambourine from Abdallah with her left hand, and,

holding the dagger in her right, held out the tambourine to her master. Ali Baba and his son put a piece of gold into it, and Cogia Hassan, seeing that she was coming to him, pulled out his purse to make her a present, but while he was putting his hand into it Morgiana plunged the dagger into his heart.

It is the woman who saves him. The woman knows, she can look through it. The man is completely unaware, and his brother forgot how to get out of the cave; it is an utter naivete. And I think one of the difficulties with Iraq is that Hussein — I believe he has once in his life been in Paris for a short conference — had never really been out of the country. He did not know the Europeans, and he certainly does not know the Americans. Nevertheless, in his own country, an immense country, he is like the chief of the forty thieves. Except he is the chief of an army with a million men. And what will happen? He will end up like the chief of the forty thieves. What is also interesting about this story is that it is a version where all success depends on the woman — in a culture in which women do not count. Where deeper underneath the use of her as a slave is the thought: nothing will happen to me, she will protect me; she becomes sort of a mother.

"Unhappy girl!" cried Ali Baba and his son, "what have you done to ruin me?" "It was to preserve you, master, not to ruin you," answered Morgiana. "See here," opening the false merchant's garment and showing the dagger; "see what an enemy you have entertained! Remember he would eat no salt with you, and what more would you have? Look at him! he is both the false oil merchant and the Captain of the Forty Thieves."

Ali Baba was so grateful to Morgiana for thus saving his life that he offered her to his son in marriage, who readily consented, and a few days later the wedding was celebrated with great splendor.

At the end of a year Ali Baba, hearing nothing of the two remaining robbers, judged they were dead, and set out to the cave. The door opened on his saying: "Open, Sesame!" He went in, and saw that nobody had been there since the Captain left it. He brought away as much gold as he could carry, and returned to town. He told his son the secret of the cave, which his son handed down in his turn, so the children and grandchildren of Ali Baba were rich to the end of their lives.

The happy ending after a course of murder, of betrayal, of war, of thievery, and of dishonesty. A culture described. Go back to the newspapers now and ask yourself whether the newspapers could outdo the first news that we had from that part of the world — the way it was then and the way it might become if it cannot be changed.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND ANTICOLONIALISM
THE INFLUENCE OF FRANTZ FANON

by Guillaume Surena

Translated by Michele Fine

*"... No race holds the monopoly to beauty, intelligence, and strength,
and there is room for all at the banquet of conquest."*

Aime Cesaire (1939)

Professor Tobie Nathan, in the *Monde Diplomatique* of October 1989, reveals to us, with the prophetic intonation of the great discoverers, "that Africa is not a land to be conquered by this or that psycho-analytical coterie looking for a clientele."¹ In this hasty rather than enlightening article, it is argued that the Negroes who lay claim to the pure gold of psychoanalysis had been "'whitened' in the universities and Western institutes."

I am therefore conscious of the risk involved in confronting such a high priest of academic knowledge. Nor do I underestimate the chance that I am taking with certain Negroes from the Antilles, in challenging the view of one of the Negroes we are the most proud of since Toussaint Louverture, one of those who has contributed the most to placing colonial alienation under new scrutiny, namely: Frantz Fanon.

How can we account for the delayed development of psychoanalysis in black communities, whether in Africa, in the U.S.A., in Brazil or in the Carribean basin? How can we explain this tardiness when Negro intellectuals have assimilated all the great elements of Western knowledge?

There are indeed many reasons. It would require a detailed study of the evolution of psychoanalysis in the black communities may they be anglophone, americanophone, hispanophone, lusitaphone, netherlandophone to attempt a global explanation of the phenomenon. But it is necessary to dismiss the fashionable sophism according to which psychoanalysis, born in Europe, is compatible with Western civilization but incompatible with others.

To do so is to assign to psychoanalysis the mission of defending and comforting a cultural ideal. It is also to quickly forget the tenacious resistance which Europe opposed to psychoanalysis, and to underestimate the historical merit of the early psychoanalysts in a struggle of dubious outcome. One of the great lessons of this story is that concrete analysts are needed in the field so that psychoanalysis may develop as theory, practice, and movement. The pure gold of psychoanalysis, that of Freud, has always appeared to me as incompatible with the colonialists' projects of alienation; on the contrary, articles such as that of Tobie Nathan can only be of desservice to us non-European analysts.

One of the reasons for this tardiness, it has always seemed to me, is the influence of Frantz Fanon. The critique which he formulated in his book *Peau noire, Masques blancs* (*Black Skin, White Masks*)² against the psychoanalytical thesis of Octave Mannoni has become an anti-psychoanalytical dogma because of its total commitment to the Algerian revolution and decolonization, and also perhaps because of his early death. His international influence has taken root among the intellectuals of the Third World.

In this paper we shall cover:

1. A quick overview of the colonial adventure.
2. The encounter of Negro intellectuals with psychoanalysis.
3. The thesis of Octave Mannoni, and its antithesis, that of Frantz Fanon.
4. The influence of Frantz Fanon.

I. QUICK OVERVIEW OF THE COLONIAL ADVENTURE

The large colonial enterprises that introduce what historians call "Modern times," are these unprecedented gigantic operations, of pillage and barbarism which have ensured for Europe a dominant place in world history, up to today. It is, after all, the great poet Alexis Saint-Leger, alias Saint-John Perse, grandson of a colonist settler, born in the Antilles, who sings it to us in his *Anabase*:

*"Vast countries auctioned out loudly under the solar inflation, the high plateaus pacified, the provinces appraised in the solemn smell of roses . . ."*³

*"Go and tell of our customs of violence, of our horses sober and fast on the seed of revolts, of our helmets flared by the furor of daylight . . ."*⁴

*"A great principle of violence marshalled our mores . . ."*⁵

*"... morning sacrifice of the heart of a black sheep . . ."*⁶, the black sheep representing the Black person in the Persian lexicon.

