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THE OTHER SIDE OF FIFTY

JOAN REGGIORI

'I refuse to admit that I am more than fifty-two even if that does make my sons illegitimate.' Lady Nancy Astor (Attrib.)

Ageing begins at the moment of birth, yet what we usually refer to when using the term 'ageing' are the later years of the second half of life. It is as if we have a secret fantasy that we do not age until we become 50 or 60 and then we are forced to recognise that something very noticeable and unfortunate is happening, which we tend to push away. Few of us welcome this stage and many of us fear it, partly because it implies the beginning of an increasing loss of status (hence my sub title), or perhaps a diminution of skills or of acceptability. Remarks like 'He, or she, has aged you know' are voiced, albeit with compassion and regret, but also with a certain distancing as if this is not happening simultaneously to the beholder. Behind this is the beginning of a new awareness of death, of one's personal mortality. After all, ageing is always fatal. Before then, ageing, or rather changing, has been regarded as a growing up or blossoming process. Growing up has become 'growing old' – and 'growing old' is not popular. This is not primarily an analytic paper, for it has a heavy sociological weighting, which I think has to be taken into account with the experience of accumulated years. In addressing this subject I am concentrating primarily on the interaction between socio-biological and psycho-dynamic processes, and in particular on the influence of changing cultural or social pressures on certain facets of the archetypal spectrum within the individual. It is not my intention to focus on the effect of the earliest formative years because I am assuming that the basic influence of this period is taken for granted; nor is it my intention to produce a clinical paper, although I shall include brief clinical material. It is my hope that by making a few observations we can then begin to discuss what the analytical concepts have to offer and why, analytically speaking, this has been a comparatively neglected area up until now.

Freud stated in his paper 'On Psychotherapy' (1905) that 'near or above the age of 50 the elasticity of the mental processes, on which

the treatment depends, is as a rule lacking – old people are no longer educable’ (p. 214). Freud was then 49! We integrate and identify with such statements and with the cultural influences of our time which evoke them; and consequently we see and experience ourselves through these cultural lenses. Recently a very well respected analytical training body has abolished its upper age limit for training, preferring to depend on individual circumstances for the selection of trainees. Our minds cannot have changed, and have become all that much more flexible, during the time since Freud’s statement. It is the cultural values which have altered and so we now judge our psychological development more flexibly. Inevitably this shift will influence our perception of ourselves in the later years. Jung’s view that ‘the afternoon of life is just as full of meaning, as the morning; only its meaning and purpose are different’ (p. 74) is especially relevant here.

First I want to introduce a positive note by giving a few examples of what some older people are actively accomplishing during this later period. These years are, after all, an integral and important part of an on-going lifelong process. Sir Georg Solti, an international conductor, was given a pushbike for his 80th birthday last year. A newspaper recently printed the following ‘Sir Michael Tippett’s remarkable Indian summer goes on. Just turned 88, the veteran British composer is now well advanced on an epic for orchestra, co-commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Boston Symphony and the Toronto Symphony, and due to be premiered during Tippett’s 90th birthday celebrations’. It is also recorded that ‘Vaughan Williams was 85 when he finished his ninth and last symphony’. In case these examples suggest that it is only professional musicians who remain so vigorous and engaged with life, let me remind you that Ronald Reagan was 69 when he first took office as President of the U.S.A. George Bush ran for Presidential Office for a second term at 69 years. In May 1993 Pamela Harriman at 73 was appointed the U.S.A. ambassador to France; I understand that she had never held an ambassadorial post before. Lady Margaret Thatcher would willingly have taken a further and fourth term of office as Prime Minister at 66, if it was not for external events. Lord Soper at 90 preaches in the open at Hyde Park Corner. All these people are anything from 1 to 25 years older than the average statutory retirement age in other posts. So reaching the decades of the 60s, 70s and 80s does not by itself necessarily mean a diminution of successful and creative external activities. Indeed in some cases these positions were achieved only after reaching the 60s.

From these examples it can be seen that external affirmation from

other individuals and from society as a whole, of professional skills, a place in society or a unique ability, are a support and an encouragement for any individual and contribute to a continuing sense of self. The expectations from others to develop, to stretch and to be creative, is a stimulus – as indeed is admiration. It is worth noting that these qualities are the desirable emotional environment in which we hope a growing child develops. I shall refer to this again later. Perhaps these very demands and the responses of the individual to them, are essential to remaining creatively alive – whatever form that creativity may take – and to affirming our identity. Needless to say ‘fame’ is not necessarily the required stimulus to a meaningful, vigorous, contributing old age but it plays its part in giving the individual a sense of ‘having a place in which to be’. On the other hand we can all give examples of mentally active, attractive personalities who have not been well known in the worldly sense, but who have been valued and whose company has been sought well into their 90s. For example, a retired friend of 76 years has taken up scuba diving in search of gold coins in a sunken galleon. A nurse, I know, who ended her professional career in her early 30s took a degree in history in her mid-seventies. Others, on the other hand, feel the passing years have marginalised them. Can we prepare for these years and so influence them? How much a part does society play? Or is ageing like a game of roulette? I suggest that, amongst other influences, societal attitudes play a considerable part in establishing how we perceive ourselves internally, and contribute to a sense of self, especially in relation to others.

Attitudes to the process of ageing

Can we predict how the latter part of life will proceed? It is not like the very early years of childhood, for which we have produced a so-called normal physical and psychological growth chart. For the child to deviate from this suggests an abnormality, a falling behind, something requiring attention. Analytically, we may speak of the oral, anal and genital stages, not that I wish to imply that we do not return to these stages as adults, or even get stuck in them. But mercifully, so far at least, no one has produced a development chart for the over sixties. Can we even agree at what chronological age the second half begins, let alone the latter part of the second half? At one time, C. G. Jung and his close associates were suggesting that it began at 35 years. Nowadays people refer to 50 or even 60, as being middle aged – a

clever attractive term spanning both halves. I like the descriptive French term, used mainly I gather when referring to women, *sans age*. As we enter each ten year period we mostly push away the thought of being designated 'old' and assign it the beginning of the following decade.

The 'third age' is a frequently used term. As people are dying at a later age, perhaps we shall soon be referring to the 'fourth age', thereby postponing being 'really old'. According to the Office of Populations, Censuses and Surveys, girls born in 1980 can expect to live for an average of 76.6 years, outliving boys by 6.2 years, whereas girls born a decade later can expect an average of 78.5 years, an increase of 2 years and 4.5 years longer than that for the boys; hence a preponderance of widows or unattached women in these later years. It would appear therefore that the differences between the life expectancy of men and women will significantly narrow over the coming decades. This extended life expectancy will surely affect our attitude as to what we expect from this later period.

Are there definable and progressive changes that we should learn to note or manoeuvre? Or is ageing rather like analysis, a journey in which one follows an undefined path – moving forward, only to retreat or regress so as to consolidate or relive an earlier phase not yet sufficiently integrated. If one never knows for certain what the next stage will bring, how can one provide for it? There are those who embrace the second half, almost as a refuge to escape the demands previously encountered in life. I heard of one man who said that what he was most looking forward to in retirement was never having to get up again in the dark on winter mornings. That was a part of his system of values. Others reject the notion of the second half, postponing or denying it. We all need some defences – and how valuable these can be! However, what is without question is that each person ages differently. This is an essential part of the individuation process. The path of ageing seems to be dependent on many factors, including gender and psychological, physical, genetic and social factors. One cannot speak of the inner world without including the circumstances of the outer one, for they are interactive.

In attempting to understand the psyche, as Jung (1910) has observed, we have to explore other areas of knowledge, such as that of the philosopher, physician, sociologist, historian and so on. 'Man's psyche is a unique combination of factors' and a subject of far reaching lines of research. 'For it is out of himself and out of his peculiar

constitution that man has produced his sciences. They are symptoms of his psyche' (p. 389).

Jung suggested that the first half of life is directed, in the main, at establishing oneself in the outer world. He also said that some people live out the second half in the first and earlier years, but exploring that particular issue belongs to another paper. Establishing oneself in the outer world would include such matters as training for a profession or craft, getting a job, getting married, bringing up children etc. In the second half he believed that we become more preoccupied with the inner world including, of course, exploring spiritual values. Let me quote what Jung said in the B.B.C. film 'Face to Face' when he was interviewed by John Freeman. Freeman referred to Jung's remark that he sees 'Death as a goal. To shrink away is to evade life'. He asked what advice Jung would give regarding the later years. Jung replied:

'I have treated many old people. The unconscious apparently is threatened with a complete end. It disregards it. Life behaves as if it is going on. I think it is better for old people to live on, to look forward to the next day as if he had to spend centuries – and then he lives properly. But when he is afraid, he looks back. He petrifies, he gets stiff, and he dies before his time. But when he is living on and looking forward to this great adventure that is ahead, then he lives, and that is what the unconscious is tending to do. Of course it is quite obvious that we are all going to die and this is the end and finale of everything. But nevertheless there is something in us that does not believe it apparently. This is (merely) a psychological fact. It does not mean to me that it proves something. It is simply so. For example, I may not know why we need salt but we prefer to eat salt because we feel better. So when you think along the lines of nature you think properly.'

This adds up to a very rich and complex attitude in which we prepare for death and at the same time we live on as if life is infinite and we look into the future with an extended focus. Facing death, of course, is not confined to older persons. Young persons and children suffering from terminal illness also have to face an early, if not imminent death. For the purposes of this paper, however, I am referring to the so-called average life expectancy.

I am very conscious that the initial examples which I have given are of those who are successful in the outer world and who are affirmed as such. I am equally conscious of the materially poor and psychologically less well endowed, who live lonely empty lives, sometimes closeted in one room, cooking inadequate meals with little care for themselves or from others. Their inner and outer lives may well be very different

from the examples instanced earlier. This illustrates only too well that every time one makes a general comment on this subject, one finds that the opposite is also true. Every observation, no matter how sincerely made, has to be qualified. So this paper is full of paradoxes and exceptions to the rule. In this it faithfully replicates the picture of the second half of life for us all. We insult the individual if we try to come to general conclusions. Yet how can we discuss the subject without searching for the common features.

Anxiety and prejudice – a defence against ageing

In speaking about the later years we often reveal a basic attitude of prejudice, stemming I suspect from anxiety about ageing. We parcel up our views and apply descriptive labels in an effort to grasp the complex subject and convince ourselves that we can resolve the problem, often denying that we are looking at ourselves in that same situation in a comparatively short time hence. Sometimes we put old people into clubs and feel we have done our bit, as if everyone over a certain age and who is in need is 'clubable'. We put them in protected institutions and old people's homes because their situation seems otherwise unmanageable. This can evoke persecutory feelings of guilt in the person who had previously cared for them, or to whom society may have ascribed personal responsibility; and so for them the elderly become figures of passive reproach. We have learned, all too slowly, not to put children into institutions but the elderly, unfortunately in one sense, are a comparatively large and growing percentage of the population. Therefore we fear them, as we do the archetypal invalid who never gets completely better. They become a threat. So in an effort to control, we tend to decide what is appropriate for someone in their 60s, 70s or 80s and what we expect them to be doing, or not doing, at that time of life. We applaud or condemn their activities according to our own and the collective expectations. Newspapers are very adept at this. Old people, it has to be said, may exploit a situation to their advantage by beginning a sentence with such phrases as 'At my age I should not be expected to ...' To appear helpless is a powerful weapon, but often it is the only lever they feel they have to achieve an end. Their very frailty can therefore be used to good effect.

I have just referred to the matter of guilt and now I would like to mention shame. Although these are separate emotions, they may be closely interactive within the psyche as well as between two persons.

Peer Hultberg in his paper 'Shame: a Hidden Emotion' writes that loss of control, one of the deepest causes of shame, lies behind the general fear and shame of old age and illness. He considers that 'behind shame is a fear of being excluded from society' and 'implies a fear of total abandonment'. 'It is not a fear of death but of psychic extinction' (p. 116) Shame can ensure membership of human society through conformity and is based on introjected idealised figures. The young in Western Society are generally more admired than the old, and perhaps even idealised because of their youth. A slim youthful body, for example, is something we are all urged to emulate. In these circumstances, shame may be engendered in the old as they fail to meet these standards. The older person may attack the many achievements of the young, when they fear that what they have created in their time is being supplanted and surpassed; and they may envy the opportunities now being offered to youth. This can cause feelings of guilt in the young and shame in the old. So shame and guilt become mutually interactive and evoked between the generations.

Attitudes in medicine

It is heartening to discover that positive moves to dispel prejudice are taking place in the medical profession. Dr. Jane Byrne, a psychogeriatrician, speaking last year on a radio programme, stated that generally our brain cells 'are not falling out like dandruff' until after about 70 years of age at least, as has been customarily supposed by the public at large. Research projects confirm her statement. Professor Peter Millard, a geriatrician at St. George's Hospital, in a paper on the development of departments of gerocomy – *gerocomy* please note, not psychiatry, not geriatrics, the latter sometimes used in a dismissive fashion – quotes Pfeiffer writing in the Journal of the American Geriatric Society. Pfeiffer in writing about basic principles states 'Not only are older patients treatable, they are teachable' and 'Older patients are not only treatable and teachable, but they also teach us about old age'. Professor Millard continues 'disease presents differently in old age, and often comes disguised as a social problem. Failing, inability to cope, immobility or confusion are all symptoms of disease, not age' (p. 733). This is a very enlightened, progressive and encouraging attitude in a medical man. Should not we, in the analytical world, also look more attentively at what should be ascribed to old age and what to a particular personality problem.

Projections (made and received)

There is, of course, a healthy pressure from the younger age group to displace the parents in the inner and the outer world, and to feel that the future lies in their hands. The very old are therefore frequently regarded as being 'past it', whatever 'it' may mean, and so they are marginalised, albeit at the same time treated with some affection. So how do the recipients of these projections deal with them? In many cases, unfortunately, they introject them and identify with the rejected, inadequate part of the young. In other words, the old represent an aspect of the shadow of youth. Conversely, the opposite is also true, and the shadow of the old falls upon the young.

I suggest that humour is sometimes used defensively by the old to pre-empt criticism, or even embarrassing ridicule, from others by appearing to laugh at themselves or their situation. By seeming to perceive the lack in themselves first, they avoid the pain of hearing it from others. By making light of it, they hope to diminish its impact. Whilst humour is a very enjoyable human interaction, in which there is a special intuitive mutuality and an exchange of insight, of nuances, it can also convey a message, a truism, which is too painful to be said directly. A certain kind of humour can therefore save both parties from embarrassment and may sometimes be collusive. We laugh at shortcomings or intractable problems because we do not know how else to deal with them. A delightful example is the well known poem 'Warning' by Jenny Joseph, from which I quote these few lines:

'WARNING'

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me,
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I am tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick the flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.
But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.
But maybe I ought to practise a little now?

So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old and start to wear purple.

The above seems to be an apologia for the prospect of becoming disinhibited or even mildly demented. It represents both a very amusing acceptance of the changes which come with old age, and also a denial of the sometimes unbearable pathos in deterioration; unbearable to the person concerned and to the observer. I recall a lecturer once saying 'Remember that inside that fat old woman huddled in the corner, she is still Katie – Katie with the 18 inch waist, the smallest waist in the class, and the most popular girl in her year'. There is a Katie, or several Katies, in all of us, and she is as much an integral part of our present identity as is any other significant inner figure. It is just that the outer world does not see it or take it into account. As a young child I unconsciously assumed that my grandmother had always had white hair and always been confined to a chair, crippled with rheumatoid arthritis. It never occurred to me to visualise her as young, active, lithe and supple, as she must have been at one time. We all too often see the older person in fixed terms and are blind to the inner and outer forces which have fashioned them and are present and active in that person at that very moment. Is not the task of analysis to find and confirm those inner sub personalities, those earlier selves, and affirm them with the analysand so that he or she may retrieve what has temporarily been denied, and so feel richer and increasingly whole as a result?

Attitudes to the inner world

A turning away from the outer world and a search for new meaning in the depths of the inner world places emphasis on the richness to be discovered, often quite surprisingly, in this dimension and characterises much of the second half of life. A reflective approach can also be a torment for those with excessive guilt reactions in response to what was, or was not, done in the earlier years and now cannot be remedied. This may become ruminative and if so, calls for outside help towards greater consciousness, if it is not to develop into a persecutory uroboric process.

Anthony Storr when writing about the 'Third Age' in his book on 'Solitude' observes that '... emotional dependence tends to decline. The old often show less interest in interpersonal relationships, are more content to be alone, and become more preoccupied with their

own, internal concerns In old age, there is a tendency to turn from empathy towards abstractions; to be less involved in life's dramas, more concerned with life's patterns (p. 169). Whilst few of us would disagree with this description, I wonder how much this is part of an innate process and how much it is an adaptation imposed upon them by cultural or social attitudes, the inevitable loss by death of their peers, and the introjections of collective expectations, as described earlier. Remember that the old, on the whole, are not economically viable or productive and consequently at times they may feel superfluous and often vulnerable and they therefore become defensively retreating.

The largest percentage of older people, in this instance I am referring to the over 60s, live alone; approximately 53% as compared with 37% of couples. Consequently for the majority, usually after retirement, there is an absence of daily physical contact, however fleeting or accidental, with another person. In order to relate meaningfully to another, there has to be separation; this includes an awareness of boundaries, reinforced by physical contact. If this is absent or considerably diminished, there may be a withdrawal, as we have found there to be in children who no longer receive physical contact from those they have known or loved. Could this be a contributory factor to the view that older people relate to ideas and abstractions rather than to other individuals; or in some cases, acquire pets? After all the former can be enjoyed without being dependent on the immediate availability of another person. Yet the presence of others can be essential to reinforcing a continuing sense of self. No one has suggested that a hermit is necessarily an example of maturity.

Inevitably there is a considerable preoccupation with death. Many people maintain that they do not fear death but only the process of dying, especially if this should be a drawn out affair. I suspect, however, that in all of us there is a fear of this unknown darkness; yet the end gives meaning to life. Preparing for death can, in some instances, stimulate the person into accomplishing the many tasks which they had previously postponed, whether this is associated with their inner or their outer world. There arises a particular type of urgency because time is limited. This is very different from the urgency of youth which has a springboard thrusting quality and whose window on the future is ever widening and for whom time feels endless, and possibly a commodity to be squandered. For the older person the aperture through which he looks is slowly narrowing. This can result in both an urgent race against time and a conserving of it, a pressure to

accomplish tasks whilst this is still possible and at the same time a resignation to that which is inevitable and cannot be changed. This can include a feeling of relief as well as of defeat. This is indeed a holding of the opposites, of tension, and is yet another typical paradox of this period.

A woman in her late sixties was referred to me for a psychosomatic condition. Two problems emerged. One was that her husband would not discuss with her the prospect of the death of either of them and the resulting emotional distress for the survivor. The other problem was that she was still unable to forgive him for his earlier affairs with other women and the time left for discussing it was running out. She had been a painter and because she felt she was too old to continue with this skill, she no longer practised it. The prospect of death both inhibited her, and confronted her, with the need to resolve her conflicts. I can do no better at this point than refer to Rosemary Gordon's book on 'Dying and Creating', in which she writes 'Psychological growth, development and the general self-fulfilment of a person seems inconceivable without conscious acknowledgement of the fact of death' (p. 4).

Loss or 'giving up'

I have referred earlier to a similarity between certain needs of the elderly and those of young children. In both there is a need for special affirmation and for individual recognition; a need to see oneself reflected positively in the countenance of another. The experience of feeling that it is safe to trust and to be dependent may be similar, although in the child the dependency will move to a capacity to be inter-dependent, whilst in the older person the dependency needs may well increase.

The experience of loss, however, I suggest may be different. The loss of a parent for the baby or young child will be experienced as abandonment or even annihilation. The loss of a loved one for an older person will resonate with earlier losses and the previous experience will determine, to a degree, how the later losses are dealt with. There can be a resignation to the inevitable and perhaps a lessening of the grip on, or the interest in, life which accompanies the initial experience of erosion after bereavement. However, there can also be an acceptance, even if painful, of that which has been known before and found to be survivable, and therefore somewhat diminishes the

feeling of helplessness. I have always been impressed by how much the ageing process in the very elderly has in common with the symptoms of severe depression in those of any age. In both circumstances there is a slowing up of physical movement and thought processes. There is a withdrawal from life, a loss of confidence, a narrowing of activity, a reinforcement of old attitudes and habits. Unexpected explosions of aggression, or in some cases a retiring into bed to shut out the world, is not untypical. Freud in his classic and invaluable paper on 'Mourning and Melancholia' stressed the central factor of loss in its various forms as playing a major part in depression (pp. 243-258). For the older person, loss will be a familiar companion.

As mentioned earlier, there is the loss of peers through death. There can be the loss of a previously held identity, such as that of husband, wife, lover, partner, parent of young children and so on. There can also be the loss of an identity as a professional or a craftsman, or of an earlier held ambition. There is the unwelcome loss of a former level of physical and mental agility. These changing factors diminish the sense of self they once created and sustained. It follows there is a disturbance of a previously held narcissistic equilibrium.

These losses leave unacceptable voids. But given time, the very same space offers an opportunity for change and for new attitudes to emerge. The fact that positive change is possible may be a conviction that the analyst has to carry, particularly for the older patient, until he or she is able to experience it for himself or herself. That is what the patient who painted, and was referred to earlier on, needed from me. First however, what has been lost has to be made conscious and has to be mourned sufficiently so as to enable different values and goals to emerge. Natural rhythms, associated with change, will be slow. Aims can still be conceived and be cherished and be realised, but they are experienced in a different form from how they would have been known at an earlier stage in life. As in childhood, such aims and ambitions need to be fostered and encouraged by others.