But these momentous oversea expeditions were more than just that. They were also the time of an extraordinary effort of classification, an effort upon which still feed the so called human sciences, particularly ethnology and anthropology.

The first Europeans who reached the lands south of the Tropic of Cancer were, according to the chroniclers of colonization, completely overwhelmed by what they kept finding. They were seeing for the first time, immense trees which seemed to escape the monotonous laws of the Great Architect of the universe, plants, shrubs they had never imagined; they saw animals that were beyond their wildest imagination; they came in contact with women and men whose beauty could not leave them outside the magical circle of seduction; but these latter had the misfortune of not being born in the image of the Judeo-Christian God.

These strangers that the autochtone population discovered as they were landing, were struck by what must be called "nomenclator's crisis." They remained open-mouthed, mute. And with good reason: European languages had no words to express these strange and disquieting realities. "We had been going West for so long," said again Sain-John Perse, "what did we know about perishable things?" ⁷

Therefore, from then on, they had to create new linguistic elements, new notions; this prompted Gabriel Garcia-Marquez to note that the journal of Christopher Columbus was the birth certificate of a new literature, that of the New World. ⁸

The French anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss says regretfully that this meeting of civilizations could have been the moment of a fertile exchange and mutual enrichment. But the European metaphysic, since ancient Greece, equates "to know" with "to master" and thus "to dominate." Things and animals were de-named only to be transmuted into concepts with Latin or Greek particules. Geographic locations received names that evoked old Europe and made them sound ridiculous for being so totally stripped of the spirits that had lived in them so long. Nor were the men themselves to escape this effort of classification. Whether in continental America, in the sea of the Antilles, in subsaharian Africa, in the Indian Ocean, in Asia or in Oceania, the Europeans undertook a true task of parthenogenesis. That is to say that these people who were to be subjugated were studied as meticulously as certain animal species. The spirit which dominated this research until recently was that of racism. Therefore one should not be surprised to find that the Europeans were somewhat late in realizing that these people, particularly the Negroes, might actually have a soul after all.

It is this knowledge tainted with racism that the Negro intellectuals have had to re-examine in the first half of the twentieth century.

At the same time, certain European intellectual "milieus" were developing a more or less radical critique of Western Reason, of its values, particularly its pretention to superiority. There was an encounter which turned out to be enriching between the Negro intellectuals and the European intellectuals and critics, in particular those of the Surrealist literary movement.

It is precisely through the bias of Surrealism that French-speaking Negroes came in contact with psychoanalysis for the first time.

II. NEGRO INTELLECTUALS ARE INTRODUCED TO PSYCHOANALYSIS

It is in Paris, rather than in the Antilles or in Africa, that Negro intellectuals first experienced this awakening of consciousness. Paris, capital of an empire upon which the sun never sets, was the geographical focus where colonial intellectuals from Africa, the Antilles, the Indian Ocean and the Pacific could meet. It is in Paris that they refused to be "Negro, like being a second class clerk, waiting for something better."⁹ To put it succinctly, it is in Paris that they came to the realization that "it is beautiful-and-good-and-justified-to-be-Negro."¹⁰

This circle of intellectuals was not ideologically homogeneous. But the shared realization that they were all victims of racism helped maintain a certain unity.

To fully understand the obstacle that faced the colonized intellectual, one must understand the state of self-denial in which the colonised people lived, particularly those of the Antilles. "And this country screamed," says Césaire, "for centuries that we are brute beasts; that the pulse of humanity stops at the door of Negritude; that we are ambulatory fertilizer, hideous bestowers of tender canes and silky cotton . . ."¹¹

Also in literature, what dominates is the servility toward France's antiquated prosody against which Rimbaud, Appolinaire and the Surrealists will revolt. "It is to these chatterboxes and the sedative water of their poetry, to these caricatures of poets, that we owe an indigestion of the 'French mind' and classic humanities."¹² And further, about the bourgeois from the Antilles: ". . . his inferiority complex pushes him on the beaten path, 'I am a Negro,' he will say to you, 'it is not becoming for me to be extravagant.'"¹³

It was therefore necessary to get out of this colonial environment in order to re-assess it and to re-assess oneself. All that was potentially liberating was good to know. Psychoanalysis, for the same reasons as Marx's dialectical Materialism, and Surrealism, belong to that category. So says the group of students of the *Manifesto of Legitimate Defense*: "As to Freud, we are ready to use the huge bourgeois-family-destroying machine that he initiated."¹⁴ Their knowledge of Freudian analysis is simply learned from books. As far as

I know, no intellectual from the Antilles undertook an analytical cure between the two wars. I must add that few works were translated in French and that the analysts were few in numbers. Finally, the interest in psychoanalysis was subordinated to literary creativity as was also the case for the French Surrealists.

Overall, one can say that between the two wars, Negro intellectuals were somewhat drawn to psychoanalysis. They expected much of it. Here again is what the group of the Manifesto "Legitimate Defense" has to say: "Though we may have great expectations of the psychoanalytical investigation, we do not preclude in subjects initiated to psychoanalytical theories, the pure and simple psychological confession which can mean a lot, providing the barriers of conformism are lifted." ¹⁵

In the middle of the thirties, the Negro literary movement, founded by Leon Gontrad Damas from Guyanne, Leopold Sedar Senghor from Senegal, and Aime Cesaire from Martinique, begins to be noticed. It deals with the rehabilitation of Negro values, the restoration of the image of our humiliated Africa where humanity took its first steps. It also dealt with an awakening of consciousness for "... millions of men in whom it had been skillfully instilled fear, inferiority complex, trembling, kneeling, hopelessness and servility." ¹⁶

All that the Western world had codified under the negative sign of ugliness became beauty, beauty itself, thanks to the liberating action of the poetic metaphor. The influence of Surrealism on these men was important, even though their works does not feature in French Surrealism. And they were thus influenced by psychoanalysis albeit in its Surrealist deformation.

We can say that the founders of Negritude were open-minded about this theory which seemed to challenge the foundations of European reason.