Ageing in men and in women

In thinking about loss I have been impressed by the marked difference between the reaction of men and that of women, in the later years, to being left, whether it be through separation, divorce or death. Older men, on the whole, seem to find new partners relatively quickly, whereas many women remain on their own. This is in part due to the

ratio of men to women at that stage, but it is also due to the cultural attitude in society which accepts that it is unremarkable for a man to marry a woman 20 or 30 years younger, but the reverse would be a talking point. Biological factors, the begetting of children, which ends with the menopause for women but continues indefinitely for men, is a contributory factor. It seems that it is also to do with the mother child archetypal relationship which becomes constellated. It is noticeable that in small rural communities there can be an active search amongst the women to find someone suitable for the newly single older man whom, it is considered, cannot be left on his own. There is an expectation from the collective that the woman will exemplify the mothering or caring role. At the same time it has to be acknowledged that nowadays there is a gradually changing cultural attitude in older women which encourages them to seek an intellectual, social or sexual relationship with a man, whilst declining to take on the role of the committed and dedicated partner, which could entail looking after him in his declining years. Social changes therefore, in this case the changing status of women, play a part in activating different areas of an archetypal spectrum.

On the whole, it would appear to many of us that the bonding to the man is more exclusive and monogamous on the part of the woman, than is the bonding as experienced by the man. After finding a new partner, the older man may continue to mourn his first woman whilst in a relationship with the second. In my experience this is generally accepted and understood by the current partner. It is as if the man can renew himself through a second and younger woman. Older men have been known to comment that a much younger wife or partner will keep them young. On the analyst's couch they have been known to admit to the comforting belief that, as one analysand put it, 'she will see me out'; another aspect of being cared for. As a mother the younger woman does indeed see the young child 'out' but it is into the outside world, not into death. As he feels increasingly vulnerable through the process of ageing, so the man may correspondingly project the role of the nurturing, or protecting, mother on to the woman. To what extent does he look to one woman to meet his sexual needs and to another to meet his nurturing needs? The woman, on the other hand, attempts to seek fulfilment of both needs in the same man.

Very many couples find that their relationship deepens with the years and a special intimacy can develop after children leave the home. This can be an especially rewarding and enjoyable period. Nevertheless figures from a report 'The Nation's Health', King's Fund (1988) and

(1991), show that the suicide rate increases with age and peaks at over 60. Suicide is more prevalent in men than in women and is most frequent amongst the divorced, widowed and single men. Statistics, again from the King's Fund, in 'Older Households in 1991', 'older' meaning men over 65 and women over 60, record that married couples form 37.7%, single women form 41.9% and single men form only 11.5% of the population. Single women, therefore, represent the largest sector and single men the smallest sector of the older population. Surely the fact that the suicide rate peaks at over 60 and is most frequent amongst single men calls for further analytical exploration and understanding.

Attitudes to sexuality. Biologically or culturally determined?

A patient in her mid seventies, who had a man friend who appeared uninterested in sex, confided with a mixture of embarrassment and relief, that she experienced spontaneous orgasms in the night. She felt that society would not have acknowledged such sexual needs and spontaneity in a woman of her age. Similar activity in an older man would have been accepted by society as normal, even a cause for admiration.

As an example of this let me quote from 'The Times' (28 November 1992) when referring to the sexual charisma of male conductors 'Even off duty the male conductor remains irresistible. When Sir Georg Solti, at 80 years old, enters a room his presence registers perceptibly on the antennae of every female. Women half his age fantasise about being trapped with Solti in a lift'. The article goes on to give examples of Leonard Bernstein and Otto Klemperer, also older men, as being strikingly attractive to women and at one point it refers to 'procuring musical orgasm'. One hears practically nothing about older women having that sort of chemistry and producing similar erotic responses in men. Whether the foregoing remarks are accurate or not, is not so much the point, as is the fact that it is accepted to print it about an older man but not about an older woman. She has become the archetypal mother figure and not the archetypal sexual partner which for the man, it would seem, is to be sought and found in a much younger woman.

Last year, a newspaper, 'The Times' (21 August 1993), reported that Anthony Quinn, an actor of 78 years, already with 8 children born within wedlock and 3 outside it, had recently fathered a child

for his secretary, reputedly at her request. We were told that this had produced 'profound respect among his peers and fans' and 'undisguised awe'. It went on 'like many older wealthier fathers he will probably make an attentive parent'. We were also informed that Clint Eastwood, 63 years old and recently a father again, cheered up the cinema goers with the sight of him 'hurtling across the screen and into the sack'. The article also observed that cinema audiences cheered when Robert Redford, at 63 years, won the girl from a man half his age. Are we looking for a modern version of Oscar Wilde's 'Dorian Gray', a *puer aeternus* who defies the passage of time? Older women resort to 'face lifts'!

On another page, however, in that very same edition, this paper reported that an Italian doctor had treated a 58 year old Swedish woman so that she was eventually able to give birth to twins. It observed that this was especially remarkable as the pregnancy went to full term and generally twins are born prematurely. Her male partner and father of the twins was about 40 years. It seems relevant to note here that due to economic pressures and cultural changes, it is not that unusual for men to stay at home and care for their children in the present social climate. This Italian doctor had similarly treated a 58 year old British woman who at that time was midway through her pregnancy. However, after the news was made public this doctor had to cancel a prearranged visit to Britain because he had received death threats due to his work. There have been further reports of more late pregnancies since then, and the strength of the many opposing protests has been impressive. This attitude is in marked contrast with the response evoked by the parenting by older men.

This attempt to retain this aspect of youth is accepted and even celebrated in the ageing man but apparently condemned in the woman. The ageing *puer* is more acceptable than is the ageing *puella*. Does the older woman envy the man's ability to biologically procreate indefinitely and, if so, does she deal with it by vicariously identifying with the man and celebrating his achievement? Does she perhaps become the mother of the *puer* man, regarding him as an increasingly scarce commodity to be protected and applauded; and even regarded as a prized object or as a status symbol. Whilst I am not suggesting that the ability to procreate is the only component in sexuality, I am suggesting that with the advent of the menopause, around the early fifties, the woman is confronted with a greater need to face the effect of ageing in response to inner and outer changes, and consequently to adjust and redefine her values in the later years, than is the man.

Whilst considering the importance of the psycho-social factors in the later years, I was drawn to an impressive paper by Pearl King on 'The Psychoanalysis of Older Patients' (1974), in which she wrote that whereas her French colleagues expressed the opinion that one could not analyse persons over 40 years of age, she considered that older people could benefit a great deal from analysis. She went on to comment that analysts tend to conceptualise their work with ageing patients as if the frames of reference were the same as for younger ones. They failed to understand and conceptualise the inter-relation that continues through the whole life cycle between the socio-biological and psychodynamic processes within the individual: 'Changes imposed by ageing could be assimilated and integrated within the personality and could lead to psychological growth' (p. 26). This view substantiates my opinion that as well as taking into account the immense importance of the early years, as an analyst one has to take into account increasingly the importance of current cultural pressures, and increasingly changing ones at that. These activate the weighting in the span of archetypal forces.

In that same paper, Pearl King writes that if sufficient integration of loving as well as destructive impulses have not been reached at this stage, it is difficult to integrate the sequences of loss and depletion with which ageing and death inevitably confront the individual. This stage offers the possibility of working through the guilt and bitterness of life's failures, and gaining enrichment thereby. In a later paper 'The Life Cycle as Indicated by the Nature of the Transference in the *Psychoanalysis of the Middle-Aged and Elderly* (1980), King writes that the 'developmental phases that most often need to be worked through in the transference of middle-aged patients are those of puberty and adolescence, the analyst being experienced, (whatever his actual age) as significant adults from those phases of the patient's life cycle' (p. 155).

Elliott Jacques (1965), writing in a similar vein, believes that the mid-life crisis was often a depressive crisis, in contrast to the adolescent crisis, which tends to be a paranoid-schizoid one. Defences against depressive anxiety often took the form of hypochondria, obsessional mechanisms or character deterioration etc. 'Working through the mid-life crisis calls for a re-working through of the infantile depression, but with mature insight into death and destructive impulses to be

taken into account' (p. 505). It will be seen from these brief references that an area of knowledge about the subject is being built up.

I would like to think that analytical attitudes have changed since the time when Pearl King's paper was written, and that we continue to examine what analytical concepts we can apply in particular to the analysis of older people, so as to enrich this period and respect the effect which their life experiences have had on their inner world, in addition to the earliest formative years. Certainly the increased flexibility with regard to the upper age limit for training, for example, reflects a currently more comprehensive and in-depth view of the older person as a whole.

Geriatricians are already looking at what older people can teach them about ageing. Sociologists have lectured on the subject of ageing. Whilst we do not want to partition off a designated group as objects for analytical observation and to spend time observing them and their interaction with others, as we do for those in the first years of life, we, in the analytical world, do need to understand more about this period in the lifelong process and not omit this substantial part because it is deemed analytically unrewarding. I have noticed how often when therapy for older people is discussed in the abstract, it tends to be group therapy, rather than individual therapy, which is mooted. There is the implication that spending time alone with an older person is too demanding – and indeed it may be so. But this calls for special resources in the therapist and possibly the adoption of a more accommodating analytical technique. A group implies that having chronological years in common means that psychological needs are also similar, and that this in itself will ensure an analytically well balanced working group – a demonstrably false assumption and another form of convenience packaging.

Luigi Zoja in his thought provoking paper 'Working against Dorian Gray: analysis and the old' (1983), views the ageing process analytically, rather than chronologically. In so doing, he reminds us that there is the *senex* in the *puer* or *puella*; and the *puer* or *puella* in the old person. To create a split between the two, as modern society does, is to offend the indivisibility of the psyche. He contends that by inventing retirement, society 'has taken away most of their socio-economic role, and by inventing the mass media and mass culture it has dispossessed them of their psychological, truly archetypal role as transmitters of . . . traditions and collectively accepted values' (p. 52). He suggests that society is often motivated more by unconscious guilt feelings towards the old than by their real needs. He puts forward a

case for the greater availability of analysis for the old. To illustrate this, he points out that while we acknowledge the distress of a young person when suffering the loss of a lover, we need to be reminded that 'an old person who loses a partner is not less lonely than a young one, but his loneliness has little if any remedy; one can scarcely start being promiscuous in old age, but many recent studies have shown that sexuality knows no age limit, and that it is cultural prejudice that makes old people give up their sex life' (p. 55). He perceives analysis for the old as an initiatory rather than a clinical process and points to the importance of a psychological preparation for death.

It is time that we looked to a greater extent with a teleological lens at the life of the older person, for the elderly are us, you and I, in what is only a question of time. We need to heed the prediction that older people will form an increasing percentage of the population.

I am aware that I have barely touched on only a few of the many salient factors influencing this subject. These have included the cumulative effect of losses; the introjection of the projected shadow of the young; the differences between ageing in man and in woman, in part due to cultural, biological and archetypal factors; and the effect of cultural or social pressures on the inner world of the individual.

In her book 'Bridges. Metaphors for Psychic Processes', Rosemary Gordon writes that 'ageing and creating are not opposed, contradictory and mutually exclusive; rather . . . they could be mutually enabling and enriching'. In identifying with this attitude I would add that we may not all be able, like Cato, to learn Greek when we are 80; we may not even want to! But we can, at least, search for whatever is relevant, at that time, to our own personal creativity. If we can develop the values and standards and teleological attitude which belong to this later period, and not be seen to hang on to those which appertain to the earlier years of life, then hopefully the older person will not compete with the younger in the same arena and for the same space. They will complement it with something different but equally valuable. Perhaps the old may then spend less time bemoaning the restrictions of the later years, so that the young may consequently approach this stage with less fear and anxiety, and sometimes resentment too, because the parents have not managed to present a more attractive picture. The values which you and I as individuals now espouse for the later years, will eventually be adopted by the collective, and in time become part of the cultural pressures or influences current at that later period.

I am very conscious of attempting the impossible, namely to discuss

the later years of the 'second half of life' in one paper. I have fallen into a common trap which is to treat this period as one unit. Who amongst us would have dared to give one paper on the early years or the 'first half of life'? There would have been protests that this period is far too varied and complex. Yet the same can be said about the complexities of the later years, for we are all individuals. We cannot predict or map out how this process unfolds, for there are very few observations or generalisations which are consistently true or valid for every individual. What remains unquestionable, however, is that it is always a unique journey of discovery.

Postscript

The above paper was written, in the main, some two years ago. I now find my thoughts on the subject have inevitably moved on. What has emerged for me, most predominantly, is the awareness of an urgent search and yearning for renewal in the later years. Renewal implies the active inner participation of the *puer* or *puella*. This demonstrates the indivisibility of the psyche (Zoja 1983), and therefore analytically militates against the artificial separation of *puer* and *puella* from *senex*, otherwise both risk becoming devalued. The continuity of the cycle of loss and renewal means being in touch with the creativity and freshness of the *puer* or *puella*, in all of us. In the later years, this is coupled with the experience of the *senex*, and is essential if there is to be an on-going, life-giving, experience of inner transformation, which is part of the cycle of renewal.

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***TWO FICTIONAL MARRIAGES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO MARRIAGE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

**A consideration of the marriages of Dorothea and
Casaubon in George Eliot's *Middlemarch* and of Soames
and Irene in Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga***

ROBERT MORLEY

Works of fiction, it is thought, often show insight into the lives of the characters created by their authors in a way that is believed to parallel the insights derived by psychologists and psychotherapists in their work with patients. I want to show in this essay how the two important marriages describes in *Middlemarch* and *The Forsyte Saga* can show us something about the interior of the marriage which is as relevant to our understanding of marital problems today as it may have been when those works were written. They attest to the enduring nature of the intimacy of relationships between men and women, as well as to the unchanging predicaments and dilemmas that couples experience in their attempts to deal with emotional conflicts that marriage recreates and the opportunities for the new solutions it may offer. The two marriages to be examined both end in failure, having been unsuccessful in resolving the problems set by the psychological conflicts which each of the couples brought to them; and when the containers for those conflicts which the marriages provided proved to be too fragile to allow growth to occur. The failure nevertheless may be seen as a step on the way to the solution of those problems which both of the novelists show as being achieved by each of the two women in their later partnerships although not for the men, one of whom dies and the other enters a marriage which has the same elements in it as the first, but which the new couple equally fail to integrate. To some extent, this may reflect a stereotypical view of women as being more able to deal with emotional issues than men.

It is possible to look at these issues as if the work of fiction was an expression of the psychological problems experienced by the author him or herself, but I have not chosen to explore those topics since it

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may be more illuminating to look at the lives of the characters of the novel, using the material presented by the novelist in the work as if living couples were being described. I believe that it is possible by so doing to arrive at psychological truth of general relevance to living individuals and couples. The account of the 'here and now' given by the authors is sufficiently vivid to make clear what kind of psychological conflicts are being worked at between the partners and of the way in which their psychological difficulties interlock so as to produce two examples of unresolvable deadlock without the intervention of death in one case and divorce in the other. In this discussion of the marriages as depicted in the novel I hope to demonstrate something of the dynamics of the marriages and their relevance to marriage in our day.

Dorothea and Casaubon¹

The story begins before we are aware of Dorothea's interest in Casaubon. She is introduced at length in the first chapter of the novel and is compared in beauty and simplicity of dress with the Blessed Virgin as portrayed by Italian painters, a comparison which has significance for some of the later events in her story. In addition to her plainly dressed beauty she is described as clever and of good family without being aristocratic, and by implication, without the coquetry of her younger sister, Celia. Although the unadorned attire of the two women is ascribed to their breeding, religious feeling, and a social awareness which 'regarded frippery as the ambition of the huckster's daughter' (p. 29) so far as Dorothea is concerned the reason lies deeper than that. Her denial of 'the solitudes of feminine fashion' which appeared 'an occupation for bedlam' (p. 30) is coupled with her being

likely to seek martyrdom, to make retractions, and then to incur martyrdom after all in a quarter where she had not sought it.

Although Eliot does not specifically make the link with this rather sombre style of dress and approach to life with anything in Dorothea's early history, she nevertheless refers in the same paragraph to the loss of Dorothea's parents when she was about twelve years old. The cause and the circumstances of their deaths are not described in the story, but I think it could be inferred that this might have been a sufficiently traumatic experience to ascribe Dorothea's ascetic life-style to

¹All references to Penguin English Library edition 1982. Edited by W. J. Harvey.

depression and not only to a feminist protest at the female role dictated by the contemporary social mores, and that, by including it in the same paragraph, the author is making the association unconsciously, as the contiguity of material in a chain of associations may be regarded as being unconsciously linked.

Dorothea is interested in improving the lot of the poor and of the tenants of her uncle's estate. She herself designs model cottages which she hopes he might build for them to replace the dilapidated hovels in which they lived, and on one occasion coerces her uncle into employing a bailiff who will manage the estate better than he does and will ensure that the tenants are fairly treated. It seems possible that Dorothea's concern for the poor and their conditions, which is not shared by other members of her family or land-owning neighbours, may be evidence of a reparative wish based upon a repressed feeling of guilt whose origin is not disclosed but accords with her general sense of self-denial. She has, since she was a little girl, nurtured a feeling that she would like 'to be of help to someone who did great works, so that his burthen might be lighter' (p. 229). Perhaps this is a reference to her father and to a displaced oedipal wish which became fixated as a result of the trauma of his death when she might have been becoming pubescent.

That her puritanical denial of 'feminine frippery' also goes deeper than social or religious sentiments might require is illustrated by an exchange with her sister, Celia, about their mother's inherited jewellery (p. 33). Celia is keen to divide them up so that she can wear them and enhance her attractiveness. She certainly does not share her sister's asceticism. Dorothea is reluctant and Celia argues

... necklaces are quite usual now; and Madame Poinçon, who was stricter in some things even than you are, used to wear ornaments. And Christians generally – surely there are women in heaven now who wore jewels (p. 34).

Dorothea is persuaded that it will be in order for Celia to wear them, but resists any attempt to induce her to wear them herself. However, we are made aware of a possible breach in her defences against femininity when she sees her mother's diamond and emerald ring and matching bracelet.

'They are lovely,' said Dorothea, slipping the ring and bracelet on her finely-turned finger and wrist, and holding them towards the window on a level with her eyes. All the while her thought was trying to justify her delight in the colours by merging them in her mystic religious joy (p. 36)¹.

¹It is interesting that here although Dorothea may be regarded as a 'new woman', her motivation is presented as religious.

She keeps the two items at the urging of Celia but is unable to repress the anxiety which is consequent on the lowering of her defence. So in this first chapter we are made aware that not only is Dorothea repressing a conventional display of her femininity, but that the repression is incomplete and that a counter-wish is not far below the surface, further evidence of which is found in her patent sexual attraction to men, but which she displaces on to her sister. We learn that

... if any gentleman appeared to come to The Grange from some other motive than that of seeing Mr Brooke, she concluded that he must be in love with Celia ... (p. 32)

The conflict between these two factors is then delicately sketched in the opening chapter of the book and it is this conflict which informs the two relationships which she makes as the story unfolds. That the repression is uppermost at the beginning of her story is made evident in her refusal of an offer of marriage from the highly eligible Sir James Chettam and her acceptance of the Reverend Mr Casaubon. To understand that choice a little further we must turn to a consideration of the way in which Casaubon is presented and the nature of his psychological conflict and how it meshes with Dorothea's.

Casaubon is a clergyman and a scholar, but one whose reputation rests not upon his published works but upon the subject he has been studying for many years, accumulating notes which 'made a formidable range of volumes' remaining to be condensed into his crowning work, 'The Key to All Mythologies'. He is 50 years old, and a bachelor without any previous relationships with women as he declares in a pedantic way in his characteristically unpassionate letter to Dorothea asking her to marry him. He appears to be physically unattractive (p. 42) and perhaps in this he may be perceived by Dorothea as tallying with her own denial of physical attractiveness. Like her he is by his own account depressed. He says of himself:

I feed too much on inward sources; I live too much with the dead. My mind is something like the ghost of an ancient, wandering about the world and trying mentally to construct it as it used to be, in spite of ruin and confusing changes (p. 40).

While he is apparently talking about his researches there could hardly be a better account of a depleted subjective world of lost objects which he is seeking to recover and restore. His repressed wish to restore and repair and to be in touch with life rather than death appears in his reflection about the marriage. In making this marriage he was

determined to abandon himself to a stream of feeling, and perhaps was surprised to find what an exceedingly shallow rill it was (p. 87),

and with the beginnings of insight wonders if Dorothea might be suffering from some deficiency which was thus failing to wake a more powerful desire in himself. That in Casaubon there was an intimation of other feelings than the repressed presentation of himself conveyed to others is also hinted in his reflection on his approaching marriage.

... as the day fixed for his marriage came nearer, Mr Casaubon did not find his spirits rising; nor did the contemplation of that matrimonial garden-scene, where, as all experience showed, the path was to be bordered with flowers, prove persistently more enchanting to him than the accustomed vaults where he walked taper in hand. He did not confess to himself, still less could he have breathed to another, his surprise that though he had won a lovely and noble-hearted girl he had not won delight, – which he also regarded as an object to be found by search (p. 111).

There can scarcely be a more delicate expression of the conflict between the faintly stirring wish for delight and its repression in 'the accustomed vaults where he walked taper in hand', which moreover cannot be admitted to consciousness (confessed to himself).