These were favorable conditions for the development of psychoanalysis. Yet there was a time, starting after the Second World War, when psychoanalysis no longer appeared to colonized intellectuals as a means of emancipation. It became suspect to belong to the colonial arsenal of the Western world. Much of it is due to the polemic that opposed the French psychoanalyst Octave Mannoni to Frantz Fanon.

III. MANNONI AND FANON

MANNONI

In the milieu of Negro anti-colonialists Octave Mannoni does not have a good reputation. He is often seen as a colonialist whose psychoanalysis helps to demonstrate "clear as the day, that colonization is founded in psychology." ¹⁷ Often, Mannoni's critics have not even read his book, *The Psychology of Colonization*. ¹⁸ They based themselves on the critical remarks of F. Fanon

and of A. Cesaire. One may be dissatisfied with this *Psychology of Colonization*. But I think that Aime Cesaire was mistaken in his *Discourse on Colonialism* when he said that behind "the subtleties of the vocabulary" and all "the new terminologies," the story remains the same: "Negroes-are-big-children." ¹⁹ This book maintains that exactly the opposite is true. It is precisely this colonial fantasm that this book obliterates. Besides, Fanon himself reminds us that Mannoni's approach is fundamentally honest. ²⁰ (It seems that Cesaire later recognized the error of his own evaluation).

Octave Mannoni was born on August 29, 1899, in Sologne of Corsican parents. He studied philosophy in Strasbourg. In the twenties, he went to Martinique where he taught philosophy at the Lycee Schoelcher and became friendly with the Martinique poet Gilbert Gratiant, one of the first to write poems in the Creole language. With Gratiant, Mannoni participated in launching the magazine *Lucioles*. He then went to Madagascar where he was a Professor, Ethnologist, and Director of Information for nearly twenty years.

Favorable to the independence movement of Madagascar, he was "dispatched" on a mission to Paris. Around 1945, he began a psychoanalysis with Lacan. Since then, his name has been associated with the conflictual history of the French psychoanalytical movement.

He died on July 30, 1989.

FANON

Frantz Fanon was born on July 20, 1925, from a father of Indo-Martinique origin and a mother of Alsatian origin, the illegitimate child of a mixed-blood couple. ²¹

Since childhood, Fanon seems to have been preoccupied with the problems of skin color. Later, he will write, "it is not surprising in a family, to hear the mother say: 'X is the blackest of my children' meaning 'the less white.'" ²²

Between 1939 and 1943, he attended the Lycee Schoelcher where Aime Cesaire taught; the man who taught the people of Martinique the price of being black. In April 1943, he became a dissident and went to the Dominican Island to rally the Free French forces of the Carribean. The following year, he fought on the European front. There Fanon discovered that the arms of Democratic France was no less racist than the forces of Petain.

He became a psychiatrist in 1952 under the direction of Professor Tosquelles. He was unwilling to be psychoanalyzed.

Beginning in 1953, Fanon worked at the psychiatric hospital of Blida, in Algeria, and committed himself entirely to the war of national liberation. He died of leucemia in New York in 1961, at the age of 36. He is buried in his adoptive land, Algeria.

Fanon was never able to live in Martinique. He found the atmosphere there stifling. Simone de Beauvoir sums up the ambiguity of his situation: "his origins aggravated his conflicts: Martinique was not ripe for an uprising; what is won in Africa can help in the Antilles; he still felt uncomfortable for not being a militant in his native land, and even more for not being Algerian-born." (Simone de Beauvoir, 1963).

MANNONI'S THESIS

The work of Octave Mannoni is written under the explicit auspices of psychoanalysis. To Freudian concepts he chooses to add the concepts of Alfred Adler and Carl Jung. His objective is to study "dependency among the Madagascans, particularly the people of Merina, in the process of colonization." ²⁴

The central thesis of this book is that colonization brings about two types of personalities:

The first is the Madagascan personality, characterized by a "dependency complex" which is the very opposite of the "inferiority complex."

The second personality is that of the European Colonialist, or more precisely of the Colonial, characterized by individualism and his emancipation from local customs.

The whole book is constructed around Prospero and Caliban, the central figures of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the prophetic tragedy which was all about the colonial relationship.

By speaking of the Madagascan, this book tells us about the colonized in general. It is an immensely rich book which requires a more in-depth study. According to Mannoni, the Madagascan puts local customs above all else and submits to them. They make one live. The relationships they presuppose are hierarchical. The dead are at the top of the hierarchy, for "the dead are the single and inexhaustible source of all goods. Life comes from them, so does happiness, peace, and above all fecundity." ²⁵ Contrary to the Europeans, the Madagascans do not believe in death, but rather in the dead. "The dead and their image constitute the superior moral authority in the dependant personality . . ." ²⁶

Touched by colonization, the Madagascans will transfer this dependency towards the dead on the "vahaza," the honorable foreigner who is here, the White Man. This situation causes a relationship of dependency toward the White Man. In replacing the dead ancestor, he becomes the one from whom is expected protection and security. Nationalist chiefs will assume this place in the struggle for independence.

The White Man will then become the object of excessive solicitations, which

does not reflect a lack of gratefulness, but rather is a request for protection from the one who has replaced the dead, the all mighty. This the Europeans will interpret incorrectly as the recognition of their superiority and of their natural right to the colonialist type of exploitation.

For the European, says Mannoni, the feeling of dependency is experienced as that of being inferior. He will react by trying to compensate for it. While the Madagascan will avoid feeling inferior by accepting the dependency. The inferiority feeling found among the Malgache results from the failure of the relationship of dependency that he wished to have with the European.

Colonialist behavior can thus be seen as the permanent failure of this feeling of dependency (which is not a feeling of inferiority), and reflects the unfulfilled wish to create a sense of community.

FANON'S ANTITHESIS

Mannoni's "sincere research" was still bound to hurt the sensibilities of militant anti-colonialists locked in a concrete fight against a colonialism whose brutality reminded them, even in the 1950's, of Nazi procedures.