Although we learn little or nothing about Casaubon's early life or of the experiences which might have led to his obsessionalism, depression, and deeply repressed sexuality one interesting matter is disclosed. He is an only child and his mother's sister made an unfortunate marriage to a Pole for love, and as a result she was denied any share of the family estate which would otherwise have descended to her. Surprisingly, Casaubon, although deeply conventional, had taken it upon himself to remedy this situation by making an allowance to his cousins from his own inheritance, and he kept a picture of his disgraced aunt Julia alongside the picture of his mother. This might be regarded as indicating some element of displacement of his disowned passionate feelings. The payment of the allowance had continued and had descended to Julia's grandson, Will Ladislaw, who was to play a most significant part in the marriage of Casaubon and Dorothea.

So in choosing each other Casaubon and Dorothea seem to have been consciously choosing another who would share the tasks of repressing the denied sexuality, and of maintaining their shared asceticism (and denial of sensuality), even if unconsciously there might be a wish to be able to overcome the repression and revive the denied sensuality. The task of the relationship was to contain the struggle against the denied sexuality and to maintain the shared asceticism.

Dorothea thought of marriage as being like having a father (p. 32) who would be above her in judgment and knowledge (p. 64); and in addition she tells her uncle that 'marriage is a state of higher duties. I never thought of it as mere personal ease' (p. 64).

Even before the marriage has occurred we are made aware that Dorothea's repression is already weakening, when Ladislav makes his first appearance. He is discovered sketching in the grounds of Casaubon's house and is introduced to Dorothea, her sister and her uncle. As they are introduced (p. 104)

Dorothea could see a pair of grey eyes rather near together, a delicate irregular nose with a little ripple in it, and hair falling backward; but there was a mouth and chin of a more prominent threatening aspect than belonged to the type of the grandmother's miniature

Later, walking back to the house leaving Ladislav to his sketching, Dorothea makes a very kindly reference to him when his character is being traduced by Casaubon. Celia notices and remarks, when the two women are alone, that being engaged to be married seems to have made Dorothea more tolerant (p. 108). So the image she has of Ladislav and her kindly remarks about him, coming from a woman who has turned down an offer of marriage from an eminently desirable young man, suggest that what is being repressed is beginning to stir and that the marriage to Casaubon is needed to reinforce the defence and so to deal with the anxiety which might accompany the release of the repressed.

The wedding of Dorothea and Casaubon was not delayed and the honeymoon was to be taken in Rome where Casaubon intended to consult the Vatican Archives for material for his project, which would involve much time being spent away from Dorothea. He proposed that Celia should accompany them as a companion for Dorothea so that he would feel more at liberty to pursue his studies. Dorothea felt hurt by that suggestion and was ashamed of being irritated by some cause she could not define even to herself 'and felt that his proposal brought a vague instantaneous sense of aloofness on his part' (p. 114), and perhaps also indicated his anxiety about the sexual opportunity offered by the honeymoon. The wedding journey proved to be as unexciting as she had vaguely apprehended that it might be. But, as if to draw attention to the split-off and repressed aspect of the marriage, Ladislav appears in Rome in company with a German artist friend who sees Dorothea by whose appearance he is instantly impressed. Naumann, Ladislav's friend, describes her as the antithesis of the statue of Ariadne against which she is standing and as the most

perfect Madonna he ever saw (pp. 201–2). He and Ladislav hatch a plot to paint her portrait while pretending to want to use Casaubon's likeness in a painting not yet complete. Dorothea, however, is a Madonna in whom the artistic heritage of Rome was awakening repressed and disowned feeling:

Forms both pale and glowing took possession of her young sense, and fixed themselves in her memory even when she was not thinking of them, preparing strange associations which remained through her after-years (p. 225).

Under the emotional turmoil that the Roman antiquities create in her, coupled with the neglect by her husband, she becomes aware of a growing disillusionment with Casaubon not only for his inability to be in touch with their shared, repressed sensuality but also with his intellectual accomplishments which she was now beginning to despise although she had originally admired them when they formed an important reason for her choice of him, and for the first time may be beginning to perceive Casaubon's work for the sham it really is. 'Having once embarked on your marital voyage,' Eliot comments,

... it is impossible not to be aware that you make no way and that the sea is not within sight – that, in fact, you are exploring an enclosed basin. (p. 228)

The basin representing the marriage was not only enclosed but becalmed and, as the exchanges between Casaubon and Dorothea in Rome make clear, it was not available to be renewed by the stirring currents of sensuality newly aroused in Dorothea. Indeed, it had been contracted in order to ensure that those strivings should remain repressed. Small wonder then that her dormant but arousing sensuality should begin to respond unwittingly to Ladislav's presence when he called. Her reaction is noted immediately with displeasure by Casaubon when he returns from his studies finding them together. He could not bring himself to express his jealousy of Ladislav and never referred to it. Dorothea however remembered it as an occasion when her expectations, although unexpressed, died and that he would not be able to lift their repressed longings. She realised that:

... she had been under a wild illusion in expecting a response to her feeling from Mr Casaubon, and she had felt the waking of a presentiment that there might be a sad consciousness in his life which made as great a need on his side as her own. (p. 243)

In this reflection we see the conflict between repressed sensuality and repressive wishes becoming conscious. The shared 'sad consciousness' to which Dorothea refers is the consciousness of the need to

deny their sensuality, which it was the task of the marriage to maintain. Her response to Ladislaw was partly a consequence of conformity to this task of keeping the marriage free from sensuality. Ladislaw, being outside the relationship, becomes a target for the displacement of the repressed sensuality, leaving the task of the relationship in place.

In that consciousness the marriage continued, but Eliot makes it clear that the growing conflict in Dorothea was echoed in Casaubon although with less hope of happy resolution. His wish for joy was hemmed in by the habits of his previous fifty years of life where he was 'present at this great spectacle of life' (p. 314) and could 'never be liberated from a small hungry shivering self – never . . . be fully possessed by the glory' he beheld. Moreover, 'to know intense joy without a strong bodily frame, one must have an enthusiastic soul,' (p. 313) and Mr Casaubon lacked both although he had some sensitivity even if it was well concealed. On their return from Rome Eliot makes it clear that Dorothea is already changing psychologically and is becoming aware of her repressed wishes. The conflict is eloquently expressed.

Marriage . . . had not yet freed her from the gentlewoman's oppressive liberty; it had not even filled her leisure with ruminant joy of unchecked tenderness. Her blooming full-pulsed youth stood there in a moral imprisonment which made itself one with the chill, colourless, narrowed landscape, with the shrunken furniture, the never-read books, and the ghostly stag in a pale fantastic world that seemed to be vanishing from the daylight. (pp. 307–8)

The contrast between her beginning-to-bloom inner world and Casaubon's shrivelled condition could hardly be more starkly conveyed. He is already suffering from palpitations which heralded a full, although at this stage not fatal, heart attack precipitated by the receipt of a letter to Dorothea from Ladislaw which he had read before giving it to her since it was enclosed in a letter to him. The repressed had returned with a vengeance, and he collapses before Dorothea reads her letter which she has in any event spurned. The somatisation of the emotional conflict within Casaubon could hardly be better signified than through a failure of the organ conventionally symbolising the seat of the emotions.

Although Casaubon recovers from the first heart attack, its immediate cause, the emergence of the denied sensuality in the shape of Ladislaw, is presented and represented again and again. Dorothea is becoming more and more responsive to it and to him:

... the mere chance of seeing Will (Ladislaw) occasionally was like a lunette opened in the wall of her prison, giving her a glimpse of the sunny air; and this pleasure began to nullify her original alarm at what her husband might think about the introduction of Will as her uncle's guest. (p. 396)

Despite Casaubon's refusal to allow Ladislaw to visit them, his proximity at Dorothea's uncle's house and his subsequent employment as editor of her uncle's periodical ensures that there are many occasions for accidental meetings between Dorothea and Ladislaw, as well as others engineered by him. Casaubon noted all this with displeasure and attempted to forbid him to remain in Middlemarch. In so doing he is also warding off in himself, and in conformity to the unconscious marriage contract, the profoundly repressed wishes for a joyous sensuality. His anxiety was increased by Dorothea's raising with him the possibility that his estate, which would descend to her after his death, might be shared with Ladislaw as a belated act of justice. When his bid to get Ladislaw to leave Middlemarch failed he was unable to admit his jealousy to others or to acknowledge to himself 'that he did not find his marriage particularly blissful'. It is made clear that he had always tried to suppress his uncomfortable feelings, and in the face of the pressure from his displaced feelings he

remained proudly, bitterly silent. But he had forbidden Will to come to Lowick Manor, and he was mentally preparing other means of frustration (p. 412).

Dorothea, in conformity with the marital task, joins Casaubon's defences and in an accidental meeting with Ladislaw after her husband had tried to persuade him to leave Middlemarch she acknowledges that she will hardly ever see him even though he intends to stay. When Ladislaw commiserates with the restriction of her life to Lowick, calling it a dreadful imprisonment she replies 'No, don't think that. I have no longings' (p. 427), a comment which is understandable only in the light of her conformity to the task of denying sensuality upon which her relationship with Casaubon was founded. But despite that denial the rest of their conversation before parting betrays an intense degree of feeling for each other.

Casaubon's anxiety continues to grow as he perceives the developing sensuality in Dorothea and her responsiveness to Ladislaw. He felt sure that Dorothea had caused both Ladislaw's return from Rome and his determination to remain at Middlemarch. 'It was as clear as possible,' he believed,

that she was ready to be attached to Will and to be pliant to his suggestions. (p. 457)

What this implies is that the inner struggle against the repressed that each brought to the marriage had now been split so that Casaubon becomes endowed with the repressing force and Dorothea expresses the repressed. So the internal conflict within each of them becomes an external one between them and belonging to their relationship. To accommodate herself to the repressive aspects of the relationship, Dorothea has displaced the repressed on to Ladislaw whose impulsive, emotional character makes him an appropriate target for the displacement. The conflict between Casaubon and Dorothea then becomes one between Casaubon and Ladislaw. Passions however subject to repression and displacement do not cease to exist in the subject of them. Eliot makes it clear that neither in Dorothea nor in Casaubon has their personal conflict been resolved in that way. Following Casaubon's consultation with his doctor about his state of health, Eliot writes of his mental turmoil as he contemplates the possibility of his death. Although he is a Christian and a clergyman,

... Mr Casaubon's immediate desire was not for divine communion and light divested of earthly conditions; his passionate longings, poor man, clung low and mist-like in very shady places. (p. 462)

In that condition he is met by Dorothea in the garden but is unable to respond to her ardent wish to comfort him. Neither can reach the other.

... it is in these acts called trivialities, Eliot comments (p. 462), that the seeds of joy are for ever wasted, until men and women look round with haggard faces at the devastation their own waste has made, and say, the earth bears no harvest of sweetness – calling their denial knowledge.

A final struggle between the repressed and the repressing forces as embodied in the threesome of Casaubon, Dorothea and Ladislaw is silently enacted in a visit that Ladislaw makes to a service in the church where Casaubon is the incumbent. Will's attempt at the end of the service, during which no word has been exchanged between any of the protagonists, to force an acknowledgement of his presence from Casaubon is met with a comprehensive snub, although his presence is recognised by Dorothea with distress. Although not party to Ladislaw's action, nevertheless when she saw him in church Dorothea had hoped that he could be accepted and reconciled with her husband. By his rebuff of Ladislaw and, by implication of her wish to bring into the marriage the sensuality and joy represented by Ladislaw, Dorothea was robbed of hope and was left in despair. Casaubon,

however, although showing signs of the return of his illness, made an attempt to make a more intimate contact with her through involving her more directly in his work. She noted with surprise even when he awoke in the night and she offered to read to him from his notebooks the his mind was more alert. She

... was amazed to think of the bird-like speed with which his mind was surveying the ground where it had been creeping for years. (p. 518)

It seems to be suggested that the refusal to acknowledge what Ladislav represented had yet stirred the repressed within him which was then dealt with by sublimation into his work.

Even that was too much and he wished before he and Dorothea returned to sleep that she should make a promise that in the event of his death she would feel bound to comply with what he should desire, although what this was he did not specify. In turmoil Dorothea would not make such a promise in ignorance but agreed to give him her answer in the morning. The conflict in Casaubon was evidently too great and he died from a further heart attack in the garden waiting for Dorothea to meet him with her reply. Such was his anxiety that he had made a codicil to his will leaving his estate to her that if her widowhood should end by marriage to Ladislav she would forfeit it. So even his identification with the passion of his aunt was disowned when the displacement was threatened even after his death. He then identified with his grandfather and dealt with the errant feelings in the same way.

The marriage to Casaubon has thus ended without having enabled the couple to resolve the unconscious emotional conflict which each brought to it. Dorothea's story has not ended, however, and although at first she makes an attempt to continue her husband's life work she soon gives it up. Despite her husband's codicil to his will she almost at once began to think of Ladislav in a romantic way, but believes that he too, in proposing to leave Middlemarch for London, is doing so from a delicacy of feeling about her loss of the legacy with all that would entail in a world where the ownership of property established a secure place in society. She does not fully recognise her feelings for him even though she takes the miniature of his grandmother from the wall to hold against her cheek

... as if that would soothe the creature who had suffered unjust condemnation. She did not know then that it was Love who had come to her briefly as if in a dream before waking, ... – that it was Love to whom she was sobbing her farewell as his issue was banished by the blameless rigour of irresistible day. (p. 592)

And she tells Celia that she will never re-marry and intends to devote her life to good works.

Ladislaw did not know of the codicil but learned of it by chance some weeks later while he was still in Middlemarch. Having learned of it, he does then leave with the intention of not returning, but not before a final parting from Dorothea. She then becomes fully conscious of her love for him and believes that he loves her, although they appear to be parting for ever. So that although for Dorothea the inner conflict is being resolved it still cannot be brought into reality and a living relationship. The defences are finally overcome when she discovers Ladislaw with Rosamund, the wife of Dr Lydgate and whose marriage has been a kind of counterpoint to her own throughout the story. Returning home shattered by the discovery, she exclaims in anguish 'Oh, I did love him' (p. 844), and recognises that this has been the case since their meeting in Rome ('a very little seed since the days in Rome'). She makes an attempt to sublimate her feelings through study (adopting the defence represented by her marriage to Casaubon) but this fails even before Ladislaw makes another appearance. They meet while a storm begins to rage outside, although within they are having a calm and rather stilted conversation. A flash of lightning and a crack of thunder breaks the spell and they fall into each other's arms, but somehow it is as if the final triumph of the repressed is to be denied until Dorothea can voluntarily renounce Casaubon's estate, determining to live with Ladislaw on her own income. So it then seems as if with him she can finally integrate her sensuality, represented by her determination to forgo the legacy from Casaubon and to live on the income inherited from her parents.

We could live quite well on my own fortune, she tells Ladislaw (p. 870), it is too much – seven hundred-a-year – I want so little – and I will learn what everything costs.

So the conflict whose resolution had been attempted in one marriage, where denial and repression were mobilised unsuccessfully, is more happily determined in another which allows for the integration rather than the splitting of the conflicting wishes.

Soames and Irene¹

The story of this couple is set some fifty years later than that of Dorothea and Casaubon, whose courtship and marriage lasted only a

¹All references to Penguin Books edition 1978, reprinted 1980.

couple of years in all. When Soames and Irene are first mentioned they have been married three years and the marriage is already in difficulty. The members of the Forsyte family are very aware of and very disturbed by the problem since it seems to threaten the established order. Although the social world of Middlemarch is in evidence in the story of Dorothea and Casaubon it appears much less oppressive than seems to be the case for the Forsytes in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

The story of Soames and Irene is told from the point of view of Soames while Irene is observed from the outside. She is depicted more enigmatically than Soames, whose inner conflict is much more starkly and dramatically conveyed. He was the first-born of his parents and although nothing is told directly of his upbringing something of it is represented in the prevailing preoccupations of the family members. They are intensely interested in money and possessions and no meeting of family members occurs without some reference to how much money has been spent on some acquisitions or to the costs of the main items on the menu if a meal is being enjoyed. The price of something is an important element in its enjoyment, especially if one or other of the family can be seen to have been overcharged. All of this has affected Soames and helped to determine his character. Responding to a comment about the relationship of his kinswoman, June, with her fiancé, Bosinney,

Soames touched the edge of a gold-lacquered lustre. 'She'll tame him,' he said, stealthily wetting his finger and rubbing it on the knobbly bulbs. 'That's genuine old lacquer: you can't get it nowadays. It'd do well in a sale at Jobson's.' (p. 23)

He has become a partner in the family firm of solicitors and is already a 'man of property', a most important attribute among the Forsytes. He is presented as being meticulous over his appearance. It was 'impossible to conceive him with a hair out of place, a tie deviating one eighth of an inch from the perpendicular, a collar unglossed (p. 68-9)'. In addition to this very 'buttoned-up' appearance, he is concerned with possessions and possessing. He collects pictures which he keeps face to the wall in a room in his London house. He

would enter this room on Sunday afternoons, to spend hours turning the pictures to the light, examining the marks on their backs, and occasionally making notes. (p. 60)

Evidently what was on their backs was as important to him as what was on their fronts, and attested to the only thing which he valued,

the price which they might command at Jobson's. Even Irene was like a piece of property to be compared with

this dining-table with its deep tints, the starry soft-petalled roses, the ruby-coloured glass, and quaint silver furnishing; could a man own anything prettier than the woman who sat at it? (p. 70)

This presentation was not the whole story, for beneath that conventional, conforming surface lay a turmoil of conflicting feelings and desires. How much of a turmoil is revealed later in the story long after he and Irene have separated and he goes to try to persuade her to return after more than twelve years without seeing each other. In desperation he says to her,

You gave me a sacred vow – you came to me without a penny. You had all I could give you. You broke your vow without cause, you made me a by-word; you refused me a child: you left me in prison – you still move me so that I want you – I want you. (p. 564)

He felt an intense longing for Irene herself and for a period of two years before they married he pursued her passionately and determinedly. She refused him again and again until

adroitly taking an advantage of an acute phase of her dislike of her home surroundings, he crowned his labours with success. (p. 59)

When he was in company with her at family or other events

... he was seldom far from Irene's side ... and even when separated by the exigencies of social intercourse, could be seen following her about with his eyes in which were strange expressions of watchfulness and longing. (p. 17)

Some of this longing was reflected in his relationship with his property:

... out of all the things he had collected, his silver, his pictures, his houses, his investments, he got a secret and intimate feeling: out of her he got none. (p. 70)

Here it seems to be suggested that his wish for intimacy has been sublimated and reinvested in inanimate objects which he could possess without possibility of loss, and that Irene, whom he could not own in the same way, exposed an unbearable vulnerability in him which hindered his desired intimacy with her. His thoughts at the dinner table when she is silent and abstracted are perhaps indicative of that vulnerability. He wants to tell her about his decision to build her a house in the country but feels nervous and irritated about it:

... she had no business to make him feel like that – a wife and a husband being one person. (p. 70)

His aching wish for a symbiotic link with her is unbearable, especially as he is aware in company with all the Forsytes that Irene no longer wishes to share his bedroom. Little or nothing appears explicitly in the novel to explain the origin of this painful conflict in Soames, but it is noticeable that Soames's mother scarcely makes an appearance and is often absent from family gatherings. Her response to the news of Irene's abandonment of Soames, while affectionate, is scarcely effusive. And her relationship with James, her husband, seems less than intimate. When one of the elder Forsytes dies (Ann, the sister of James),

of all the brothers and sisters James manifested the most emotion. Tears rolled down the parallel furrows of his thin face; where he should go now to tell his troubles he did not know, (p. 102)

not, evidently, to his wife, the mother of Soames. So perhaps what is being indicated is that Soames's relationship with his mother is as detached as is his father's relationship with her, and this may have given rise to his intense and sublimated wish for symbiotic closeness, which cannot be easily consummated. Such closeness with an animate rather than an inanimate other incurred the prospect of its loss, as Soames was discovering about Irene as contrasted with his valued property.

Irene seems to be somebody who might be able to provide what he seeks; a free spirit through whom he could experience his own repressed wishes and enjoy the advantages of the unity of wife and husband for which he longed. In a passage contrasting her with Soames the difference between them is made plain; he 'would not have gone without a bath for worlds – it was the fashion to take baths; (p. 69)' She could be imagined 'like some nymph, bathing in wayside streams for the joy of the freshness and of seeing her own fair body.' She was capable of inspiring affection and

... men were attracted by her: their looks, manners, voices betrayed it; ... she was one of those women – ... – born to be loved and to love, who when not loving are not living ... (p. 49)

So it is possible to understand Soames's wish to marry her and the intensity of his pursuit of her; she perhaps represented an unconscious and denied part of himself with which he, no doubt ambivalently, wished to become more identified; and to be able to abate the painful deprivation resulting from the cool detachment of his mother.

It is much more difficult to understand Irene's motivation in marrying him. She plainly did not wish to do so, although Soames was in the eyes of the world, and of the Forsytes particularly, a very desirable

partner for her since she came from a poor family. Her father, a professor, had died leaving her with an income of £50 a year (no money in Forsytean terms). Nothing is known about her mother, beyond that she was the daughter of a bankrupt cement manufacturer and that she was also dead. Her father had remarried and after his death she continued to live with her step-mother, and there is the merest hint that Irene and her stepmother do not get on. She had a physical revulsion to Soames, and in the light of that it is difficult to understand her decision to marry him even although it was coupled with making him promise that if the marriage was unhappy he would agree to release her. In the light of subsequent events in the marriage it might be speculated that despite the availability of her emotions she was made anxious by the powerful sexual reactions she so readily evoked in men and possibly might have been looking for someone whose strong defensive system would help her to manage her potentially dangerous sexuality. If that were the case her marriage to Soames did not provide the safety she may have wished for. It may be surmised that from the beginning the marriage does not have a mutually and unconsciously agreed task, as was the case for Dorothea and Casaubon. Irene may be seeking help with the task of controlling her unruly passions, while Soames may be seeking to be able to express his.