In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Fanon reproaches Mannoni his too exhaustive apprehension of psychological phenomena. In the name of what is real, Fanon objects to the infantile sources of the inferiority complex, and he holds colonization responsible for it.

There is no point in blaming the subordinate white man in order to absolve European civilization and its most qualified representatives. This would be as absurd as this colonialist fantasy, par-excellence: "France is the least racist nation in the world." Since, says Fanon, "a society is either racist or it is not."

It is in the economic structure created by colonialism that must be sought the causes of pathologies, of the hopelessness of the man of color facing the white. Here, says Fanon, "Freud's discoveries are of no use to us."²⁷ Fanon then launches a critique of psychoanalysis. According to Mannoni's book, he put Freud, Adler, and Jung on the same level. He appears to be very taken by Jung's concept of the collective unconscious.

As a whole, he dismisses European psychoanalysis because of the differences in family structures. Since, "the racial drama is played out in the open, the black man has no time to "make it unconscious."²⁸ "They (the black men) live their drama."²⁹ And further: "... neither Freud, nor Adler, not even the cosmic Jung have thought about the black men in the course of their research ... whether we like it or not, the Oedipus complex is not about to see the day among the Negroes."³⁰ He adds for emphasis "... one could very easily show that in the French Antilles, 97% of families are incapable of giving birth to a Oedipal neurosis; an incapacity for which we congratulate you highly" because "... all neurosis ... is the result of the cultural situation."³¹

From the beginning, Fanon had warned us that "only a psychoanalytical interpretation of the black problem can reveal the effective anomalies responsible for the structural complexes."³² But let's face it, we are talking about social-therapy: "As a psychoanalyst I must help my client to make conscious his unconscious, to forestall the hallucinatory white-wash, and to act instead towards a change of the social structures."³³ "... my purpose will be, once the motives are clarified, to enable him to choose action (or passivity) towards the real source of conflict, that is to say, the social structures."³⁴

From this time on, all of Fanon's work will be marked by this social-therapeutic ambition. Thus the therapeutic effects of the Algerian war for national liberation could not bring him solace.

VI. FANON'S INFLUENCE

If the analysis of Octave Mannoni is sincere and honest, Frantz Fanon's counter criticism is no less so. At no time does Fanon contest Mannoni's right, as a European, to look critically at the reality of the black world. Because, as Fanon says: "I do not have the right, I as a colored man, to wish the crystallization of guilt in the white man towards my race's own past."³⁵ And he adds: "I am not a slave to the Slavery which dehumanized my forefathers."³⁶ Just as Mannoni's book, Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* is a remarkable book which will require a more in-depth study.

I believe that it is the interactions of the colonial and anti-colonial policies that contributed to the delayed development of psychoanalysis among black intellectuals.

Fanon died of cancer in New York, on December 6, 1961.

Between the age of 18 and 36, he participated in two wars of liberation: the French Resistance and the Algerian Resistance. In addition to *Black Skin, White Masks*, he wrote *The Wretched of the Earth* and other political texts which have established him as a great thinker for several generations of intellectuals. His accomplishments have seemed to address all the sorrows of the non-European world, particularly at the cultural level.

Fanon died with the youth of Heroes. He did not have the time to re-evaluate his thoughts. No one knows what would have been his approach to psychoanalysis. What I do know is that his death caused a backlash phenomenon, which in the Antilles, has given a special meaning to this first book.

This book has been interpreted as being the groundwork for the independence movement, when in fact it is very much in the tradition of the Antilles: anti-racist but pro-assimilation. It is perceived as a total refutation of European thought, when in fact it is written under the explicit spiritual patronage of Hegel, and above all of Sartre. Actually, Fanon's opposition to

Freudianism is directly related to the existentialist critique. Over the years, it has been read in an increasingly dogmatic way, though in 1952 Fanon appealed to his body to always allow him to be "a man who searches." ³⁷

The result of it was that, in the Antilles, most intellectual objections to psychoanalysis are made in the name of Fanon and Fanonism.

Other perspectives must be taken into consideration: notably the attitude of the psychoanalytic movement, it being understood that its role is not that of a political organization.

How did the concrete policies of the psychoanalytic movement contribute to curtail the influence of psychoanalysis among non-European populations? Psychoanalysis spread throughout the world for the most part, thanks to the emigration of East European psychoanalysts caused by the rise of Nazism. ³⁸ This policy of emigration led these analysts to countries where white communities were dominant. In these regions, segregation, acknowledged or not, has kept the Negroes away from the places of knowledge. Since psychoanalysis cannot be learned from books, Negroes could only know it through groups of white analysts. In times of segregation (I am thinking particularly of the U.S.A.), going to forbidden places was always a perilous undertaking. The dissuasive power of this fact cannot be underestimated since psychoanalysis can only be transmitted from person to person.

During our previous international meetings (Paris, 1987 and Vienna, 1988), we have reflected on the attitude of non-Jewish psychoanalysts who, between the two world wars, were operating in the surrounding antisemitic ambiance. We must also ponder on the attitude of psychoanalysts, who, during this century, have worked with a pretty clear conscience in countries, (and I am not thinking only about the U.S.A.), where the segregationist mentality was (or still is), a primary reflex.

I would not want to exaggerate the importance of this aspect of the problem while forgetting another, no less important: the ideological triumph of Stalinism after the Second World War. This lead vault inhibited all independent thought among many of our intellectuals and all personal creativity by spreading its own intellectual immune deficiency syndrome (IIDS). There were, of course, a few survivors, but their voice was lost in the arid dunes of the so-called "Third World."

To say all this is not to diminish our collective and individual accountability for this tardiness. There is a place for us coloured men, without having "to whiten" ourselves, to speak like Tobie Nathan, at the table of theoretical and practical questions of psychoanalysis. We are in a better position than anyone else to investigate the problem of identity beyond social differences. Let's transgress the colors! There is room for all at the banquet of the giving and the receiving.

Above all, do not believe what they tell you: the history of psychoanalysis has not ended, it has just begun . . .

SUMMARY

How can we account for the delayed development of psychoanalysis in the various black communities? There are many reasons, but one in particular held our attention: the theoretical conflict between O. Mannoni and F. Fanon. The political influence of Fanon precipitated the assimilation of psychoanalysis into the ideological arsenal of colonialism. The interactions between colonial and anti-colonial policies have diverted the attention of Negro intellectuals from psychoanalysis which — Oh cunning of History — is one of the most efficient weapons against all alienation.

- ¹ Tobie Nathan, "L'Afrique n'est pas une terre à conquérir," *Le Monde diplomatique*, No. 427, October, 1989, p. 24.
- ² Frantz Fanon. *Peau noire, Masques blancs*, 1st edition 1952 Seuil. The quotations here are from the 1975 edition.
- ³ Saint John Perse, *Anabase*, 1st edition 1924, p. 102. The quotations derive from the 1986 edition, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Gallimard.
- ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 108.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 108.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 109.
- ⁸ Gabriel Garcia-Marquez, *Une odeur de goyave*, edition Belfond, 1982, p. 71.
- ⁹ Aimé Césaire, *Cahier de retour au pays natal*, p. 58. First published in 1939 in the journal *Volonte*. The quotations are from the 1986 publication of "Presence Africaine," a first edition, Bordas 1947.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- ¹² Etienne Lero, "Misère d'une poésie," in the journal *Legitime Defense* — New edition, Jean Michel Place, 1979.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 11
- ¹⁴ The Manifesto "Legitimate Defense" signed by: Etienne Lero, Thelus Lero, René Menil, Jules Marcel Monnerot, Michel Pilotin, Maurice Sabas Quitman, August These, Pierre Yo Yotte. Quoted from the journal *Legitime Defense*, p. 1.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.
- ¹⁶ Aimé Césaire, "Discours sur le colonialisme," p. 20, a speech presented in 1950 at the Mutualité (Paris). The quotations are from the 1973 edition of *Presence Africaine*, the first edition was 1955.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.
- ¹⁸ Octave Mannoni, *Psychologie de la colonisation*, first edition in 1950. The quotations are from the Presse Universitaire edition under the title *Prospero et Caliban, psychologie de la colonisation*."

- ¹⁹ Aime Cesaire, "Discours sur le colonialisme," pp. 38-39.
- ²⁰ Frantz Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques blancs*, p. 84.
- ²¹ Irene Gendzier, *Frantz Fanon*, edition Seuil (1976), 1st edition 1973.
- ²² Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, Masques blancs*, p. 132.
- ²³ Simone de Beauvoir, *La force des choses* (1963), quoted in *Frantz Fanon*, by Irene Gendzier, edition Seuil (1976), p. 29.
- ²⁴ Octave Mannoni, *Psychologie de la colonisation*, p. 49.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 57.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 62.
- ²⁷ Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, Masques blancs*, p. 122.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 123.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 124.
- ³² *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 80.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 185.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 186.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 188.
- ³⁸ *Revue internationale d'Histoire de la psychanalyse*, No. 1, edition PUF, 1988.
- ³⁹ Ricardo Steiner, "C'est une nouvelle forme de diaspora," the political emigration of the psychoanalysts, according to the correspondence of Ernest Jones with Anna Freud, pp. 263-310, in the *Revue internationale d'Histoire de la psychanalyse*, No. 1.

FREUD AND LYTTON STRACHEY: AN UNCANNY PARALLEL

by Paul Roazen, Ph.D.

There has been speculation about the relationship between Freud and Lytton Strachey, since they had so many thematic and stylistic similarities. It is known, for example, that Freud enjoyed reading Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*, although it has been doubted that at the time Strachey first wrote that book he was yet influenced by Freud's teachings. Freud relished Strachey's debunking approach to religion. Strachey's great book on Queen Victoria ends with a famous paragraph in which, while dying, he enters into her mind after she has become speechless; he imagines that she lies in bed free-associating back to her earliest childhood. Strachey first wrote this stunning paragraph, and only then proceeded to compose the rest of the book itself. I have long suspected that in Lord Keynes's *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*, which also concludes with an extraordinary and even more often-quoted last paragraph, and whose work has recently been investigated for its similarities to Freud's, Keynes had been competing with his old friend and rival Lytton Strachey to see whether Keynes too could write a passage and then compose a book to precede it.

According to James Strachey, the main example of his brother Lytton being consciously influenced by psychoanalysis came in his composition of his relatively late *Elizabeth and Essex*, a book which Lytton dedicated to James and Alix Strachey, who were then practicing analysts. A letter from Freud to Lytton discusses the problem of the psychology of Queen Elizabeth I. In an interview in the mid-1960's Alix Strachey told me of an incident from her analysis in which Freud had been highly critical of Elizabeth, and to Alix's indignation. Freud expressed a romantic-seeming preference for the underdog Mary Queen of Scots.

Now I have come across an instance of an apparent reciprocal relationship between Bloomsbury and Freud. We have known that during James Strachey's analysis with Freud he lent his analyst a copy of Keynes's *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*. That is historically relevant since Freud already disapproved of Woodrow Wilson, and Keynes's unattractive view of Wilson fed Freud's political prejudices, which culminated in his later collaboration with William C. Bullitt on a study of the American president.