The marriage is in difficulties as the novel opens and neither Soames or the family can understand why. Soames reflected upon his virtues as a husband and could not understand what she might find wrong with him;

It was not as if he drank! Did he run into debt, or gamble, or swear; was he violent: were his friends rackety; did he stay out at night? (p. 58)

What he was unable to conceive is that the 'subdued aversion' to him that he was aware of might be a result of his unexpressible passion and unconscious emotional withdrawal from her, which was expressed through his listing as virtues what he was not, rather than what he was. Just before the dramatic crisis in their marriage they are at a dance given by one of the elder Forsytes. Soames

'danced with no one. Some fellows danced with their wives: his sense of 'form' had never permitted him to dance with Irene *since their marriage*, and the God of the Forsytes alone can tell whether this was a relief to him or not. (p. 182, my italics)

It might be wondered if, in marriage, he was now repeating the cool relationship with his mother; such repetitions regularly occur in marriages where each of the partners may be seeking to repair something from their earlier relationships with parents. Into such a relationship

which appears to have become stuck in an ungratifying way for both partners, and where the possibilities of escape seem blocked, a third party may intervene, representing the missing or repressed element in it. Such a person is Bosinney, an artistically minded architect, who is engaged to Irene's close friend, June Forsyte. Irene meets him for the first time at a party given by June's grandfather to introduce him to the rest of the family. His artistic temperament and lack of business qualities are regarded with great suspicion by the Forsytes. Irene and he make an immediate rapport. Interestingly, Soames decides that he will engage Bosinney, despite his reputation, to design and build a house for him in the country with the intention of moving to live there with Irene in the hope that it will of itself improve the marriage. It is as if he unconsciously apprehends what is missing for him and that it might be something represented by Bosinney, so he unreflectively proposes to remedy it by living in a house created by him. Equally interesting is that he finds that the remedy rapidly begins to cost him more than he can afford, and perhaps not only in economic terms. The persistent failure of Bosinney to observe the cost restraints drives Soames to rage in which the jealousy about the relationship between Irene and Bosinney is combined with the fury about Bosinney's prodigality. His proposal to take punitive action against Bosinney and his threats to make him bankrupt succeed in estranging Irene from himself. She locks her bedroom door against him and refuses to relent. The stalemate endures until one night Soames discovers that she has failed to lock the door. He enters and rapes her, dealing with his subsequent guilty feelings by regarding it as

'the first step towards reconciliation' and as doing his best 'to sustain the sanctity of marriage, to prevent her from abandoning her duty . . . (p. 265)'

– a rationalisation which perhaps covers his passionate desires which he had hoped might find their release through Irene's apparent tolerance of her sexuality.

The relationship between June and Bosinney was ended at the ball where Soames did not dance with Irene and where she was seen both by Soames and June coming out of the conservatory with Bosinney who had 'that strange look of utter absorption on his face . . . (p. 186)' Later, Soames watches them dance together;

To the slow swinging measure they danced by, and it seemed to him that they clung to each other; he saw her raise her eyes, soft and dark, to Bosinney's and drop them again. (p. 184)

June leaves in distress without speaking to Bosinney. Both Soames and Bosinney are in an emotional turmoil, which results in the rape of Irene and the death of Bosinney. Bosinney is killed in a road accident while wandering about at night in a thick London fog on the night before the case which Soames was bringing against him for overspending on the house was due to be heard. It is hinted that he may have committed suicide. Before she learns of his death Irene leaves Soames to go to Bosinney and only hears of it after she has visited his lodgings to find that he is not there. When she discovers what has happened she returns to Soames in shock and distress: 'She had come back then of her own accord, to the cage she had pined to be free of –' and seems 'like an animal wounded to death, not knowing where to turn, not knowing what she was doing (p. 312).' Soames is torn between sending her away and begging her to stay, and in their suffering they cannot reach each other. Although racked with his own suffering, Soames is quite unable to express it to anyone, and she is too shocked to be able to do more than wish her lover would return to life, and indeed briefly mistakes another member of the family, Young Jolyon, for him when he calls with a message in the middle of the bleak scene with Soames (a singularly prescient mistake, as will be seen). It is as if Irene has received confirmation of her unconscious feeling that her sexuality is dangerous and destructive, and by returning to Soames, unconsciously wishes to have it imprisoned again; to be met with Soames's unconscious and inexpressible wish for the opposite.

Soon after these events the marriage of Soames and Irene ends in their separation and so they remain for twelve years until Soames decides he wants to divorce her to be able to marry a young French woman, Annette. He discovers, as he tries to open the possibility of divorce, that he is still emotionally embroiled with Irene. After meeting her for a discussion about the divorce, Soames in conversation with Young Jolyon says of himself that he is

... also in a damnable position. Hers is what she has made for herself: mine is what she made for me. I am not at all sure that in her own interests I shan't require her to return to me. (p. 462)

He makes attempts to persuade her to return which fail, so he continues with the divorce. He marries Annette in the hope that she will become emotionally available to him, but equally fails to solve his own emotional problem with her. This brief scene which takes place after the birth of their daughter epitomises the whole of his difficulty.

Annette was very pale and very pretty lying there. The baby was hidden away somewhere; he could not see it. He went up to the bed, and with sudden emotion bent and kissed her forehead. 'Here you are then, Soames,' she said. 'I am not so bad now. But I suffered terribly, terribly. I am glad I cannot have any more. Oh! how I suffered.' Soames stood silent, stroking her hand; words of endearment, of sympathy, absolutely would not come; the thought passed through him: 'An English girl wouldn't have said that!' At this moment he knew with certainty he would never be near to her in spirit and in truth, nor she to him. He had collected her – that was all! (p. 631)

He never rids himself of the intensity of his frustrated passion for Irene and at the end of the book he sits in Highgate Cemetery after a family funeral reflecting on his life:

And only one thing really troubled him, sitting there – the melancholy craving in his heart – because the sun was like enchantment on his face and on the clouds and on the golden birch leaves, and the wind's rustle was so gentle, and the yew tree so green and dark, and the sickle of a moon so pale in the sky. He might wish and wish and never get it – the beauty and the loving in the world. (p. 906)

If Soames has been unable to resolve his problems satisfactorily, Irene is eventually more successful in finding ways of dealing with hers. The unleashing of the sexual destructiveness brought about by her marriage and in the relationship with Bosinney, leads her to withdraw from life for many years. Her sexuality is suppressed, and she is without any relationship with a man. She lives alone, earning an income sufficient to support herself and to employ a maid, by giving music lessons. As if by way of reparation and to assuage her guilt she devotes herself to what Galsworthy calls 'the city's Magdalenes'.

In the meantime, Soames's uncle, Old Jolyon, has bought the house built by Bosinney and lives there with his son, Young Jolyon, the father of June; and with young Jolyon's second wife and their two children. Before he dies he meets Irene again, and even though it was his grand-daughter, June, whose relationship with Bosinney was destroyed by Irene, he feels sorry for her and decides to leave her sufficient money in trust so that she will have a comfortable income for the rest of her life after he dies. Young Jolyon (so-called although he is in his early 50s) is to be her Trustee.

After a further six years, during which time Old Jolyon has died, Soames is torn between divorcing Irene and marrying Annette, the French woman. Having with difficulty decided on remarriage, he has to obtain evidence of Irene's adultery, although she has been living perfectly chastely for the whole twelve years she has lived alone. Young

Jolyon's second wife has also died, and their two children are by now young adults. Soames sets a detective to watch Irene, after he has failed to persuade her to return to him. The detective reports that she has been frequently visited by Young Jolyon. Soames, although he is aware of the trustee relationship, cannot believe that they are not also having a sexual relationship. He visits them unexpectedly in Robin Hill, the house built by Bosinney, where they have been served with divorce papers naming Young Jolyon as co-respondent. Although it is made clear by Galsworthy that the relationship is chaste, confronted by Soames in person they agree that they are living together. This leads them to give effect to that admission by going away to Europe together. After the divorce they marry and have a son. For Irene this can be seen as an integration of all aspects of her personality in a relationship, and a resolution of the conflict about sexuality within herself which has been either so destructive or completely repressed. Young Jolyon is himself an artist, who in his youth left his first wife and daughter to take a lover with whom he had two more children. He was not concerned with the all-consuming passion of the Forsytes for property, but after his first wife's death he was reconciled with his father and rejoined the family without giving up his artistic career. So he can be seen as a man who has somehow reconciled within himself his unruly passionate nature with the requirements of society without loss of integrity, and who is therefore available for Irene to help her with the task of defusing her destructive sexuality. It may be seen that the second marriage for Irene, and perhaps also Young Jolyon, has a natural task to contain the passionate, and perhaps destructive, sexuality and allow its expression in a mutually fulfilling way. It is symbolic of this that the couple live together in the beautiful house completed by Bosinney before his death, as if something of that artistic passion can now be a container, rather than the catalyst of destructive forces. One other rather inexplicable aspect of this integration, but one which points towards an oedipal complexity in Irene which had never been clarified in the story, is that Irene has married the father of her friend, June, whose lover, Bosinney, she had seduced; and they live together in the house built for her by Bosinney, and which itself had been bought by her husband's father, Old Jolyon, who had himself made her a legacy which had allowed her to live totally free from Soames. This perhaps hints a much deeper conflict than Galsworthy has been able to make explicit in the story, but which he somehow ties off rather neatly in this outcome.

Conclusion

The authors of these two accounts wrote in the second half of the nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century, and each set their story in an earlier time period. Despite this, the marriages they are describing, in terms of their emotional content, could be set in any period. It is particularly interesting that each of the women find the resolution of their problems in a second marriage rather than the first, and this, because of the ready availability of divorce in the final third of the twentieth century, is believed to be a particularly modern phenomenon. In these stories these outcomes can be envisaged by two authors, writing at different times, as a way in which problems of relationships could be healthily resolved. Galsworthy contrasts this with what he thought was the general social view of the late Victorians that even when the marriage was unsatisfactory for either of the partners

... that they should jog along, even if they hated each other. It would not matter if they went their own ways a little so long as the decencies were observed – the sanctity of the marriage tie, of the common home, respected. (p. 204)

This opinion is not too far from the position of some modern moralists, although they would be unlikely to express their views quite so bluntly. For them it is the form rather than the content of marriage that is important. It contrasts very starkly with the basic theme of marriage of Soames and Irene where not only can the decencies not be observed, but Soames's wish to reassert the appearances, as he conceives them, results in a violent rape and the complete rupture of the relationship. Does this not resemble some of the outcomes of the breakdown of contemporary relationships in which one of the partners feels driven to act out violently, sometimes as an attempt to re-establish the bond between them, and sometimes to break it finally?

For both authors, as for modern marital therapists and counsellors, marriage can be understood first as a container within which conflicting emotions and unresolved problems inherited from past relationships may be held while solutions are attempted (Clulow 1985; Colman 1993; Morley 1984; Pincus 1973). The relationship incorporates for both partners unresolved issues from the past with the prospect of reworking them anew so that anxiety-arousing conflicts may be successfully defused. For both couples the problems they bring into the marriage are about sensuality and sexuality, about which they are all ambivalent, and the marriages seem to have been contracted with

some intention of keeping at bay the anxieties created by these factors. Dorothea and Casaubon have each displaced their sexuality, although for reasons which have not been made explicit in their story. Dorothea has displaced hers on to her sister; Casaubon seems to have displaced his on to his disgraced aunt, to whose family he has been making voluntary restitution of their lost legacy from the family property. In both, as in any partners who experience similar ambivalence, the hope exists that the displaced or repressed aspects of themselves may be found in the other and kept safely distant but within the boundaries of the relationship. The conflict which for each before the marriage had been internal becomes externalised, lying between them. For Dorothea, Casaubon may have been experienced as being able to help her maintain the repression which she may have felt was beginning to weaken. Casaubon, however weakly, was seeking the delight he hoped that she would provide him, despite his inability to seek for it before. One of Casaubon's defences was the sublimation of his sexuality on to work in which Dorothea joined him, and after his death temporarily attempted to maintain for herself.

For Soames his ambivalent struggle with his violent and passionate wishes is evident throughout the story, even to the last page of the book. It is as if he alone can allow himself to be aware of what he seeks and cannot express it except in fury when he rapes Irene. In the presence of a passionate woman like either of his two wives it seems to have to remain repressed and frustrated, and to be subdued by anal preoccupations with possessions and collecting. It is as if his powerful sexual wishes, related to the desire for unification with the mother and its expression in the wish for a symbiotic husband/wife relationship, are feared because of their potential destructive and incestuous nature, and in the incident of the rape of Irene their actual destructiveness. They can only be safely contained if they are aligned with a retentive, controlling constraint. That Irene's sexuality is held equally ambivalently despite her apparent ease with herself is conveyed in the choice of the undemonstrative Soames with his capacity to control the outward expression of passion, contrasting with the many other men who are immediately attracted to her and who would have offered a more satisfactory choice if she was really as comfortable with her sexuality as she appeared to be. Moreover, that she shared, at an unconscious level, Soames's fear of the destructiveness of her sexual passion is demonstrated by what happens when she allows it to be unleashed with her lover, Bosinney, whose violent death while he is in a bemused, distracted state ensues. The symbolism of the foggy night on which

he meets his death seems to be representing the state of mind to which he has been driven by Irene's passion. So each of the partners is more alike than appears on the surface, and in their relationship with each other they seek, unsuccessfully, to resolve their desperate internal conflict.

The ambivalence about their sexuality and the creation of a relationship to help deal with it is just as characteristic of many twentieth-century couples. In seeking less fearfully and with greater gratification to express mutually these aspects of themselves they then have to confront the anxiety created by the threat of raising to consciousness their repressed wishes and at the same time seek in the other support to maintain the repression. In the example of Dorothea and Casaubon, the unconscious emotional contract between them is weighted powerfully on the side of maintaining the repression. In each of the two men, Casaubon and Soames, the power of the repression is considerable and the struggle with it in their marriages leads one to his death and the other to lifelong frustration.

The introduction of the third party into a relationship is a common feature of many marriages which are ambivalently concerned with sexuality, and may be seen as an attempt to deal with an ambivalent aspect of the relationship by displacing it outside its boundary. The intervening person may be seen to represent the desired but feared elements of the relationship which cannot be contained within it. Both Bosinney and Ladislav represent an easy sensuality and emotional availability which is missing from both marriages. Soames, in engaging Bosinney to build a house for himself and Irene, seems to be seeking to possess some of Bosinney's emotional availability and to incorporate them in a home as if they will somehow become part of the marriage. He cannot afford the economic price or the emotional cost of this manoeuvre and it leads to disaster and the complete breakdown in the relationship with Irene. It is not a sufficiently strong container to hold the turbulent feelings that would be aroused by the entry into it of the warded-off aspects represented by Bosinney. While Irene is much later able to enter successfully a relationship with a much less disturbed version of Bosinney, Soames remains completely unable to choose a partner with whom he can achieve what he sought.¹ Ladislav,

¹Soames's longing is transferred to his daughter, Fleur, who falls in love with Irene's and Jolyon's son, Jon. The possibility of that relationship reviving aspects of the past cannot be allowed by either Soames or Irene, and she particularly is unable to permit even the vicarious forgiveness of the past which would have been represented by the marriage of their two children.

because of the blood relationship and the fact that he is the grandson of Casaubon's sexually free aunt, makes him the ideal target for the displaced and disowned sexuality. For both Dorothea and Casaubon he represents what is missed and feared in the marriage and his family link makes the return of the repressed even more threatening. As we have seen, Dorothea is less fearful of him and attempts to bring him into relation with the marriage through her wish that Casaubon would restore the lost inheritance to him, and in the scene in the church is silently wishing that his presence could be accepted and acknowledged. Casaubon's very weak wish for sexual gratification in the marriage cannot sustain its symbolic realisation in Ladislav's threatened intrusion across the boundary of the marriage however platonically. His response is to reinforce the sublimation of his sexuality in his work, functioning with renewed vigour with Dorothea in their joint task of preparing his notes for their long-postponed publication, but even this is too much for him and his heart gives out under the strain. In an odd way he then becomes the third party in the relationship between Dorothea and Ladislav. Although dead his influence lives on through his codicil forbidding the inheritance of his estate by Dorothea and thus identifying her with his passionate aunt who could marry for love at the cost of her fortune. He then can be the object upon whom the denial can be displaced, freeing Dorothea to realise her repressed sexuality.

As with other couples, there are other aspects of their unconscious phantasy which is shared (Bannister & Pincus 1965; Teruel 1966). The evident depression of both Dorothea and Casaubon suggests the possibility of their being unconsciously preoccupied with similar object relations. Although conjectural, the absence of any real reference to either of their fathers, and the possibility that Dorothea is in a state of uncompleted mourning for her father may mean that they have some unresolved shared complex and the loss of a male internal object in common which might be linked to their anxiety about the expression of sexuality. Soames and Irene may have in common the lack of a gratifying mother, and for Soames at least Irene embodies the distant, unobtainable woman with whom he is unable to be in intimate contact and who threatens him with abandonment. This is a choice which he is compelled psychologically to make if he is to be able to repair the damage he has suffered because of his own mother's emotional distance from him. The choice of the opposite, as in the case of the second wife, Annette, does not enable him to heal the psychological wound, and as his continued emotional attachment to Irene shows he is

unconsciously aware that it is only with her that he had any chance of finding the remedy.

Irene's mother is dead and has been replaced by a stepmother with whom it is hinted that Irene is in conflict. Might she have some feeling about the loss of her mother which finds an echo in Soames's striving to unite with the absent mother? Equally, the loss of her mother may have been experienced with guilt because of her oedipal relationship with her father, which may then have been frustrated by the choice of the stepmother as the replacement. In that case the unconscious fury about father's betrayal of her might easily lead to its displacement on to Soames and to the withholding of herself from him. Her marriage to Young Jolyon appears to provide the resolution of the oedipal conflict and perhaps the triumphant entry into the role of the envied stepmother. These are, of course, speculations which cannot be supported directly from the text, and may, in fact, be a consequence of Galsworthy's inability to write persuasively about Irene and her emotional difficulties, and also possibly from his identification with Soames, whose intense struggle with his passionate nature is vividly conveyed in the novel.

Finally, what makes the understanding of marital problems different from individual psychological problems is that the relationship itself has a role in the interaction over and above what the two partners bring to it individually. It acts first of all as a container, or it may be a crucible, within which intense emotional transactions may be experienced. Secondly, however, it may form a kind of contract unconsciously entered into by the couple and the terms of which are equally unconsciously enforced. This can be plainly discerned in the marriage of Dorothea and Casaubon where sexuality and sensuality were to be excluded as it had been in their individual lives prior to their marriage. Casaubon's struggle with the terms of the contract finally killed him. Dorothea, too, even in her relationship with Ladislav before Casaubon died, was not attempting to breach the contract, but to sustain her contact with sensuality outside the boundary of the marriage. Even with Ladislav himself, after Casaubon's death she did not immediately feel able to acknowledge her sensual and sexual longing for him without a struggle. Her compromise, involving the loss of Casaubon's fortune and the relative asceticism of 'living in a street' and on a modest income of £700 a year, served to allow her to enter into a more gratifying relationship with Ladislav.

For Soames and Irene it seems probable that even such an unconscious mutual contract might not have been possible. It is not clear

whether Irene can be considered to have entered the relationship at all, securing from Soames a promise at the outset that he would allow her to leave if she could not bear it, and already at the beginning of the novel she has abandoned their sexual relationship. So that without such an unconscious foundation the relationship could not begin, even if it was destined to fail at a later stage. Nevertheless, there can be discerned some elements which might have served to form such a contract if the feared destructiveness of their sexuality had not been so great.

In these two marriages set in widely different historical periods, both relatively remote from our own, and in different social classes, there can be seen many of the elements which continue to appear in marriages in our own day. Like these two couples, we choose partners who bring to relationships psychological conflicts which mesh with our own and which often may offer opportunities to find new and gratifying resolutions of those conflicts. As with the two fictional couples where the defences against the repressed material are too great, the relationship will fail, but like them, too many will seek to find the solution with another who may offer greater hope of a successful outcome. What is clearly demonstrated is that whatever the changes in social conditions and in the moral climate, the intimate nature of relationships and the problems that they are attempting to solve appear to remain unchanged and the difficulties of couples of a hundred or a hundred-and-fifty years ago can be understood in the same way as those of couples in our own time.

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FROM ROOTLESSNESS TO ROOTEDNESS: A CLINICAL DISCUSSION

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Introduction

The seeds for this paper began to germinate when I spontaneously offered to present clinical material, as part of a panel discussion, on 'Rootlessness'. While drafting notes, it was difficult to decide which of four patients to present. For that presentation, a professional man in his early forties was chosen because the week before he had said, 'I have been rootless for 20 years, the worst fear is loss of security'. His statement and the lively panel discussion motivated me to explore and write about the meaning of rootlessness. For this paper, I have chosen to write about a woman in her thirties whom I will call Victoria.

Rootlessness

My first assumption is that in reality neither plants nor human beings can survive without roots. It is literally a matter of life or death – a plant dies without roots, a foetus can not survive without an umbilical cord. Without roots there can be no flowers, no seeds. The term root is used as a metaphor to describe a link/connection between mother (natural mother, mother imago, mother earth, and archetypal Great mother) and the sense of self (conscious, personal and collective unconscious). It is the link between one generation and the next. I agree with Jung's (1940) statement, 'We could say that every mother contains her daughter in herself and every daughter her mother and that every woman extends backwards into her mother and forward into her daughter'. I would add that every son contains maternal aspects of his mother and grandmother.