In addition, it seems that Freud might have quoted something from Lytton Strachey's work without acknowledging the kind of indebtedness that academic scholars pedantically are accustomed to. At any rate, there is a curious parallel that needs pointing out. In recently preparing Helene Deutsch's collected psychoanalytic papers for publication, I was faced with a sudden editorial dilemma on the page proofs. In a clinically important 1926 paper of hers on occultism, she discusses how an analyst's counter-transference can be a constructive source of intuitive empathy into patients' problems. Her paper has been often neglected in the literature as part of unconsciously downplaying psychoanalysis and the occult; the whole subject of telepathy, Freud's fascination and repulsion over the matter, has for too long been a taboo subject among analysts. A paper of his from 1921 was deemed by some of his closest disciples so potentially troublesome that it was withheld from publication until 1941. Oddly enough, he discusses there a patient he had referred to Helene Deutsch for analytic treatment, but she never noticed it, because she had not realized that Freud's posthumously published paper was actually anything new. I brought the clinical illustration to her attention in the course of interviewing her. She had never bought Strachey's *Standard Edition*, since she was so confident she knew Freud's works by heart from much earlier German texts. Freud never mentioned in his paper that one of the patients he was talking about was sent by him to Helene, but from her own prior description to me of patients she had gotten from Freud it was easy for me, when I came across it re-reading Freud, to confirm with her that it was in fact the identical case we had already talked about. It was fascinating to see just how Freud had described in print (with disguises) a case that Helene herself knew about clinically and from a different perspective.

The problem with my editing Helene's own paper on occultism was that in the first published version she refers to works of Freud from a German edition; and in the only English translation of her essay, which appeared originally in 1953, Strachey's early *Collected Papers* got cited. I felt I had to scramble to put a proper reference for English-speaking readers to Strachey's later *Standard Edition*. And therefore I looked through everything Freud had written on telepathy to find the appropriate references. Although I left the wording of the quotation from the *Collected Papers* intact, I hunted for the appropriate modern page numbers in the *Standard Edition* since I assume that is the text most of us use now.

If I believed in telepathy I would think the following coincidence was an illustration of it. For I had only just a day earlier been reading from Lytton Strachey's *Book and Characters*, a collection of his odds and ends, dedicated to Keynes, which appeared in 1922. Although I have already read almost everything by Lytton Strachey, parts of this book had escaped my grasp; he wrote with such clarity and wit that, even though I know how he could distort

historical evidence, every essay is a joy for me to savor. One piece of his I had just read late at night; it was called "Madame du Deffand," and was based on the letters she wrote to Horace Walpole; the three volumes of their letters appeared first in 1912, and Strachey had originally written about them in 1913.

The relevant passage in Strachey's essay is as follows:

Her famous "mot de Saint Dennis," so dear to the heart of Voltaire, deserves to be once more recorded. A garrulous and credulous Cardinal was describing the martyrdom of Saint Denis the Areopagite: when his head was cut off, he took it up and carried it in his hands. That, said the Cardinal, was well known; what was not well known was the extraordinary fact that he walked with his head under his arm all the way from Montmartre to the Church of Saint Denis — a distance of some six miles. "Ah, Monseigneur!" said Madame de Deffand, "dans une telle situation, il n'y a que le premier pas qui coute."

Roughly translated she had said: "In this situation, it is only the first step that counts."

The comparable though slightly different passage with which Freud concluded his 1921 telepathy paper reads:

Perhaps the problem of thought-transference may seem very trivial to you in comparison with the great magical world of the occult. But consider what a momentous step beyond what we have hitherto believed would be involved in this hypothesis alone. What the custodian of [the basilica of] Saint-Denis used to add to his account of the saint's martyrdom remains true. Saint-Denis is said, after his head was cut off, to have picked it up and walked quite a distance with it under his arm. But the custodian used to remark: "*Dans des cas pareils, ce n'est que le premier pas qui coute.*" The rest is easy.

A translation from the custodian might read: "In these instances it is only the first step that counts." James Strachey added the footnote: "The *mot* was Madame du Deffand's. See her letter to Walpole of June 6, 1767." In Freud's version it was no longer a Cardinal who told the tale, and the custodian both tells it and jokes about it.

Freud's use of irony has often been neglected. First, he had modestly restricted himself to the problem of thought-transference, in contrast to the whole area of the occult. And then, in proposing that in spite of such a restriction his contribution might amount to a "momentous step" nonetheless, his open-minded paper on the possibility of the existence of telepathy concluded on a note which implied his continuing suspicion that it ought to remain in the category of an aspect of human superstitiousness. Freud could not, given his own critical attitude toward religion, have retained the Cardinal as narrator;

that would have gone too far and undermined the purpose of the paper, which was to express his tolerant acceptance of the reality of thought-transference. But his inner doubts were enough that the paper never appeared in his lifetime.

Partly what intrigues me is the question of sources. According to James Strachey, Freud wrote the paper between August 2 and 6, 1921; then he presented it to a meeting of Freud's closest followers, who made up his "secret committee" in the Harz mountains in early September 1921. Strachey's splendid *Standard Edition* was mainly constructed out of an examination of Freud's printed texts, but since this paper was only published in 1941, I suspect the original manuscript still survives. An inspection of that text might shed light on whether Freud could possibly have added the passage about Saint Denis, after delivering the paper — a question for future scholars.

I am offering this tiny aspect of the history of ideas since it does seem to be a striking coincidence. At the least it shows how Freud could, with an anecdote, express a subtle reservation about something he had just carefully tried to argue; and it indicates he shared some patterns of thought in common with Voltaire, presuming Lytton Strachey was correct in thinking Madame de Deffand's comment was "dear" to Voltaire's heart. Also, it shows Freud's own taste for *bon mots*.

Additionally, Freud had omitted to name Madame du Deffand as a source; we know why James Strachey himself was familiar with the origins of the story, even though he failed to highlight any differences between his brother's version and that of Freud. A further question is whether Freud had been acquainted with the *mot*, or reminded of it, having been alerted (either in print or through personal contact with James and Alix Strachey) to Lytton's use of it. It can be established how Freud's artistic capacities, as in how he shaped the account of Helene Deutsch's patient in the same essay, could enter his construction of a narrative. Freud's general use of quotations, and how he could alter them, would be a subject all in itself. Even if the multiple puzzles about the *mot* connected to Freud's slightly ironic "momentous step" cannot be resolved here, I think the parallel between Freud and Lytton Strachey an uncanny one.

BOOK REVIEW

THE GENOCIDAL MENTALITY: Nazi Holocaust and Nuclear Threat

by Robert Jay Lifton and Erik Markusen

Reviewed by Ann Edelman and Richard Edelman, M.D.