Dictionaries define **root** as: 1. part of a flowering plant that anchors and supports it and absorbs and stores food (Penguin); 2. the part of a plant which grows down into the soil seeking nourishment for the whole plant (Collins); 3. feelings of belonging established through close familiarity or family ties with a particular place (Penguin); 4. *a person's roots*; what attaches him emotionally to a place where his or

her ancestors lived for a long time (Oxford); 5. to establish deeply and firmly, *the feeling is deeply rooted* (Oxford).

Rootless is defined as 1. having no root: belonging nowhere, having no home and constantly shifting about (Chambers); 2. (*of a person*) having no roots in a community (Oxford and Chambers).

In my opinion, human beings act out the unconscious sense of not belonging, of having no place to be their selves in an attempt to communicate and to repair painful early experiences of traumatic abandonment. I consider the regressed, detached, unreal aspects of a rootless individual's personality as 'borderline'. Rootless acting out is a survival technique aimed at getting in touch with the wish for and fear of support for growth, and the wish for and fear of loss of self. It is an unconscious attempt to find security and a sense of personal identity, a manic defense against feeling weak, helpless, anxious, unlovable and unwanted.

Some patients seem to be compulsively and repetitively acting out in the external world an unnamed, unresolved internal problem which has been passed down from their parents or grandparents. These patients are undifferentiated from a parental image of not belonging, of being abandoned. I am in agreement with Quinodoz (1993) who sees separation anxiety as the tragic fear of finding oneself alone and abandoned. Abandonment is understood to be a traumatic loss of, or rejection by, a loved and needed person when a substitute can not be found. It is a deeper, more damaging psychic injury than separation in which sadness and grief may be experienced. Feeling anxious and insecure, rootless patients carry on their parent's search for security and identity. Since they are struggling to manage the unconscious pain from previous generations, they cannot fully attach themselves to the present generation. They fear an already experienced abandonment or loss at a time when containment and support seemed unattainable. Paradoxically, rootless behaviour can be an attempt to find oneself by repetitively losing oneself and an attempt to find strength and security by surviving unbearable anxiety and insecurity.

The group of patients to whom I refer are in and out of places and relationships including the therapeutic relationship. They uproot themselves, re-root and root again. Rootless patients are similar to, but not the same as, the 'half-in and half-out' schizoid individuals described by Guntrip (1980). In my experience rootless patients are more likely to produce neurotic rather than psychotic symptoms. However, they are like the schizoid individuals who have great difficulty establishing a genuine relationship with another human being.

Since they are over sensitive to the threat of rejection or separation, they fear both isolation and close emotional proximity. There is an ever present fear of being devoured, suffocated by the powerful other and/or of being left alone in a weak and helpless state. They desperately search for a way to fill the gap left by the lack of a containing and mediating mother, then become terrified by the relationship they need.

These patients can be frustrating to treat and difficult to contain in treatment, but rewarding if treatment enables them to take root and grow. Trust in the containment of the mother/therapist, and the withdrawal of primitive defences (denial, splitting, projection, introjection, projective identification) is a long, painful process. Regression to the early failure during a deep analysis often makes possible the development which was not possible initially due to environmental failure. Transference and countertransference enactments can make it possible to re-live and manage painful separations and losses.

The Index of Jung's Collective Works has two references under 'rootlessness'. Jung (1941) referred to the loss of roots as 'one of the greatest psychic dangers not only to primitive tribes but for civilized man as well'. According to Jung, the loss or breakdown of age old convictions, traditions rooted in instincts, is always a real danger. He comments that important rites pertaining to marriage, birth and death were probably originally designed to avert the psychic injuries liable to occur at these times. The inner worlds of the rootless patients whom I have treated tend to be dominated by parents from different cultures, religions, mother-tongues. Their parents' own roots had been severed or damaged, not firmly established.

Jung (1938), writing about the positive aspects of the Mother complex said, 'This is mother-love which is one of the most moving and unforgettable memories of our lives, the mysterious *root* of all growth and change: the love that means homecoming, shelter, and long silence from which everything begins and which everything ends'. This is the idealised good mother aspect of the Mother Archetype. At the other end of the spectrum is the evil, devouring, witch mother who wants to kill her children, as in Hansel and Gretel. Rootless patients seem to live in an archetypal world compulsively travelling between the extremes of good and evil mothering. If the actual mother is not humanised, a child can not fulfil their own human potential.

Leon and Rebeca Grinberg (1989) in *Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Migration and Exile* describe 'transplanted' individuals who have emigrated. Grinberg's patients do not repetitively and compulsively move in and out of countries, houses, jobs, and relationships in a

rootless way, but they erect similar defences against the pain of separation and mourning. The comment that latent psychotic mechanisms can be set off when the equilibrium between conflicts and defenses is disturbed (e.g. the traumatic experience of loss of mother at a time when mother fails to contain the child's anxiety) is confirmed by my clinical experience with rootless patients.

Individuals who feel that they have no roots (i.e. no anchors or means of absorbing food) need to find a defensive manoeuvre which will provide needed security and preserve a sense of being. A rootless identity of movement and detachment becomes a substitute for a true identity. There is a need to protect the weak, vulnerable, and hateful parts of the self and to prevent intrusions. Guntrip (1980) speaks of a need to regress into mental convalescence where one can lie quiet and protected and try to recuperate. According to Winnicott there is a sense of unreality in the formation of the false self which develops to protect the true self. A caretaker false self protects the regressed part. The false self can not experience life or feel real; it only offers a false integrity (Winnicott, 1954). Anzieu's 'skin ego' has a containing function. The failure of a skin ego to contain may lead an individual to seek an alternative protective envelope. He describes the complementarity of the shell and kernel as the *root* of the sense of continuity of self and well being (1989). Bick (1968) uses the term 'second skin' which is developed to provide a substitute container and pseudo-independence.

I perceive autism as another defence mechanism against traumatic loss or rejection. Tustin (1990) referred to a hard, shell-like encapsulation when writing about autistic children and said that they feel they have nothing to hold on to, no solid ground beneath their feet. The link between autism and rootlessness is illustrated in an autobiography titled *Nobody Nowhere* by a young woman named Donna Williams who movingly tells of her long struggle from autism to near-normality. She wrote:

I move from place to place, a life of nameless faces,
Looking for some place that I'd call home,
I'd always be moving on;
Always trying to find some place I could call mine,
But that never came my way and the feeling was there to stay,
Not knowing who I used to be.
I look in the mirror, in the face looking back I see. . . .
'Don't know. Who is me?'

Williams (1992) describes her battle to keep out the world and the battle to join it, and of the pain of 'not belonging in the world'. She

repetitively moved from one relationship, house, school, job to another. Gradually, she began to face the joys and sorrows of joining the human race. Like the patients I describe as rootless, Williams does not attach herself emotionally for fear of abandonment or loss of self. She finally discovered that when she locked herself in the autistic shell she locked others out.

Clinical illustration

I intend to use one female patient who represents a group of patients. It is a personal story of facing and surviving losses and limitations, of taking root and finding integrity and a secure place to flourish.

Victoria

Victoria was an attractive, youthful, married woman in her thirties when I first met her. During the previous eleven years, she had lived in eight different houses. In the past three years she had had one year of psychoanalytic psychotherapy and two years of biogenic therapy. The analysis with me was three times a week for a period of five years. The presenting problems were a ten year unconsummated marriage and a desire to feel 'authentic'. Although to the outside world Victoria appeared to be functioning successfully in a lively, self confident manner, inside she was becoming increasingly anxious and insecure. She was afraid that she was not 'normal', either all bad or empty inside and that if people really knew her she would either be laughed at or rejected.

Victoria spilled out a tragic history at the first session; it seemed unbelievable. I noted after the session that I had felt overwhelmed, unable to take it all in. I wrote that she was 'closed – can't open up'. When she left the first session, her appearance had changed from a self confident woman into a frightened little girl. In the transference, I felt like an idealised mother who was unable to adequately hold and feed a starving baby. She seemed like an orphan child, an innocent victim powerless to understand or satisfy her own needs.

Family background

Victoria is the youngest of five children, three boys and two girls. Her father was of European Jewish background. He was *sent to Scotland*

in his late teens when his mother died, although he could not speak English. He continued his studies, obtained professional qualifications and married in his twenties. Victoria described her father as quiet, eccentric, and solitary. Her mother was a Scottish Presbyterian whose *own mother died when she was 13 years old*. Victoria has been told that her mother had a fiery temper, played the piano well and wanted to be an actress.

Father did not like living in the small close Scottish community, but mother had grown up there, so did not want to leave her extended family. Against the wishes of Victoria's mother, the parents and five children, ranging in age from six to thirteen years, emigrated from Scotland to New Zealand. Shortly after they arrived in New Zealand, Victoria's mother became ill, so the five children were flown back to relatives in Scotland. Victoria remembers being met at an airport by crying relatives, but has no memory of being told directly of her mother's death or of the family mourning the death. There is still a great deal of uncertainty about the cause of death since it was not talked about.

Father became depressed and withdrawn after his wife's death and was never able to settle. He managed to look after the children's physical but not emotional needs. The family moved back and forth between England and New Zealand three times until the older children refused to move again. Victoria recalls feeling frightened during long ship journeys, living out of suitcases, changing schools, and always feeling an outsider. She did not feel rooted in any community and did not establish satisfying friendships. It was a close, self contained family unit which stuck together against the outside world. They eventually settled in England. Victoria's elderly father was in residential care when she began therapy with me, and he died suddenly during her treatment.

Clinical material

Rootless shifting about was acted out in the early analytic sessions by Victoria's requests to alter session times, missed sessions and lateness. On one hand she seemed to be working hard and committed to the analysis, because she kept detailed notes between sessions of dreams, thoughts, and memories. However, on the other hand, she distanced herself from me and prevented direct linkage by reading from her notes. I found her difficult to reach or hold. The lateness, non-

attendance and notes enabled her to remain in control and keep me at a safe distance; i.e. not too far away and not too close. She seemed to want support and nourishment, but was unable to take root and allow herself to use what was available. I sensed that to Victoria control felt like a matter of survival; life or death. After a few months she confirmed this by writing, 'If I lose control I die'.

In the early transference-countertransference interaction, I was unconsciously seduced and manipulated by a charming, innocent victim. I responded to the special, weak, fragile, child part of her and I acted out the good mother projections. At first, I tended to accept the practical explanations for lateness or missed sessions. It took me some time to recognise and interpret the well concealed unconscious aggression and destructiveness in her behaviour and my frustration at being treated in this way. She tried to hold onto a rootless image of not needing an attachment to her therapist/mother. She also acted out the denial of a need to absorb nourishment at home, by refusing to keep nutritious food in the house and by allowing food which her husband provided to rot away.

We struggled together and separately to find the hidden 'authentic' Victoria. During the early months, she sat opposite me rather than use the couch because she felt, 'To be seen is to be'. One year into analysis she said, 'I feel invisible but better because before I did not exist'. Victoria often looked like a 'bag lady', carrying a large handbag containing notebooks full of her dreams and thoughts. She knew they came from inside because she had written them, but when she read them out loud in sessions she seemed completely detached from the words and feeling. At the time, neither of us could locate the source of the well hidden feelings expressed. It was as if there was no connection between inside and outside, unconscious and conscious, words and feelings. It was as if this rootless woman needed to have her belongings and proof of identity with her at all times as she moved from place to place.

She acted out personality changes by changing her appearance, ranging from make up with elegant designer outfits to no make-up with shabby, dirty jeans and top. She often looked like a pre-pubescent school girl in play clothes, or a bright party dress – a Shirley Temple image. I wondered if that was an identification with her mother at the age of thirteen when her own mother died; it was as if all life had stopped then. For a brief period after her father's death Victoria dressed in a masculine suits. This may have been an attempt to hold on to a lost part of herself attached to her lost father or an attempt

to restore her father. After returning from visits with her envied sister, she appeared in stylish, elegant outfits. Victoria seemed to take on the identity of lost objects at a cost of her own identity. Redfearn (1985) might describe this as acting out sub-personalities. Dress could be an expression of sub-personalities as well as a defence against being seen/known; i.e. an attempt to find herself by losing herself. She could not feel that she belonged anywhere or with anyone until she felt secure in her own personal identity.

Victoria called herself a 'clown' and I often felt as if I was watching a performance. Perhaps this was a way to identify with her actress mother. Friends could rely on her to liven up a party with amusing stories and initially she assumed that I wanted to be entertained in analytic sessions. Perhaps she used the clown character in an attempt to keep herself and others alive, but also as a means of hiding and protecting her true identity. At the time, I thought of her 'clown' act as a defence against being 'nobody', but after re-reading Ulanov (1987), I recognised the clown archetype in Victoria. According to Ulanov, the clown is man's best defence against feeling and personifies the worst fears of inferiority. Clowns alternate from being high spirited, funny, colourful to being sad, touching, *wistfully wanting to belong*. Ulanov states that clown's mothers are not vengeful, or wicked, but rather unable to provide adequate care. This was confirmed by my countertransference feelings of inadequacy.

During sessions, my consulting room seemed crowded with the inhabitants of Victoria's inner and outer worlds; friends and relatives, close and distant. It was as if there were people everywhere, but she was nowhere. Sessions were filled with long, complicated stories about other people's activities, past and present. To find my patient in this crowd, I quickly learned to listen to the stories of others as projected parts of Victoria or introjected parts of others while at the same time listening for transference communications. Projective identification was used to communicate her unconscious feelings of envy, hate and love as well as to break links (roots) with me. Gradually she could begin to withdraw and integrate projected elements of her personality. I relied on my countertransference feelings and the enactments to reach Victoria's hidden feelings. I often felt sad, envious, frustrated, angry or anxious during sessions and exhausted afterwards; alternating in the transference between being Victoria or her sister (substitute mother).

The theme of abandonment was continually acted out and worked on in the transference at times of weekend and holiday breaks and

missed sessions. Victoria's mother died suddenly without her being able to say goodbye, there was no opportunity to express anger or grief, only denial. The traumatic loss of mother was twice re-enacted, first at the time of her father's death and then again when her husband left. Both men had served as substitute maternal figures, carrying good or bad archetypal projections. Victoria recalled being 'rebellious' before mother's death, but cutting off all feelings of love and hate on that day. It was as if she herself went dead when mother died.

Father's death, in the sixth month of analysis, inevitably stirred up repressed memories and feelings. Victoria was out of the country when she received the message that father had died. Although he had been ill for several years, the death came suddenly and unexpectedly. She returned home feeling guilty that she had not been at his bedside (as she has felt about mother's death). Feelings of abandonment and loss were awakened, but there were also reparative elements. Following the Jewish traditions of mourning and burial, Victoria established a valuable religious link with her ancestors; she felt emotionally supported (rooted) by her father's Judaism. She complained of being unsupported by her siblings (all abandoning mothers), but aware that she would not accept the comfort offered by her husband. She was angry about support that was unavailable, but rejected what was available (i.e. she only wanted an actual mother). During analytic sessions she was beginning to face the pain of separation and disillusionment and to accept feelings of dependency toward her therapist/mother.

The grief and regression during mourning prompted disturbing sexual memories and feelings. Erotic feelings were linked to love and tenderness as well as hateful rage. I think this was what McDougall (1989) refers to as a psychosomatic regression to infantile erotism complete with pregenital, sadistic and fusional aspects. Physical symptoms appeared which she described as 'shutting down'; e.g. migraine headache, a numb tongue. Her body and mind seemed to be reconnecting. It was as if her body was acting out the impulse to eliminate all feelings. She wrote touchingly about her love for father, the love she had not allowed herself. One could speculate that if frightening erotic feelings had been attached to the love between Victoria and her father, since mother's death, that she would want to cut them off rather than absorb his love. Anger toward mother was projected on to all women. We were all perceived as abandoning, unreliable and responsible for her need to be a strong, independent, self-sufficient caretaker (without roots).

The shock of father's sudden death brought psychic reality about her marital relationship. She was not securely rooted in a stable relationship. Victoria understood that her whole married life was a pretence (e.g. pretending to be in a normal sexual relationship, not to be on verge of bankruptcy, to be happy etc.). The strain of maintaining her false self, hiding her true feelings, and holding her guilty secrets became unbearable; the real world could no longer be avoided. Her protective shell was cracking and exposing real feelings.

Eight months later, Victoria's husband left her. Next their fourteen year old dog died. The dog had lived with them throughout the marriage and was loved by both partners. The losses were traumatic and painful. She said she felt as if she was 'dying inside', 'poisoned', 'falling apart'; unloved and unwanted. She feared that living alone she could not survive; i.e. *without roots she could not live*. The reality of loss brought forth more memories and feelings linked to sexuality, abandonment and rejection. Eighteen months into analytic treatment, she owned her insecurity by admitting that *she had felt lost since she first went to New Zealand* (age six). Facing the truth about her need for support enabled her to seek change.

Soon after her husband moved out, Victoria telephoned me, in a state of lonely desperation and confusion, at 3:00 AM for containment and support. The call felt intrusive and afterwards I was left feeling emotionally exhausted and drained of energy. I felt she wanted more from me than I could give, as if she was sucking all the energy out of me to keep herself alive. Victoria (by projective identification) communicated how she herself had felt drained by the infantile dependency needs of her parents and husband; i.e. the emotional cost to herself of 'saving' them. This demonstrated to me the power of her life or death struggle. Did one always have to die to keep the other alive? Could parents and children both live? We were able to reflect on what had been re-enacted and link it to early feeling of weakness and insecurity. She felt contained by the analytic intervention and relieved that her needs had not destroyed her mother/therapist as she imagined they might have killed her mother.

Victoria began to face the full weight of her depression and dependency needs and mourn the separation from her husband. She reported long periods of solitary crying. In sessions she cried what I call 'How can you do this to me?' tears; a combination of sorrow and rage. Alone at home a soft toy rabbit helped her to get in touch with how much she had loved her husband. She realised that she had not been able to hold him or love him because it was like holding the mother

that died. Her husband had complained that she could not express love either physically or emotionally; she had not consummated the marriage. I believe her fantasy was that if she allowed herself to take root that it would be cut and that either she or her husband would die. There was guilt (related to omnipotent fantasies) about the destructive power of her own insatiable needs. Transference interpretations and reconstructions enabled her to begin to face the painful reality that she had in fact experienced mother-love (the root of growth and change), had lost it, and had survived.

Like a house of cards, her whole pretend world collapsed, reality took over! Their home was repossessed, the bank cut off credit facilities, and the furniture was sold at auction; every thing was taken away! There was *nowhere to be!* Recognising the need for security, she borrowed enough money for the analytic fees, and accepted an offer of a friend's rent free flat. She was forced to tell family and friends the truth about her unconsummated marriage and financial insecurity. She was surprised when nobody laughed at her or rejected her as she had feared. Others could accept the truer Victoria.

The process of shedding what she described as a 'fossilized shell' and finding an 'authentic' identity took several years. During that time, Victoria tried to protect the tender, vulnerable parts of herself while strengthening the stronger aspects of her personality. It was a time of discovery and change. She seemed to alternate between being an excited toddler and a rebellious adolescent, enthusiastically rushing out to find exciting experiences then rushing back to see if mother/therapist was still there to support her. There were deeply regressed periods when she felt unable to speak to family or friends, or even to dress and feed herself, alternating with exciting social periods when she would enjoy exploration and play. There was also a 'push-pull', 'in-out' acting out in the analytic work. As an attack on analysis, she sought alternative help and magical answers though daily meditation and visits to a clairvoyant. She seemed to be everywhere, but nowhere. She oscillated between trying to speed up the natural growth process, and trying to hold on tightly to the familiar rootless defences of movement and hiding.

Vague memories surfaced of sleeping in her parents bedroom as a child and in the same room or in the same bed with father or a brother in New Zealand, either at the time mother was in hospital or shortly after her death. There were also faint memories of being in bed with a 'girl friend' of her father, at the age of about eight in New Zealand. She wondered if she had been sexually abused? These memories sur-

faced during phases of stress and loss; while feeling insecure. My view is that it was a longing for mother, a primitive sexualised regression aimed at fusion, as described by McDougall (1989). A combination of my four week summer holiday break and her weekend away with a boyfriend, toward the end of the fourth year of analysis, evoked powerful feelings which seemed to have been locked away in Victoria's body. In the first session after my holiday, Victoria told me about being away with her current boy friend in a romantic city to celebrate her birthday. This brought back disturbing memories of feeling ashamed of her father's appearance and behaviour and his need for comfort after her mother's death. During the session, Victoria was agitated and complained of insomnia, constipation and a feeling that she had 'disappeared'. She had abandoned herself in defence against feeling rootless, weak and emotionally alone in an unfamiliar place and relationship.

At the next session she read a detailed account of what had happened while driving home from that first session. The physical pain triggered off frightening emotional pain. Wearing high heel shoes, she began to shake uncontrollably when she remembered dressing up in mother's high heels (i.e. playing mother). Her legs and back hurt, there was a deep pain in her pelvis, her arms felt scabby and ached, her teeth chattered and she let out a childlike wail. Victoria made a decision to allow the feelings out and to write them down. At the time it seemed incomprehensible, but now I understand it as what McDougall calls a somatic explosion (1989). All I could do was try to contain and support her.

Victoria anxiously telephoned me the following evening to report an experience of weakness and pins and needles in her legs while walking. She was feeling frightened and vulnerable, with tender skin and an urge to scream. She came to the third session of the week with uncombed, tangled hair, dirty track suit (like a neglected orphan) but saying she felt better. Before the session, she had already been to hospital to seek help from a doctor (father figure). She had been unable to sleep, was constipated and retaining urine, so the doctor prescribed laxatives, sleeping pills and tranquillisers. She recognised the pain in her pelvis and back as similar to the pain which she suffered once when her mother laughed at her because she needed to pee. Victoria's body was trying to hold on to itself to prevent psychic fragmentation. I recognised and interpreted that we were re-enacting the early traumatic abandonment by mother (therapist) and a turning to father (boy friend, doctor) as a substitute caretaker. It was as if

her mind and body joined together to relive the original abandonment and to save her. This time she could ask for and receive the help she needed. I did not interpret possible guilt about a wish to be a grown woman (sexually active) replacing mother (in high heel shoes) or about surviving mother.

I sensed her heavy depression and anxiety at the following session. She said that she had felt frightened while coming to see me; it was like walking to school alone, leaving her family behind. She was feeling separate, anxious and full of envy and rage because she recognised that everyone else (including her therapist) seemed to have a partner. Victoria realised that if she did not pay me she would have to stop coming; i.e. that I was not the actual mother she longed for. Although I was only a substitute, I was available and 'good enough', so she asked for an extra session. Victoria seemed to be letting go of the hope of finding an omnipotent, omnipresent mother and to be accepting what her 'good enough' therapist had to offer. She had become rooted in the therapeutic alliance and aware of her dependency needs. Finally the self destructive rage and hate appeared to move out of her body into the transference where it could be thought about. Eleven days after I returned from my holiday, colour returned to Victoria's cheeks. Most important of all she said that *she was hungry!* Hungry for food, love, attention, and restful sleep. She was ready to absorb life giving elements and start to grow; this was the turning point.

The illusion of a protective shell had been part of the analysis from the beginning, but it had changed. Victoria usually described it as a hard crust either encapsulating her or as scabs covering her arms. In the second year of analysis, she said she felt as if people were chiselling away at her so that only her virginity was left. The hymenal membrane seemed to be perceived as a part of her protective shell. During the later phases of analysis, there were several dreams about breaking out of a shell and complaints of sensitive skin. At the session in which we agreed a termination date, she said she felt like a six year old covered with a crust of moving maggots. The protective shell seemed to be breaking up (maggots are soft bodied larva of house flies). She said that that her protective shell had preserved loving feelings, so that they could be retrieved later. This substantiates theories mentioned at the beginning of the paper.

Victoria's external world was changing as well. She began to limit social engagements to friends with whom she could talk openly and honestly about real feelings. A divorce settlement was negotiated and

decree nisi granted. She set up a freelance business using her maiden name and became more financially secure. The frightened little girl part of her was still apparent, but in direct communication with the more assertive, integrated women who could take responsibility for herself. Needs were more likely to be spoken than acted out. She arranged to finance a comfortable flat in a familiar, secure area; her own space/place. The day Victoria exchanged contracts on her flat she announced that she only wanted to attend one more therapy session. I felt that she was acting like a teenager running away to her first personal space and that I was the mother whom she did not want to need. I saw it as a premature flight to freedom and independence, but felt that I must respect her timing. It was as if she had to prove to herself that she was real and strong and that she could leave me before I left her.

We negotiated a termination date six weeks ahead in the hope that we could spend the time on issues of separation and loss, but this was not possible. She continued to attend thrice weekly for the six week period, but her rootless and primitive defences (mainly denial, projection and splitting) were re-established and she only wanted to discuss external issues. It was as if she could not risk allowing me to remain emotionally close for fear that I might destroy or spoil her new life (projected envy). At the end of the final session six weeks later, she asked if she could give me a hug. After a quick hug and a 'thank you', she rushed away without leaving her new address or telephone number. At least she said 'goodbye', which is more than either of her parents had done before leaving her.

Conclusion

I believe that Victoria sought my analytic help at a point in her life when the tension between the urge to find herself (live) and lose herself (die) became unbearable and uncontainable. She had gained a degree of ego strength from the two previous therapeutic interventions, but was still using rootless behaviour as a manic defense; a way of maintaining emotional equilibrium. By working through transference re-enactments and external events she managed to lower her defences and to get in touch with the need for support, nourishment and a true identity. When the 'orphan child' found a voice that could communicate needs rather than hide within a protective shell, she began to develop into an 'authentic' woman; i.e. to blossom. She could use

words rather than act out unconscious impulses and feelings. The analysis enabled Victoria to rediscover lost parts of herself and become a real person in the real world.

In retrospect, I think that Victoria used the telephone line as a 'helpline', a root/'umbilical cord' providing a safe link with mother figures and herself. Ordinarily telephone calls would not be considered good analytic practice, but in my opinion it was appropriate in managing Victoria's treatment. There was the 3:00 AM crisis call (mentioned above), as well as important long distance calls. These were symbolic leaving home/mother and being welcomed back (Jung's 'homecoming'). She rang me, like an excited teenager, from abroad to tell me about her 'first kiss' and professional successes. I became a distant mirror, used to confirm emerging aspects of the self; a reliable source of security and continuity.

Victoria had needed to erect defences against taking root; to protect against loss of self. She had internalised two generations' pain from irreparable loss. How could she trust that it could be different for her? Her maternal grandmother died when her own mother was in puberty. Victoria was six when her mother died, leaving her in the care of a depressed father (who had lost his mother in adolescence), a pubescent sister, and three older brothers. She carried the family burden of emotional deprivation and loss of security. She needed to find ways of defending the undeveloped, vulnerable parts of herself against loss. Victoria seemed to be strongly identified with the innocent victim, orphan child image. This had allowed her to project or deny destructive, aggressive and sexual aspects of her self. My view is that she could not own these 'shadow' aspects because they had been hidden within the enmeshed, tangled, distorted family structure. Since father and the five children moved frequently, Victoria grew up within a closed, self contained unit. I am reminded of Guntrip's reference to the fantasy of returning to the womb, a 'fortress' where it is safe (1980). Victoria may have converted an internalised protective family circle into her own personal 'fossilized shell'.

One can speculate that Victoria had a good enough mother in infancy, which enabled her to establish a therapeutic alliance. Although when she began analysis she appeared to be rootless and self contained, she was conscious of having a false self and that an 'authentic', true self existed somewhere. My view is that Victoria progressed developmentally as far as she could at the time. Perhaps she will return someday, or maybe the next generation will be left to continue the journey. She found an honest style and identity in which she could

feel real and comfortable; a personality that incorporated both good and bad, male and female. She no longer needed to become invisible, to hide behind the clown or dress as if she was another. She could acknowledge a need for food, love, play, and work and ask for what she wanted. She could openly express feelings and was in touch with her body. She had enjoyed two sexual relationships before she left therapy.

During much of the analytic work, I was experienced as her envied sister, an inadequate substitute mother with whom she had an intensively ambivalent relationship. After working through, in the transference, the rivalry and separateness from her sister, I was experienced as the mother of childhood (the previous generation). During the five years of analytic work, Victoria lost her father, her husband, her beloved dog, financial security, and the illusion of family support. It seems she could not bear to risk further loss or disillusionment by separating from a human mother/therapist. There was a small irrational part of her that still believed that her dependency needs had killed her mother and that she (as a divine child or clown) could omnipotently keep others alive. She could not trust that we could both survive and flourish if she reached her full potential as a mature sexual woman. Victoria was only beginning to trust that it is possible to have mutual respect for differences and that two women of different generations could work side by side in an equal relationship.

Mary Williams (1971) makes the important point that primary envy, on the archetypal level, is envy of the creative function of the mother. It is a mother's envy of her creation and wish to re-incorporate it. In Victoria's inner world there seemed to be a generational war between a sexual, aggressive woman and an asexual abandoned child. I believe that it was this life or death, sado-masochistic struggle that was the source of both Victoria's presenting problems (an inability to consummate the marriage and not feeling 'authentic'). In Guntrip's language, the anti-libidinal ego sadistically crushes or enslaves the masochistic, suffering libidinal ego. There is a violent internal struggle between the destructive, rejecting self and the creative, life giving self (1980). In Hubback's language, it is 'living the shadow' in the form of antidevelopmental and regressive forces (1984).

Four of my rootless patients experienced a somatic regression in which one vital system (digestive, respiratory, or reproductive) was temporarily impaired. This acting out was physically dangerous. Destructive impulses were communicated somatically, in response to emotional pain, rather than verbally. When the capacity to think was

restored, it was as if they made a conscious decision to fight for their lives; i.e. to become somebody, somewhere. Victoria had not believed that she had the permission or the 'know-how' to become a 'real woman'. Since there was no actual mother or grandmother to give way to her, to help her step into the productive generation, she seemed to have felt that she had no right to develop beyond puberty. It had been safer to be nobody, nowhere, than to find a place where she felt she belonged and to allow herself to live creatively.

In conclusion I return to the biological metaphor. Without roots there can be no flowers, no seeds. Annual plants grow from seed, flower and seed in one year and then die; they do not re-seed themselves. Perennial plants are propagated by seeds or cuttings then flower and die off, but the roots store energy and food for the next generation. I do not know why some plants are annual and others are perennials, but they all need roots to take in food and water just as all human beings need to be attached to life giving internal and external resources. If nourished when incapable of feeding themselves, they learn to provide enough sustenance through their own roots to survive.

Summary

The term rootlessness is used as a metaphor to describe individuals who act out a sense of not belonging and behave as if they have no need for support and nourishment. It is described as a manic defense against traumatic early loss and rejection and an attempt to find needed security and personal identity. The themes of abandonment and protective shells are used to explain the concept and attention is called to psychosomatic symptoms. Reference is made to unconscious links with previous generations and with separation anxiety. Clinical material from one patient is used to illustrate and explore rootless behaviour.

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SIBLINGS, SPACE, AND SEE-SAWS

MARGARET A. HAMMOND

A baby's struggle to establish her place in the family, and to cope with the transition to becoming the middle child.

This is the account of the first two years of the life of Suzy, born October 22nd. 1992, the second child of a comfortably off, settled family, who live in a small town near London. I trace her growth and development, her ups and downs, especially focussing on the way she managed to establish a space for herself, with her mother, and with her demanding and articulate brother, Dan, just two years older than herself. I go on to describe what happened when her mother again became pregnant when she was three months old, with baby Steven arriving three weeks after her first birthday.

David, the father, works for a public service, which involves him in shift work, so he may be available during the day, or he may be away for long periods of time. When at home, he is supportive and available to the family, helping in the kitchen, or taking over the care of the children. The children relate very closely to their father, so he is badly missed when away. David combines a sensitive nurturing aspect with a tough macho streak, providing sensitive containment for his family, but he also rides a powerful motor bike and broke his arm playing football. I saw him only rarely during the first year of my visits, but he was at home regularly during the second year, and I saw him taking part in the care and support of his young family.

Penny, the mother of Suzy, worked in the same field as her husband before having the children. She is in her early thirties and my first impression was of calmness and containment. She took easily to having an observer, being interested from a professional point of view, and was always cooperative in giving me ample space to observe. I found her generous in sharing her baby with me.

On the surface, she seemed confident about her mothering capacity, and had some experience, as she was the oldest of three children herself, and had a lot of involvement in the care of her youngest brother, who was born when she was a teenager. I was struck by her capacity to cope with physical pain. For example, she had no gas and air until her last contraction when Suzy was born, and one day when I arrived, she had just returned from the dentist, where she had had

a pinned filling without injection! Her anxiety showed in subtle ways. She would chat to me often, but it was mainly about the children, and filling in background information. However, when things were tough, she tended to talk to me more often, and I would hear how one or the other had been awake a lot in the night, or how David was away, and Dan had been difficult. Anxiety showed up too in the atmosphere in the house, and seemed to be expressed mostly by Dan, who became demanding and noisy. I have rarely seen Penny ruffled with the children. When I was there, she maintained a sensitive, but firm exterior, sometimes in the face of great provocation. She seemed to have a capacity to contain strong feelings in general, her own and the children's, to think about them, and put them into words. I think this enabled the children to express themselves clearly and often creatively, as I will discuss in this paper. I felt too that from early on, Suzy demonstrated an ability to contain herself to some extent, for instance, lying awake in her pram without crying for long periods. This seemed to be an echo of what I observed in her mother.

From my first meeting with the family, in October, before the birth, I realised that Penny had a very close relationship with Dan. She played imaginative games with him, talked to him a great deal and showed deep understanding and care for his feelings and needs. My question was: 'How will Penny make space in her mind for a new baby, and how will Dan react when his close two-person relationship is disrupted?' The difficulties intrinsic in this situation were displayed in my second visit.

10.11.92.

Aged 3 weeks.

Suzy was in her pram, in the lounge, alert and moving around, giving me the feeling that she knew I was there, and that she wanted attention. Dan and his mother were in the kitchen where I could hear them talking to each other. Suzy began to cry and Dan ran into the room, carrying his juice in a feeder cup. The baby, perhaps thinking this was mother, stopped crying and began to make sucking movements with her mouth and tongue. However, it wasn't mother, and she began to cry again. Penny came in and picked Suzy up, and the baby began rooting for the breast. As she sat down to begin feeding, Penny told me that Dan had had a temper tantrum that morning, and was finding the disruption difficult. Dan immediately found a tape, and tried to put it into the tape player for some music. He couldn't manage, and began to whimper. While holding on to the baby, Penny put the tape into the machine for him. Suzy waited patiently but latched firmly on to the nipple when it was finally offered, and began to feed purposively. She held the breast in place with her right hand, while sucking with contented sounding little grunts. Penny watched her some of the time with a loving smile and

stroked her head. The rest of her attention was with Dan, who was bringing his toy cars over to park on the sofa next to his mother, or dancing to the music. While engaged in this, he managed to squirt himself in the eye with juice from his feeder cup. This seemed to reflect an experience which often happened to Suzy, who would come off the nipple, apparently when these disruptions became too much for her to manage, and would get squirted in the eye by milk from the breast.

The theme of a struggle for space was repeated regularly during my early observations as I observed again on my fourth visit.

24.11.92.

Aged 5 weeks.

I was told by Penny that the baby was feeding a lot and that one evening in the week, when Dan was in bed, she had demanded to be fed hourly, from six to nine. Maybe she was already realising when she had the field to herself. During this visit, I watched Suzy's bath, an activity in which Dan was a determined participant. Afterwards, she began to cry and suck, showing signs of hunger. Penny sat down on the sofa with the expectant baby, unbuttoned her blouse and Suzy took the nipple enthusiastically. At this point, Dan declared that the pram was his boat, and climbed into it, complete with his feeding beaker, full of juice. It was a tense moment, and felt like a challenge from him to his mother. He resisted Penny's requests for him to move, and an outburst seemed imminent. The situation was saved by granny, who suggested that the laundry basket might make a good boat. Dan acquiesced, climbing out of the pram and into the laundry basket, with plastic bricks, his drink, and a car or two. A crisis had been averted by diplomacy. During the drama, Suzy had been unable to manage the flow of milk, perhaps realising that she had lost the attention that she needed, so came off the nipple, and began to hiccup, and squeak, drawing her breath in violently, in distressed fashion. This was her version of the crisis. Penny managed to switch her attention quickly, and calmed Suzy down, by talking to her, hugging her to her body, and stroking her back. She took the nipple again, and continued to feed for another five minutes.

Dan showed strongly ambivalent feelings to this new arrival in the family, partly wanting to be helpful and loving, and partly wanting to keep the baby role for himself. Penny was sensitive to his conflict, and mostly helped him to manage it without Suzy being seemingly adversely affected. Sometimes, as I have shown, this was not possible. For her part, Suzy showed a good deal of self-containment, feeding purposively through all but the most strident interruptions and remaining unruffled by Dan's rough attempts to hug her, or comb her hair. From a very early age, she shut her eyes when he came too close but I rarely saw her cry from his attentions. In her pram, I observed her showing signs of discomfort or distress, and often dealing with it herself, and returning to sleep, or to alert but peaceful wakefulness. She found ways of getting the attention she needed, to which her

mother responded quickly and sensitively. Suzy seemed a 'sparing' baby, but one who could make her voice heard when things became more than she could manage. The evening became her time with her mother and father, when Dan was in bed, and for the first few months, she would only settle in the evening if brought downstairs to sit in her chair. During the day, she also wanted to be downstairs, where the action was, crying if put upstairs where things were quiet. Maybe this was how she expressed her feelings about being excluded, and showed how difficult it was for her to be on her own.

As my observation progressed, I gained the impression that Suzy was absorbing Dan's feelings, and possibly experiencing them as part of herself. When he played noisily with his cars, she would join in the excitement by kicking her feet and waving her hands, or if he was interacting with his mother, angrily or lovingly, Suzy would watch, and show some physical response herself. It was as if Penny's management of Dan's emotions was also important for Suzy, and that by identifying with her brother, she gaining containment too, and experiencing a relationship where strong feelings of many kinds could be felt, thought about and responded to. I felt that Penny's ability to hold them both in mind helped Suzy grow and take into herself a good mothering experience at this time.

Alongside the theme 'Is there enough space?' ran a related theme 'Is there enough to go round?' and this surfaced distressingly after Christmas, when Suzy was around ten weeks old. I arrived for my second visit in January to be met at the door by Penny who was clearly upset. She told me that when she visited the clinic last Friday, the health visitor had said that Suzy was not gaining enough weight, and perhaps breast feeding should be supplemented with a bottle. This suggestion awakened a great deal of anxiety in Penny about whether she had enough nourishment to give both babies, and since Friday her milk had begun to dry up fast. It was now Tuesday, and she only had enough left for one breast feed a day. She felt sad and bereft and referred to this off and on throughout the visit. She consoled herself with the thought that it would be better for Dan if Suzy were bottle fed, but there was a huge sense of disappointment.

During that visit, I observed Suzy in her pram.

11.1.93.

Aged 11 weeks.

She was moving around a lot, kicking her legs and staring fixedly at the side of her pram. When I approached, she stared at me without expression, with wide open grey eyes, and then looked away. I felt extremely sad. She then began moving her arms around, holding one hand with the

other, as she had held the breast, and trying to put them in her mouth. Sometimes she managed to stuff two or three fingers in her mouth, and would then suck them avidly for a second or two, before taking them out, and grizzling, as if disappointed. Most of the time, she couldn't find her mouth at all. She also had a cold, so was snuffly, and her breathing was difficult. At some point during this time, she filled her nappy, and I heard a loud and bubbly noise. Even her tummy was upset! Having expelled some of the discomfort, Suzy cheered up for a bit, until her bottom began to feel uncomfortable. She now ran out of resources, and cried loudly. Penny came to the rescue, picked her up, changed her and talked to her. She calmed down. The distress was dealt with for now, and mother and baby smiled and cooed at each other in a delighted and connected way. I then heard about last night, when Dan had woken while Suzy was having her only remaining breast feed, at 3am. He screamed for his mother and could not be pacified, so David took him downstairs. Penny herself became upset and cried, at which point Suzy became fretful, and would not feed or settle. No wonder there was such a feeling of upset round this morning.

The health visitor's remark profoundly affected Penny, who, up until now, had been struggling with the many demands made on her, but had been coping. Now, suddenly, her resources were drying up. For her part, Suzy seemed to be struggling to hold on to the breast and her feeding experience by holding on to her fingers as a substitute nipple, or by holding things sadly with her eyes. Dan reacted to the situation by expressing rage at his exclusion, and Penny broke down in tears. The feeling of loss affected the whole family, and I picked it up very strongly on this morning. Penny described David as very sympathetic and supportive, and, in spite of all the underlying distress, I saw her managing to be reassuring and comforting to Suzy. Perhaps my presence also provided Penny with some support and reassurance at this difficult time.

The visits that followed had an undercurrent of tension and disruption running through them. At the time, I thought this was to do with the sudden weaning that followed the move to bottle feeding. However, early in March, I was given the news that Penny was again pregnant, and that the baby was due around November 10. Hence, she must have become pregnant around the second week of February. When she told me the news, Penny was both anxious and sad. She had briefly considered abortion, but decided that this was not an option for them. David is a Roman Catholic and was pleased about the pregnancy, although concerned for Penny and the children. On the verge of tears, she talked of her sadness for Suzy, who she feared would be robbed of her infancy, but then she said: 'But my real worry is for Dan', who

would have to adjust yet again. Whether or not she was pregnant had been on her mind for a few weeks, so maybe this anxiety was being expressed in the feeding difficulties that I observed and shall describe. There seemed no obvious connection between the milk drying up and the pregnancy, as the two events were about three weeks apart.

The change from breast to bottle feeding and the introduction of solids did not go smoothly. I felt there was a lot of pressure around, as if it was important for Suzy to grow up quickly, or as if the loss of the breast had to be made up for by the introduction of many new, exciting things. Maybe the sadness and the anxiety were too great to be felt, especially when there were also the confused feelings about the new baby to be managed.

I was aware of this when I visited in the second week of February, when Suzy was 14 weeks old.

16.2.93.

Aged 14 weeks.

Suzy was being fed baby rice from a red plastic spoon. She sat in her chair, fixing her mother with her eyes, but not participating in the feeding. Although Suzy seemed very contented, smiling and cooing, I felt very sad, and wondered whether this was connected with what was going on. I observed the loss of physical contact in the feeding, and felt that the food was being put into the baby without her consent. Suzy let the spoon be put into her mouth, but the rice trickled down her chin. Sometimes this was because she spat it out, and sometimes because she just did not swallow it. She was looking all round, at Dan, at her mother, and at me, apparently unaware of the food in her mouth. After the rice, she was taken into the lounge for her bottle. Mother and baby settled down, with Suzy still rooting for the breast. I felt Penny was sad, and Suzy became distressed. My fantasy was that the teat on the bottle was too large, that it was an intrusion like the plastic spoon, and that she might choke. Suzy took the teat in her mouth, had a couple of sucks, then spat it out, and looked round, just as she did with the spoon feeding. Penny left her for a moment, then tried again. Suzy again had a couple of sucks and spat it out, this time, I thought, angrily, as a protest. She arched her back, and waved her arms, as if to push away the offending bottle. Penny put it down, and put Suzy over her shoulder, to see if she had wind. None came up. Penny cradled the baby again, who started searching again, it seemed, for the breast. This time, her mother rocked her gently as she took the teat, and talked to her in a soothing voice. Suzy settled down, and sucked steadily, eventually drifting off to sleep.