This timely and compelling book explores in historical context the nuclear threat and the psychological mechanisms that have created and maintained the threat. A parallel examination of the Holocaust, a genocide that has already occurred, is designed to give us insight in order to prevent its recurrence, and to help us evolve from a genocidal mentality to a species mentality.

Lifton's Book, *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima*, which won the National Book Award, made the term "psychic numbing" a household word among anti-nuclear activists. Two years of research in Japan, including in-depth interviews of Hiroshima survivors, had a profound influence on Lifton, and galvanized his commitment to the peace movement. He concluded his book by comparing Hiroshima survivors with those of Nazi death camps. Other previous Lifton books pertinent to "The Genocidal Mentality" include an exploration of the psychic traumas of Vietnam veterans; a study of brainwashing in China; and most recently, "The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and the Psychology of Genocide."

Sociologist Eric Markusen has studied various forms of mass killings, has analyzed American weapons policies, and was co-editor of "Nuclear Weapons and the Threat of Nuclear War." He also assisted Lifton with research on the Nazi doctors.

The authors point out that Nazi genocide and nuclearism are not always synonymous, and take care to point out the differences. However, they do have certain mechanisms in common: Dissociation, or the separation of a portion of the mind from the whole, so that each portion may act separately from the other; psychic numbing, a diminished capacity to feel, resulting in a separation of thought and feeling; doubling, which carries the dissociative process still further, and results in two separate selves acting independently; and finally, brutalization, which enables decent, ordinary people to cruelly harm others with little psychological cost.

The Nazi doctors tended to be conservative, authoritarian and nationalistic. There was also widespread anti-Semitism among them. However, many were not dedicated Nazi ideologues. Yet they ended up participating in the most heinous mass murders in history. It's difficult to understand how as professionals they could switch from healing to killing. The process began by clothing what they were doing in euphemistic scientific language. They were "biological managers," and what they did was grandiosely assumed to lead to the revitalization of the Nordic race and ultimately the world. Killing in order to purify the race and eliminate those "unworthy of living" was masked in Darwinian theory and made respectable by such institutions as the German Society for Racial Hygiene. At the death camps, older and more experienced doctors, including some of Germany's leading psychiatrists, briefed the younger doctors and socialized them to killing. Participation became a "purely technical matter," and their attempts to make the killing more humane served to make them feel they were fulfilling their medical function. Eventually a doctor had to develop an "Auschwitz self" that bore no relation to his life outside the camp.

Nuclearism and the evolution towards a genocidal mentality began in the United States in a somewhat different way. Our scientists operated in a democratic society, and we had a real enemy, the Nazis, who were believed to be on the verge of developing an atom bomb. It is likely that dissociation began with the saturation bombings of Dresden, Hamburg and Tokyo, where hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed by pilots who never saw the results of the bombs they dropped. Initially, the Hiroshima bomb seemed like a continuation of strategic bombing, and most people felt that it served to shorten the war and save America from an evil enemy. The scientists, even those who had grave misgivings about the implications of the atom bomb, worked enthusiastically on its development. And subsequently, other well-educated professionals, nuclear strategists and defense intellectuals who were caught up in systems analysis and problem solving, became part of a technological structure that totally separated them from the genocidal intent of what they were doing.

The whole nuclear system, according to the authors, has become like a vast bureaucratic corporation, involving tens of thousands of people. No one is actually responsible for being in charge of these weapons that may destroy all human life on earth. There are nuclear games, nuclear war plans, and the delusion that nuclear weapons are manageable. The absurdities and contradictions — for instance, deterrence, where we must be prepared to kill hundreds of millions of people in order to prevent killing — are ignored. Everything is couched in the language of non-feeling. And regardless of what is going on in the world, or what arms agreements are hammered out, the system inexorably continues to this day to grind out better, more efficient, more lethal weapons.

A particularly engrossing section of the book is the story of Robert Oppenheimer and the physicists who worked with him on the Manhattan project. Most of them were ambivalent, and became increasingly so after Hiroshima, about the work they were doing. On the one hand, these brilliant, decent and patriotic men were fascinated by the scientific challenge and the exhilaration of working together. Yet the Trinity test, while a triumph, evoked feelings of terror, awe, self-condemnation. Even Brigadier General Farrell, the military witness, described the effect as "unprecedented, magnificent, beautiful, stupendous and terrifying."

Subsequent development of the hydrogen bomb was a turning point for many of the scientists — they realized its potential for destroying the world. Some eventually became anti-nuclear activists (Szilard, Franck, Weisskopf and Rabi), Others, like Teller and Lawrence, were avid proponents.

Hans Bethe, whose wife had always been opposed to his working on weapons projects, typified the ambivalence of the physicists. He was appalled at the idea of developing the hydrogen bomb, which would have 100 to 1000 times the destructive capacity of the Hiroshima bomb. Yet he felt that with the outbreak of the Korean War, and the perceived danger from the Soviets, that it would have to be made. After initially refusing to work on it, he changed his mind, still hoping that it would not succeed. He focused only on the technical issues, and avoided thinking about the consequences. Say the authors, "This great physicist and good man, working as he did on a weapon he hated and knew to be annihilative, reveals the extent of his profession's immersion in a potentially genocidal enterprise — and perhaps also the extent to which human beings in general are capable of dissociating actions from feelings."

Oppenheimer, a hero after Hiroshima, originally saw the bomb only as a force for good. He later became an outspoken opponent of the hydrogen bomb, and was criticized as subversive at a Congressional hearing in 1954. An astonishing number of American physicists have continued to serve as consultants in weapons development, even though the majority are anti-nuclear. The excitement and importance of the work becomes divorced from its implications. And of course, although the book only touches on it, the same processes have been going on in the Soviet Union.