It seemed to me that Suzy found it very hard to change from feeding from the spoon, where she was passive, to the bottle, where she needed to be active. With the spoon feed, she was looking around, taking in many things with her eyes, Dan, her mother, me, but this made it difficult for her to re-establish close enough contact with a feeding

mother to suckle. However, after a period of distress, they found a way of coming together and feeding calmly.

This became a typical pattern. The spoon feeding gradually felt less of an intrusion, but Suzy continued to need to take in other things around her while feeding, as if this was a way of controlling the transaction, and perhaps keeping in touch with good feelings, in reaction to the spoon which did not feel good. For several weeks, I watched her rejecting the bottle feed, pushing it away angrily, preferring a close cuddle or gentle words. Maybe the bottle represented the rejecting breast, which she had to reject herself, before she could get in touch with a mother who could nurture her as she needed. When she did make contact, the pattern was to feed slowly, and apparently hang on to the hard won closeness. Dan complained and so did David, but Suzy persisted, having established her way of getting the closeness and containment she needed.

This was the situation at the beginning of the new pregnancy, and a new intrusion into her relationship with her mother. Penny seemed to cope with the anxiety of this period by introducing more and more solids in a rather manic way. There was a lot of illness around; Dan had conjunctivitis, Suzy an ear infection, Penny a cough. Suzy began teething and Dan was still cutting his back molars. There were numerous disturbed nights, and fractious days. When the pregnancy was confirmed, in her concern for Suzy and her infancy, Penny cut down the solids a great deal, and for a short time, Suzy was fed again almost entirely on milk. Penny said she wanted Suzy to be a little baby again and Suzy was in agreement. She responded well, gradually taking her milk without difficulty, sucking well. By the end of February, she was back on solids, taking them with enthusiasm. Feeding was once again a holding, connected experience, fun, communicative and cooperative. Penny was getting used to the idea of another baby, and she and Suzy had apparently managed to work through the developmental loss of the breast. David had said that she mustn't think of another baby as depriving Dan and Suzy, but simply that there would be three of them, and they would be close. This helped her, and she held on to this idea. An experience of great loss and disruption had been survived and worked through, by mother and baby, but maybe some legacy was left with Suzy, in the form of an experience of being intruded on by a hard object, namely a spoon and a teat. Maybe too, Suzy had found a way to control this experience and protect herself from it to some extent by pushing away the spoon and bottle, and also by taking in

things of her own through her senses for example, things she could see or hear.

When I returned after the Easter holidays, a three week break, things had entered a new phase. This period was about Suzy's increased mobility, from first rolling over at the end of March, to crawling, by July. She took great pleasure in manipulating objects, toys, especially Dan's, in banging and biting, and in learning to put one object inside another. Like Dan, she showed creativity in her play. At seven months, when playing with a soft toy, a little monkey, she first played gently, holding the arms and moving them up and down, delicately fingering the manufacturers label, and inspecting it. Then she became more lively, bumping the monkey in to her face, up to her mouth and away again, like the teat of a bottle perhaps symbolising the lost breast. Finally, she began to bite the monkey, energetically, laughing with pleasure. By now she had four teeth, and was keen to try them out on all manner of objects, animate and inanimate. She moved around the room by rolling at first, and this brought frustration as well as delight. She would yell with fury when she got stuck in a corner, or with pain, when she rolled on a sharp toy. The word 'no' was firmly introduced into Suzy's world, to try and restrain her from eating coal, playing with flexes, or, most desirable of all, Dan's cars, with all their little detachable pieces.

Suzy's relationship with Dan began to change in subtle ways. She could still often be seen watching him intently, perhaps taking in his feelings, and reacting to them as if they were her own, but I also began to observe behaviour which suggested that she felt more separate from him. At the beginning of May, when Dan was climbing on the kitchen units, although told not to, Suzy began a show of her own, squealing and shouting with eyes wide open, full of mischief, looking first at Dan and then at me. Dan squealed in return, and they began a competitive exchange: 'However high you can squeal, I can squeal higher.' The atmosphere was riotous. She began to show preferences for certain toys, and objected loudly when Dan took them away from her. She also started to behave towards Dan as if he were a toy, grabbing his hair or poking his face when he came within range. Dan was ambivalent towards this, deliberately coming close, but sometimes complaining when he got more than he bargained for.

Sometimes, the frustrations became overwhelming.

15.6.93.

Aged 8 months.

One day, when Suzy had become frustrated with stickle bricks, Dan had taken yet another toy away from her, allegedly to show her how it worked,

and Penny moved her away from the light flex, with a firm 'No', Suzy began first to grizzle, and then yell with fury. From a sitting position on the floor, she got on to her tummy, then abruptly on to her back, knocking her head on a hard plastic object as she did so. She howled, and tears rolled down her cheeks. Penny picked her up comfortingly, and she snuggled in to the breast, before continuing to cry. A bottle of juice was a help but then she pushed that away too, as if she really wanted to act out the feelings of frustration when things were taken away. Penny then asked Dan to sing to Suzy, saying this sometimes cheered her up. He sang a song he had learned at Tiny Tumbles, a gym club. He sung tunefully and Suzy was entranced, calmed down by the music and her brother's voice.

Having expressed her frustration through yelling and pushing the bottle away, Suzy was able to accept the warmth and understanding offered by her mother and brother. It seemed that she was beginning to symbolise, showing distress when she had lost something important to her, as if it stood for the breast which she had lost so abruptly, but then finding that she could rediscover that comfort, nourishment and excitement in other things. This ability to symbolise and play has stood her in very good stead.

As she became more mobile, Suzy began to notice and protest when her mother left the room, again showing her increasing awareness of other people, and how quickly they could be lost. Although she could move herself around, and did so after objects, she did not yet seem to realise that she could follow people. All she could do was to cry for them to return, and express her feelings of loss and abandonment. Perhaps her mother going away also rekindled the picture of the lost breast which she could not retrieve for herself, but had to wait for it to come to her.

I had observed her protest in this way several times, before this visit in June.

29.6.93.

Aged 8 months.

Dan had gone to play at a neighbour's house, and Penny was engaged in animated conversation with a male neighbour in the kitchen. Suzy was sitting on her own in the lounge, surrounded by toys. She looked sad. I thought that Suzy was missing Dan and feeling excluded from the conversation going on in the kitchen. She looked at me long and anxiously, then looked towards the kitchen from where she could hear her mother's voice. She whimpered. Toys were frustrating and pushed away, except for a soft red teething ring, which she bit on viciously, perhaps expressing her fury at being left. She played for a bit with a yellow plastic posting box, putting shapes inside it, but the toy was too big to manage, and the game didn't seem to gain her interest. She was subdued, on the brink of tears, smiling wanly when she heard the dog bark, but otherwise, staring

out at the garden, where the washing was blowing in the wind. She yawned, then began to cry loudly and urgently, looking round apparently for her mother.

It seemed that Suzy had tried to hold herself together, in the face of feeling abandoned, and for a while, toys, and the sound of the dog barking had given her something familiar, reminiscent of her mother and Dan. The distress had now become too great and she could contain it no longer. Penny came to the rescue, picking her up and talking soothingly, but Suzy couldn't be retrieved that easily. Later that visit, I observed her:

Sitting in her high chair waiting for tea, she began to bawl and scream with rage. When Penny offered her food; pasta and cheese sauce, she took some hungrily into her mouth, but was too upset to chew it, screamed and began to choke. She couldn't take the food in, needing rather to push something out. She made an angry br-r-r sound with her lips, and sobbed. Penny waited for her to calm down, and put the pasta on one side, giving Suzy a rusk instead. This was acceptable, apparently because Suzy could now control what went into her, so she sucked and gnawed at the soggy rusk, yelling whenever it ran out. Penny mixed her bottle, talking to her, explaining what she was doing, and putting into words why Suzy might be upset, saying it was hot, she was tired and she didn't like mummy's food. The sound of the voice seemed to give Suzy something to hang on to, and when the bottle came, she snuggled down and took it avidly. Calm reigned, apart from the hiss of the air as it came out of the bottle. Suzy hung on to the teat, biting it, long after the milk had gone, hanging on to her mother, the milk, and her space. Penny cuddled her for a good five minutes after the milk was finished.

Penny then said she had to pop out for five minutes to collect Dan. I felt alarm, fearing that Suzy might be very upset at another abandonment. Penny put her back in the chair, with a biscuit, and the plastic top of the feeding bottle, which was a favourite object. She went quietly, and Suzy seemed not to notice, busying herself with trying to put the biscuit inside the bottle cover. She was completely engrossed in this activity. I stayed as still as possible, in case she looked at me and was reminded that I was not her mother. Before long, Penny and Dan returned noisily, and Suzy became very excited to see them both.

Having been very distressed, ostensibly by her feelings of exclusion and abandonment, Suzy now seemed to have taken in enough from her mother through her experience of being held, talked to and fed, that she was then able to cope with this further separation, apparently drawing on resources in herself. I thought perhaps the plastic bottle cover symbolised mother, who had been containing when she was so distressed, and who had given her her own container to hold on to while she went away.

There were three more visits before the summer break. Suzy was

becoming increasingly mobile, beginning to pull herself up on the furniture. She also became more assertive. She began to stand up for herself against Dan, and on a couple of occasions, she crawled crying to Penny when hurt or outraged. One time, Dan sweetly said 'You tell *our* mummy'. Suzy was becoming a forceful, effective member of the family, with a clear space of her own and methods of defending it. Dan was becoming less demanding and more able to cope with having a sister, with whom he shared his mother. Penny was enjoying this hard won homeostasis, before everything changed with the arrival of baby number three.

When I returned after the summer break, at the beginning of September, Suzy was on the verge of walking. She walked unaided at the end of the month, aged 11 months, and to my delight, she took her first five steps during one of my visits. This period was characterised by an atmosphere of triumph and excitement. Suzy was on top of the world, which she often acted out by climbing on to her toy box, shouting with glee and drumming the sides of it with her feet. Penny and David encouraged every new achievement. Suzy learned to clap herself when she managed to stack her beakers, and even kissed each one before carefully putting it on the pile. I felt they were celebrating her early development, but beneath this I think there was a feeling of relief and also of urgency, that she should grow up fast and achieve some independence before the arrival of the new baby.

During the second year, I watched Suzy's development, walking, feeding herself, talking and potty training. I witnessed her reactions, and thought about her feelings, in the context of her growing skill and ability, and also in the context of her place in the family, and her progression from baby to middle child. She had to find a way to cope, not only with her own feelings in relation to all these changes, but with those of Dan too, as they impinged on her. It was fascinating to compare the way Dan coped with potential rivals, both Suzy and the new baby, Steven, with the way Suzy herself managed the situation. Dan tended to show his jealousy, rage and loss quite openly and directly, while Suzy, encouraged by her parents, expressed these feelings more through the medium of play. In the second part of this observation, I concentrate on Suzy's games, as the possible way in which she expressed and mastered her feelings, and found a measure of control, through using objects which she could manipulate as she wanted, and which seemed to represent internal objects, like breasts, and babies, that were perhaps evoking strong or overwhelming feelings in her that she needed to find ways to manage. People, including me,

were used as objects in this enterprise, in quite an urgent way. In this, she was supported by imaginative parents, who understood her behaviour as a communication, and were able to cooperate with her and respond constructively.

During the two months between the beginning of September, and the arrival of Steven, in November, I watched Suzy beginning to behave in ways which reminded me of 'little mother'. She began to tidy up, bringing me my handbag if I left it on the floor, and taking cups into the kitchen for her increasingly pregnant mother. On one visit, she followed me with a flannel she had taken from the radiator. My fantasy was that she intended to wipe my mouth, but she didn't. She ran a musical toy with wheels back and forth over the floor, as if sweeping. She was busy! This helpful behaviour was encouraged by her mother, who was often tired and in need of help. Suzy also began to point a lot, especially, it felt, at me, at my eyes and my face, and she developed an interest in my jewelry, something which grew over the subsequent months. She would prod rings and try and take them off me. She once succeeded with a bracelet, which she then put on herself. I already had a sense that she was identifying with me, that I had become someone or something for her. She showed no specific interest in the baby in her mother's tummy, although she cuddled up to Penny's bump regularly, and must have felt the baby move. Dan talked about it but Suzy showed her interest in other ways. For example, in the middle of October, she seemed fascinated by the little plastic mouse who lived inside her stacking beakers. She played a lot at hiding things; her socks, mother's pink slipper, then gleefully finding them. It seemed that she had some idea that something was hidden, and she was having a lot of fun being the one to find it!

For her first birthday, on October 22, she was given two dolls, a teaset, and a bike. The first two as Penny said, were to encourage her to play about babies and feeding. The bike encouraged her to be mobile and grown up. Her parents were thinking carefully about what might help her cope with the new baby. Penny was still anxious about it and sad for Suzy. I thought it was hard for Penny to think much about the new baby until just before his arrival, because of this concern.

Steven arrived, two days late, on November 12th. David had two weeks leave, and was at home, cooking and looking after the children.

I arrived for a visit on November 16th.

16.11.94.

Aged 13 months.

Penny took me upstairs to see Steven, and Suzy came too. The little girl

looked excitedly into the Moses basket, beaming and wanting to touch the baby. She tended to poke him. She then went and found a packet of nappies, and began to unpack them and share them out: one for you, one for me! We went downstairs and Suzy quickly presented me with a pink plastic piggy, one of a nesting set! She was very receptive to me, taking my hand, and somehow reaching out to me. I had the sense that I was *her* person today.

I felt that Suzy was wanting to gain some control, to be in charge of sharing things out, and also to have a baby of her own, represented by the pig, that she could give to me. I was struck by her apparent ability to symbolise, using objects to embody and communicate her feelings. However, there was another side to all this, which emerged later during the same visit:

David was in the kitchen getting drinks for everyone. He brought Dan his Ribena, and there was nothing for Suzy. She shouted with indignation, and glared at me with my cup of tea. She set off towards the kitchen, but luckily David arrived with her Ribena, before things deteriorated too far. She seized her cup impatiently and sucked away at the Ribena, apparently thirsty, but almost certainly, determined not to be left out.

In this scene I thought Suzy was showing her upset feelings, and how desperately she had to make sure that she was thought about. It also felt that she saw me as the interloper, who got my drink before she did! She seemed both grown up and precarious. She wanted to play with the real cups on the real tray, and would not substitute her toy ones. When she was told no, she had a tantrum. Maybe she needed to feel so omnipotent in order to cope, that it was unbearable to be frustrated and controlled. Also, Dan was acting in a mature fashion, helping his parents, and even managing to placate Suzy. Maybe there was rivalry between them for who could be the most grown up.

Towards the end of the visit, the health visitor arrived to check the baby. We all trooped upstairs. Suzy was really involved in this, encouraged by the health visitor.

Suzy sat in her mother's nursing chair handing nappies round to everyone. I stayed on the landing, because the bedroom was very crowded. Suzy came to talk to me. She took my hand, and escorted me next door to Dan's room. There, she found his slipper, sucked it a bit, then took it to him like a trophy. She returned to attend to me, found Dan's Meccano, and began to get it out. I felt I was being looked after and found something to play with, in case I should feel left out!

In this last vignette, I again thought that Suzy was needing to feel adult, like the mother, and able to be helpful, which left me as the one with the baby feelings, of being left out, and needing looked after. I felt like a container, a cup on the tray, filled up by Suzy with

the difficult feelings which she had to protect herself against. In this visit, Suzy's struggle seemed clear; 'Was she big enough to cope with this baby brother, and what would happen when she *did* feel small, left out and frustrated?' On this occasion, her father was sensitive to her needs, making sure she had her drink quickly, even if she wasn't first, and for an hour, perhaps she was able to relate to me as her baby, which might have helped. When she bumped herself this morning, she rushed to her father for comfort. This was possibly a way to exclude mother, making *her* into a left out baby. I felt Suzy was expressing her conflict, because she wanted to be grown up and in charge, but she also wanted to be a baby, nurtured and understood. I watched this theme of pseudo-maturity versus dependence develop through the following months, intrigued by Suzy's various ways of expressing the problem.

In the weeks that followed, I continued to feel 'adopted' by Suzy as *her* person. She regularly greeted me in the hall or in the lounge with a little object, a plastic figure, a toy. She often then pointed to Steven if he was downstairs, and the object seemed connected with him. Maybe it represented her own baby. The week after Steven's arrival, she sat next to me on the sofa, and from time to time, gave me her feeder cup, then took it back again. I wondered if somehow she was giving me her feelings. She had gained something and lost something. There was a new baby in the house, which could be exciting and something to be shown off, but she had lost her position as the baby, in relation to her parents and Dan. I had similar feelings in relation to Steven. I had gained something fascinating to observe, namely Suzy coping with a new baby at so young an age, but I felt curiously resistant to him, hardly wanting to acknowledge his existence, as if I too had lost something. I reflected on the possibility that I was receiving her unspoken communication.

23.11.93.

The tea-set game.

Aged 13 months.

Suzy collected her plastic tray and placed on it the yellow sugar basin, the yellow jug, and four pink saucers. She brought the tray very purposefully over to me, making chatty noises as she did so, and proceeded to drink from the jug with lip smacking noises. She then gave me the jug very insistently. It seemed I had to drink too, so I did, with similar noises. She beamed and gave it to me again. I drank again. David, who was in the room, said 'Give Daddy a drink.' She was not keen, and only did so peremptorily.

It seemed that, like the previous week, I represented a baby for Suzy, one who was hungry and needed her to feed it. The feeling accompanying this game was one of considerable urgency, as if I *had*

to play. Apparently, she could not have the same feelings about her father, who at this time was *actually* cooking for her and feeding her. Maybe I was sufficiently outside the family so she could use me in this way. This game became quite a ritual, and on many occasions, Suzy would reach for the tea set when Steven was being fed, feeding me, sometimes Mummy, and occasionally Dan.

On this visit too, when Steven was two weeks old, I watched Dan and Suzy cooperating together.

23.11.93. *The dancing game.* Aged 13 months.
Dan was wingey, saying his bottom hurt, soon after Steven had been changed. There was nothing obviously wrong, so Penny distracted him suggesting he might sing a song, and Suzy would dance. He sang tunelessly and Suzy danced. They then put on a video with a catchy song. Suzy was entranced, waiting. She knew just what was coming. Dan sang, and she danced rhythmically, in time to her brother, loving the attention.

Watching this performance, I again had the fantasy that they were grown up, a little couple, maybe a suggestion of a Mummy and a Daddy. I often saw them repeat this, with Suzy's dancing becoming more graceful as she gained in skill. I wondered whether the delight everyone showed in this performance was somehow a way of counter-acting the risk of the children feeling excluded by Steven's arrival. Penny really encouraged them with attention and praise. I was told that the previous day Suzy had seen herself in the mirror, expressed excitement, and had then kissed her reflection. I found this charming. She was encouraged to kiss the other baby. It felt good that Suzy had such loving resources to draw on, with enough kisses to go round.

I was again intrigued by Suzy's use of imagination at the end of November. This was the day when her parents had bought a double buggy, for her and Steven, and she had been investigating it with interest.

30.11.93. *A pretend feeding game* Aged 13 months.
I was sitting on the sofa, and Suzy came up to me, took my hand and peered into my face. She made kissing noises, beamed, then tried to poke me in the eye. Later, having tried to drag my bracelet off my wrist, she took my hand, turned it palm side up, and began to take something imaginary from my hand and put it into her mouth, staring at me intently as she did so. She then took my fingers, and put them into her mouth. Finally, she fetched a big plastic circlet and pushed it on to my wrist.

I felt that somehow, Suzy was putting me in the double buggy with her. She had made poking gestures at Steven's side of the buggy and her wanting my bracelet and giving me hers felt like an attempt to link us. I thought she was taking imaginary food from my hand, and

that maybe my fingers represented a nipple for her, to be sucked and controlled by her. Again, this felt like a serious communication she was making. Her parents watched, intrigued.

For Christmas, Suzy received a little doll's pram, as well as another teaset. In January, she was moved from her cot into a bed, to make room for Steven, and early that month, Penny began to supplement Steven's breast feeds with a bottle. He then moved quickly to total bottle feeding. He was a large hungry baby! This reminded me a lot of how Suzy was weaned. Steven did not react by being difficult to feed. He became miserable and insatiable, requiring a lot of holding and attention. I felt that the loss of the breast for Steven again evoked sadness in the family. All the children were ill in January and February, needing anti-biotics. Dan sometimes seemed sad, saying 'Bye bye Maggie' in a very sad little voice. Suzy did not take to the bed easily, so there were many disturbed nights, with her screaming. She was also teething. David was very supportive during this time, and was often the one who could calm her down. She still had a bottle of milk herself at night, which seemed a reminder of how young she actually was.

These changes, difficulties and feelings again seemed to be expressed by Suzy in her games. She became more interested in her dolls, presenting me with one of them the moment I arrived after Christmas. She seemed to use this doll to help her manage her own move to a bed. In January, I watched while the doll was placed precariously on a cushion, which she had put on a coffee table. Suzy was not happy with that, so she took the cushion down, placing it on the rug in the middle of the room. That was still not right, so doll and cushion were restored to the table. As she did this, Penny was telling me how Suzy could now climb out of bed, but was unable to get back. It seemed that in this game, she could make sure her doll could manage both!