Although this book was published before the war in the Persian Gulf, its thesis is stunningly relevant to that war. T.V. reports and military briefings and newspapers seldom mentioned the dead, the maimed, the refugees, the bombed-out cities. We heard talk of the brilliant performance of our smart weapons, we saw images of airplanes taking off, bombs bursting, and smiling soldiers climbing into jeeps. The Iraqis were demonized as less than human, and there was scarcely any mention of how many of them had been killed or wounded. Human beings were referred to as "soft targets," and an American captain was quoted as saying, "I prefer not to say we are killing people. I

prefer to say we are servicing a target." Psychoanalysts are perhaps uniquely equipped to raise people's consciousness about the psychological mechanisms that propel us towards a genocidal mentality, and the urgency of switching to a species mentality so that humanity can survive. But we too tend to be so involved in the inner workings of our professional identities that we overlook the danger signals.

This is an important and absorbing book, although it is sometimes repetitious and not very well-organized. But the points the authors make are well-documented and convincing. And it ends on a tentative note of hope. We must think, we must act, we must be aware of persisting genocidal arrangements in order to "become healers, not killers of our species."

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

by Arthur Malin, M.D.

You suggested that those of us who were involved in early study groups might write-up a history of that involvement for publication in the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society/Institute bulletin.

I graduated from the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Institute in 1960. At that time I felt that I had not received a particularly good seminar experience. There were some individual seminars that were outstanding and valuable, but I am afraid the bulk of the seminars were not very stimulating. It is my impression that the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Society/Institute today has a much higher quality seminar program than we had in the fifties, in spite of the fact that we had some outstanding teachers such as Ralph Greenson and Hanna Fenichel among others.

Because of this experience I suggested to some of my classmates and others that we study by ourselves. So, beginning in 1961 we formed a study group which consisted of James Grotstein, Marvin Berenson, Bernard Bail, and myself. We knew at that time that there had been another study group which consisted of Bernard Brandchaft, Hilda Rollman Branch, Mel Mandel, Gerry Aronson, and Morris Beckwitt. They had been studying object relations and Melanie Klein and presented some of their work at a meeting of the Institute which, I believe, occurred in 1959 or 1960. As I recall, that presentation was received rather critically by the Institute. I recall that they were supposed to present for a second meeting, but it was never scheduled. The impression I was left with was that they had been studying an area that was not considered important or meaningful for American psychoanalysis.

The 1960's were a wonderful time to be studying new developments in psychoanalysis. The original group of four met twice a month for seven years. We read Fairburn and Melanie Klein, and then the 1961 book by Guntrip, *Personality Structure and Human Interaction*. In 1964 we read Edith Jacobson's monograph, *The Self and Object World*. I recall that in 1964 Harold Searles's paper on the Transference Psychosis seemed very important to all of us. Guntrip's second book, *Schizoid Phenomenon, Object Relations and the Self* was published in 1968. We also read Ian Suttie, Michael Balint, Winnicott and others.

We would assign our reading and then we would have a discussion which was very free ranging, and we each developed our own ideas. In 1964, Dr. Bernard Brandchaft came to our group to ask us to help sponsor Herbert Rosenfeld's two week visit to Los Angeles. We would help guarantee a certain amount of money so that Rosenfeld could make the trip. We hoped that he would be able to get enough income from his individual supervision and some courses in the evening that would cover everything. The four of us helped as part of a larger group which helped sponsor Herbert Rosenfeld's trip. By the way, Rosenfeld was completely sold out in terms of supervision as well as his evening seminars.

We have all gone in different directions since that time, but we very much enjoyed and learned from our experience. Those were wonderful years when we talked about our interest in psychoanalysis and about the new ideas that were developing.

On occasion I would attend meetings of the American in the sixties and I was terribly disappointed in what appeared to me to be the sterility of these meetings. It seemed that there was very little consideration of the human interaction in analysis, and very little awareness of the subjective experiences of the patients. Metapsychology was at its height, as well as an intellectual approach to ego psychology. The only "true scholars" were those who emphasized metapsychology. I think that was a very unfortunate time in American psychoanalysis, and in my opinion, the fact that there was some interest in Southern California in object relations and in Melanie Klein was a big advantage over East Coast psychoanalysis.

I should mention the seminal influence of Ivan McGuire. Each of us had analysis or supervision with him. McGuire suggested that we read more than just Freud or critical reviews of Klein or Fairbairn. We should read the original contributions of Melanie Klein, for instance, and not just Glover's critical review, which was the way Klein was covered in seminars at that time. McGuire was well-known as a Freud scholar and was called upon when one needed an exact reference in Freud. But, he also felt that there was a lot more going on in psychoanalysis and around the world, and he suggested that we read Winnicott and Fairburn, and even Klein. I do recall that Dr. McGuire was disappointed after hearing Herbert Rosenfeld because McGuire felt that Rosenfeld sounded like a true believer. He was also critical of Freudian true believers because he felt that true believers were not able to learn further. Many members of LAPSI were influenced by McGuire's suggestion that we look to others in addition to Freud for ideas in psychoanalysis.

After about seven years we expanded our group to include Neil Peterson and Norman Atkins. Within a year, in 1968, Albert Mason moved to Los Angeles and we expanded our group even further at that time. I believe we met monthly and sometimes more often, and for about a year I presented an analytic case for our discussion.

We met at each other's homes for the first seven years; and when we started to meet with Dr. Mason, we also met at his home. I believe our group was up to 10 people at that time and included Bernard Brandchaft as well as the six I have already mentioned, among others. After a time, perhaps one and-a-half to two years, some people started to leave the group.

The first seven years, when the original four people just studied new developments in psychoanalysis, were the most fruitful time for us. Aside from my personal analysis, this study group was the most significant learning experience I have had in my development as a psychoanalyst. If I can draw some conclusions from this experience, it would be that it is very important to get a group of people with whom you feel some affinity and then have an agreed-upon approach to what you will be studying. It might be recent developments, or it might be clinical cases. I have been involved in a study group for the last ten years or so on a monthly basis, in which we rotated presenting our difficult cases to one another, and I found that valuable also. The point is to have a group of compatible people who would agree on their agenda and meet regularly on that basis.

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