At the beginning of January, she also began to show a great interest in covers and sheets.

4.1.94.

Aged 14 months.

I first noticed her carefully swaddling a round piece of jigsaw in the little cover of her dolls pram. She then put the piece of puzzle on the floor, and spent a long time trying to pick it up through the cover.

This game appeared in many forms. She would find a pram sheet that belonged to Steven, and struggle to pick up little toys through it, and then she would wrap them up carefully, and sometimes put them in her pram. She once wrapped her feeding cup in a blanket, and took it for a walk. It seemed that the toys stood for babies, that had to be carefully covered and contained, and were hard to pick up. I once saw

her trying to play the game with a nappy, so the object might also have stood for faeces, which was carefully wrapped before being picked up.

As Steven's weaning progressed, and he began to have spoon feeds, Suzy's feeding games appeared more frenetic, for instance, at the beginning of February, when Steven was miserable and feeding a lot, from bottle and spoon.

February 2nd. More feeding games Aged 15 months.
Penny brought Steven into the room and sat him in his chair. Suzy dashed over to him and was encouraged to kiss him. She then went to her toys selecting a Mickey Mouse doll, with a nose like a nipple. She brought it over to me and pushed it into my face, near my mouth, repeatedly and hard. I shut my eyes, like Steven does, and like Suzy used to do when Dan came near. She then put Mickey's nose in her own mouth and sucked it.

I felt as if Suzy wanted to push something hard into me. It reminded me of my fantasies when I watched her being spoon fed last year, and wondered whether she was re-enacting that experience, reminded of it by Steven's feeding. I also thought that perhaps having to kiss Steven evoked aggressive feelings in her. She might have preferred to poke him instead for so intruding on her relationship with her mother. This version of the feeding game became gradually more sophisticated, until her mother, she and I were actually fed from tea spoons, which she used to stir imaginary food in a cup. It was again all quite urgent and intrusive. Suzy's insistence on spooning something into us seemed to help her cope with Steven, who was a demanding, ever feeding baby. I speculated that it helped her cope with a demanding baby inside herself as well, and that by trying to put objects into my mouth, and her mother's, she was searching for a way into mother, where she could be nurtured. I rarely saw her make a fuss or demand attention that would actually disrupt Steven's feeds, as Dan might do.

An issue important in this family is sharing. Penny managed to share herself admirably, and David too, but the children did need to find a way to cope with frustration and deprivation when their parents could not be available. Suzy developed many games which I thought were about sharing, and her position in the family. For instance, at the beginning of March:

8.3.94. A sharing game Aged 16 months.
Penny was preparing to feed Steven, with baby rice from a spoon, and then with his bottle. Suzy went to ask for food too, and was given two bread sticks, one for her, and one for Dan. They were of different lengths. She offered Dan the shorter piece but he took the longer. She was outraged

and screamed with rage. Dan relented, breaking off a piece and giving it to her. She ate it quickly but then broke off a piece about the same size and stored it in a little toy the shape of a cow. She then got her feeder mug and pushed it into my face, talking to me intently but incomprehensively. Then, while Steven had his bottle, she vanished into the kitchen coming back with a red feeder cup and a green one. With the one she already had, this made three. For about 15 minutes, she played intently, taking the lids off the cups, rearranging them, transferring them, mixing and matching. She was utterly engrossed. Sometimes she would ask for help to get a lid off, and sometimes, she would feed Penny or me with imaginary drink from a cup. This game went on until I left.

With this absorbing game, it appeared that Suzy was working through something. It was a game where there was always enough to go round, because the lids fitted all the cups. It seemed to be the matter of being in charge of the swapping that was important. I thought it was provoked by Dan's ability to take the longer breadstick, as well as by Steven and his feed. Perhaps Suzy felt she had to give way on two fronts, and this was her way of getting back in charge.

The question of where she felt in the family was also expressed very graphically by Suzy, using objects around her. I will take an example from the beginning of February, during a period when Steven was very grizzly, and Penny seemed unable to tolerate his crying for long without picking him up. There was a visit when I felt like an intruder, following Suzy around and looking at her, as if I were a demanding baby, always in the way.

1.2.94. Baby chair versus big digger Aged 15 months.

Suzy had been behaving assertively, and had moved a kitchen chair up to the sink to turn the taps on. Penny restrained her, because it looked dangerous. Suzy was angry and defiant, screaming and struggling to climb back up. Penny picked her up, Steven on one arm, and Suzy on the other. Suzy quietened down but gave Steven a push, as if to get him out of the way. Back in the lounge, Penny put Suzy down, and went out of the room with Steven. Suzy came over to Steven's little chair, and fiddled with the straps for a bit. She then climbed into it, rocking it strongly (it had once been hers). Penny returned and coaxed her out, saying she would break it. Suzy got out, but went straight over to Dan's huge toy digger, which was taking up the centre of the room. Laboriously she climbed on to it first facing the wrong way, but then turning round, and ferociously turning the wheel, with loud Brm-m-m noises. 'Power at last!' I thought.

It seemed that Suzy was finding it very hard to cope with all the attention that Steven was getting and she needed to feel either very grown up and powerful, or very small, in the baby chair. Penny managed to be firm, preventing her from putting herself in danger, or

breaking things, but she was also empathic, understanding that Suzy needed her own power, to assert herself in a noisy way, like Steven.

As Steven settled down and became less demanding, Suzy became less insistent with me. Spring came, and there were many warm days, when I observed the family in the garden. Suzy continued to develop in skill and independence. She started to feed herself in January, and by May, was managing this almost entirely. Her speech developed rapidly, encouraged by her parents, who talked to her a lot. By June I had become clearly 'Mag'. I still felt like *her* Mag, to be used as she needed, but I had, too, many opportunities to see her playing with Dan and with his friends, who were frequent visitors. Suzy held her own with other children, three and four year olds, not actually playing with them, but alongside them. One hot afternoon there were two visiting children, and they played in the paddling pool, on the climbing frame, and in the shed. Suzy went everywhere with them, but she insisted on pushing her little pram in front of her. I felt it was partly to defend herself, and partly to force a space for herself. It was very effective!

With the development of language, came Suzy's delight in rhymes and tunes, taught her by her parents and brother. One afternoon in June, when Dan was out, I watched her playing with Penny and Steven.

28.6.94.

Singing games

Aged 20 months.

The see saw was on the lawn, and Suzy was clearly singing 'See saw, Margery Daw'. She pointed at the seesaw, and said 'Ste'(sic) in an imperious way. Steven was put on the seesaw, where he sat a bit nervously, I thought, while Suzy worked it and sang the song. She then became uncertain whether she wanted Steven to play. Penny put him indoors, and then Suzy engaged her mother determinedly in games. She knew 'Ring-a-ring-of-roses', and insisted that Penny play this over and over. They then changed to 'Row, row, row the boat'. Suzy knew the words and the actions, when to scream, when to be quiet and was excited, full of anticipation and delight. Penny was enjoying the game too, involved, letting Suzy take complete charge. The game ended when Steven wailed wanting attention. Suzy coped with that by running down the garden to fetch Katy, her doll, bringing the doll's pram to the patio, and placing it beside her mother.

I thought that Suzy had enjoyed an experience of having her mother totally to herself, of being in charge, not only of mother, but of the game, knowing the words and actions, and it was very exciting. I was also impressed by the way the game could end, not in tears, as might have happened, but with Suzy then able to mother her doll and perhaps, in a way, herself.

During the last three months of the observation, when Suzy was becoming increasingly assertive, and tantrums were quite common, I became aware of her growing concern for her parents and brothers, and sometimes saw this develop into apparent anxiety.

I visited in the middle of May, when Penny and the children had been out to lunch with two of Penny's friends and their children, who were Dan's age.

17.5.94.

Aged 19 months.

The friends were still there when I arrived. Dan was over excited, and Suzy was being helpful, fetching the shoes for one of the children without being asked. When they left, she brought me a toy clock, apparently to play with. She insisted on showing me what to do with it before settling down to play with Dan's cars.

This felt like Suzy the helpful, the little hostess, thinking of other people's needs. But later;

Steven began to cry, and Penny put him in the high chair in the kitchen, with a piece of bread. Suzy became very interested, pulled up her chair and began to shout for food. Penny gave her a plate with some little cheese sandwiches and biscuits on it. Suzy ate a biscuit then, perhaps sensing me as an audience, she began to pull the sandwiches to pieces. First, she tucked a biscuit in one and stuffed it into her mouth. Then she began to spread the cheese all over her tee shirt, her hands, and then over my hand. She was excited, squealing with glee. However, the squeals then changed to distress, until she was wailing for her mother. Penny was warm and reassuring, asking what was the matter. Suzy calmed down, but then wanted to smear me again, and began to squeal. This time I took my hand away.

Something had distressed Suzy, connected with her treatment of the food. Maybe she had moved from a very powerful but destructive feeling, where she could turn mummy's good food into something else, perhaps faeces, spreading it everywhere, including over me, to a fear that this harmed her mother and messed her up too, for which she needed reassurance.

During this visit, I saw Suzy have a nappy change. I had not seen her changed for months and I felt surprised, as if she was too big for this, although I knew she wore a nappy. It seemed that I had been taken in by her apparent maturity. However, I was told that she was beginning to use the potty, especially for defaecating. As the Summer went on the potty was in evidence. Suzy became increasingly proficient at asking for it. She appeared in little pants, which made her seem more grown up. I was more aware of her sexuality when the nappies disappeared and I think she was too. She touched her genitals quite often, and talked of bottoms and knickers. Dan informed her that

boys wore pants and girls wore knickers, so 'knickers' they became to Suzy. One afternoon when David joined the children in the paddling pool, Suzy very deliberately got hold of his genitals. He steered her away, saying 'What a rude girl!' but with a laugh.

Suzy was bought a collapsible portable pot, and she took to this, as hers. She collapsed it, she put it back together, and she put it in its bag, which she could then carry around like a handbag. Needless to say, Penny had to keep an eye on her, in case she had used it first! At the end of my very last visit, Suzy was playing an elaborate game with this pot, mastering it, and showing just how many things she could do with it. I had a fantasy that a pot might become a fashion accessory! I had watched her so often play with her bottle, the teat cover, and her feeding cup when her concern was mainly with feeding. Now she was gaining control of her bowels and bladder, what was more appropriate than that she should be so engrossed with this potty and what it might contain. It seemed the right note on which to end a fascinating observation.

I had watched Suzy grow from a new born baby, to a competent, imaginative, friendly little girl of 21 months. I have been intrigued by many things, but especially by her apparent ability to symbolise, to express her feelings through activity and play, encouraged by responsive parents, and by an imaginative, articulate elder brother. In a family where the children were so close in age, there were many stresses and demands. I felt Suzy managed to establish a place for herself with confidence and creativity. She found space and acceptance for her need to be a baby, as well as encouragement and containment for her urgent need to feel powerful. She was helped to manage her emotions, but allowed to feel that she had some control over the people important to her. I felt that her need to rid herself of overwhelming feelings was understood and the feelings themselves were often put into words for Suzy which seemed to help her cope with them. As the middle child, she had to cope with great ambivalence. My image for this observation is the see-saw, with Suzy sometimes up, sometimes down, sometimes with her bottom on the ground, and sometimes, with her head in the clouds. Throughout it all, I had a sense of a secure fulcrum, provided by both parents, which ensured an equilibrium to which she could usually return.

I would like to thank Suzy and her family for allowing me to observe and for all I learnt.

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Book Reviews

Frances Tustin

By Sheila Spensley. Routledge. pp. 154. h/b £30.00 p/b £12.99

Frances Tustin has thrown light on the most terrifying of human experiences, fear of the 'black hole' of dissolution and loss of existence underlying extreme psychiatric conditions. Her critics have said that she argued beyond the evidence and that some of her ideas are not in accord with psychoanalytic theory. Tackling these contradictions alone is an enormous task and Sheila Spensley has also undertaken to describe some of the wider applications of Frances Tustin's ideas on autism and psychosis in a slim volume, excluding glossary and bibliography, of fewer than 130 pages of text. In including biographical material Spensley follows the format of **The Makers of Modern Psychotherapy**, a series of introductory texts which although mainly intended for a non specialist audience, will interest the most experienced reader.

Spensley draws on the many stimulating clinical conversations she had with Tustin, first as supervisee and later as friend whom she regarded as having made a key contribution to the development of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. She has two main objectives, to give an account of Tustin's clinical work and principal ideas and to place them in context. Spensley explains how Tustin's work fits in with discoveries in developmental psychology, and examines with great clarity how these ideas came to affect practice not only in clinical work with severely disturbed children but in understanding psychosis and learning disability in a wider field.

She was given access to written material and to Tustin's case notes on her work with autistic and psychotic children. She sets the scene for the discussion by describing the emergence of the study of autism within the 'gradual and reluctant' recognition of psychiatric disorder in children, and clarifies what has, and what has not, been claimed for the psychoanalytic treatment of this condition.

Spensley traces the development of Tustin's ideas following the publication of her first book: **Autism and Childhood Psychosis** in 1972. She made the distinction between two main types of autistic disorder, the encapsulated form which recalls Kanner's original description, and the entangled form which can resemble schizophrenia. Initially Tustin regarded autism as being linked with a premature experience of bodily

separateness from the mother but like Margaret Mahler had to accommodate the discoveries of Stern and other developmentalists late in life and abandon the belief, derived from Freud, in a brief initial stage of normal autism in the first weeks of life. 'Psychological catastrophe is the result of a premature or mismanaged psychological birth' became later reformulated in the language of containment, which hints at Tustin's debt to Bion, her own analyst, as 'Autism is the result of trauma which dissipates the sense of bodily containment necessary for psychic growth.' It is this trauma which produces 'the cognitive inhibitions and dysfunctioning which characterises the autistic and psychotic conditions. Looming behind the bizarre behaviour is the threat of black hole depression.' It was this study of black hole phenomena, and the unique quality of autistic anxiety, against which psychosis might be a defence, which Spensley regards as Tustin's most important contribution to psychoanalysis.

Another major contribution was her elucidation of the sensation-dominated nature of autistic experience and the sensory significance of autistic objects and autistic shapes. These are to be distinguished from transitional objects which belong to a more integrated level of whole object experience. Autistic objects are of two distinct types, both used to blur the edges of physical and psychological separateness, hard objects to be held onto or soft sensations of the body and its products. Tustin suggested that the desperation to hold onto concrete reality in obsessional neurosis may be a similar process in response to primitive autistic terrors.

Spensley describes how Tustin's work on the results of the disruption of the earliest psychological processes had implications both for theory and technique. Her view was that the autistic patient makes inadequate differentiation between people and objects and that a first essential of treatment was for the therapist, by observing boundaries and being confrontative and firm, to begin to establish her presence. The autistic child's lack of awareness of conflict requires a shift of emphasis away from the interpretation of the symbolic content of material in the session. The ultimate aim of treatment was to put the patient back in touch with the original unbearable sense of loss.

Perhaps most professional readers will find Spensley's discussion of the questions which inevitably arise about how Tustin's ideas fit into the body of psychoanalytic theory the most interesting and substantial aspect of the book. Does Tustin pose a challenge to our understanding of Klein's description of the paranoid schizoid position as the most primitive form of psychological organisation? Do we need to follow

Ogden's suggestion of an even earlier state (which he names the autistic contiguous position) which is distinct from the discarded concept of primary autism? Could the condition of the autistic child and what can be known about the black hole experience be the result of excessive evacuation and projection or was there some even earlier failure which prevented the development of a primitive paranoid schizoid position? Is a similar mechanism of excessive evacuation and projection underlying the mindlessness of severe learning disorders and psychosis? Is it possible to extend the understanding of borderline psychotic patients by hypothesising hitherto undetected autistic levels of defence against existential terror?

Tustin suggests there could be an 'autistic enclave' in most of us which undetected might account for impasse and therapeutic failure. Many authors are following her in extending the concept of autism to include a whole spectrum of autistic experience from 'normal' to psychotic. Spensley makes an interesting link with the work of Kohut and in a recent book on narcissism Neville Symington has acknowledged his debt to Tustin. With the wider application of her ideas will Tustin come to be regarded as a major contributor to psychoanalytic thought in her own right, not least because she 'makes Bion more accessible.'?

My only criticism of Spensley's clear and lucid book concerns the structure: it seemed rather a leap from biography to ideas and some of the examples from Spensley's own practice seemed somewhat lightly worked out.

ANASTASIA WIDDICOMBE.

Sincerity And Other Works: Collected Papers of Donald Meltzer

Edited by Alberto Hahn. Karnac 1994 pp. 260 p/b £34.95

This collection of the papers of Donald Meltzer, edited by Alberto Hahn, succeeds in providing an overview of the varied aspects of psychoanalysis which interested and challenged him over a 35 year period from 1955–1989. The papers are arranged chronologically, although a thematic grouping of the material may have been more helpful in giving some insight into the evolution of his ideas. The editor's choice has ensured that there is something for everyone, and includes aspects of adult, adolescent and child psychopathology, issues

of psychoanalytic technique, developmental theory and the training of psychoanalysts. It also includes an investigation of Money-Kyrle's concept of 'misconception' and a critical evaluation and appraisal of aspects of Bion's work. Each paper is preceded by a short introduction by the editor providing interesting comment and a summary of what is to follow.

Donald Meltzer studied medicine and child psychiatry in the U.S.A. He arrived in England in 1954 to train in psychoanalysis with Melanie Klein and remained in analysis with her until her death in 1960. He subsequently became an influential albeit controversial figure in the British Neo-Kleinian school. Meltzer is widely acknowledged for his development of Melanie Klein's ideas both theoretically and clinically, and for his interpretations of the work of Freud and Bion. His influence as a teacher of psychoanalysis, his contributions in the area of child analysis and to the development of the training in child psychotherapy at the Tavistock Clinic, are indicative of the scope of his endeavours.

The papers on psychoanalytic technique are rewarding and give insight into Meltzer's ideas about the nature and function of interpretation and the use of countertransference, the difficulties in dealing with therapeutic impasse, as well as issues to do with the analytic setting and the frequency of sessions. The (1968) paper 'An Interruption Technique for the Analytic Impasse' is an attempt to provide a solution for dealing with a specific type of therapeutic impasse, which occurs at the threshold of the depressive position, and is a consequence of the wish to avoid psychic pain. Meltzer suggests an interruption of the analysis as one possible way of dealing with such a situation. This might mean a reduction in the number of sessions to a maximum of once weekly or less, for an agreed period of time. His rationale is to force the patient to tolerate both longer periods of mental pain without expulsion, and the containment of damaged objects. He delineates quite carefully the countertransference dangers inherent in such a technique, and wisely suggests the safeguard of having a colleague review all the evidence first before taking such action.

The two papers 'Routine and Inspired interpretations: their relation to the weaning process in analysis' (1973) and 'Temperature and Distance as technical dimensions of interpretation' (1976), reflect Meltzer's concern with the nature of the analytic encounter and the possibilities inherent in the individual analyst for creating an enriching analytic experience for both patient and analyst alike. In the first he differentiates between dull, routine interpretations and those inspired

interpretations which reflect the analyst's intensely personal response to the patient's communications. The second paper deals with the individual linguistic skills he employs in the service of regulating temperature and distance in the analyst/patient interaction. Meltzer asserts that if we stick with the safety of the traditional analytic stance, we offer the patient a poorer analytic experience, with less likelihood of his being able to engage in creative self-analytic work after termination. On the other hand, he emphasises the dangers of so-called wild analysis – the megalomaniacal possibilities of inspired interpretations rationalised as scientific advance, which may lead to a breach in the basic technical method and consequent acting-in-the-countertransference.

The (1976) paper on 'The Psychoanalytic Process twenty years on, the setting of the analytic encounter and the gathering of the transference', illustrates how Meltzer's continued struggle with understanding the function of interpretation, has led to a modification of his original ideas. Interpretation is no longer the crucial factor in enabling the transference to evolve, but one of the 'quantitative factors' (p. 552) assisting in its development. Its function is not so much the evolution of the transference, but as a contributor to the richness, clarity or economy of the transference situation. Meltzer's more recent ideas on clinical practice are interesting. He indicates his preference for beginning analysis with two to three sessions per week, only increasing this number when both patient and analyst feel it to be necessary. He does not clarify the reasoning behind this, nor behind his increased willingness to change the time of a session to accommodate the patient's needs. His comment that therapists practising in their own homes place an unfair burden on patients because in doing so they stimulate feelings of exclusion, confusion and curiosity, will provide food for thought for many of us.

Melanie Klein's theory and technique developed out of her analysis of children. Although this area was a focus of research and development in the 1920's, 1930's and 1940's, there was a decline in such work from the 1950's, with the exception of Meltzer. (*Melanie Klein Today: Volume 2: Mainly Practice*. Ed Elizabeth Bott Spillius. p. 155). Of the papers on child analysis contained in this book, the one on 'Adhesive Identification' (1974) is of greatest interest. It is a transcript of an informal talk, and as such has an immediacy which is appealing. It is also a journey through history, since it provides an aerial view of the evolution of the concept of Identification – from Freud, through Abraham, to Melanie Klein's discovery of projective identification,

from which Meltzer together with Esther Bick, differentiates a new type of narcissistic identification called 'adhesive identification'. In response to catastrophic anxiety the infant attempts to hold the self together by attaching itself to an object in a kind of 'adhesive identification'. In such an attachment, there is 'no projection, no introjection, only 'sticking' followed by psychic damage and tearing apart when individual and object are separated.' (Melanie Klein Today; Volume 1; Mainly theory. Ed Elizabeth Bott Spillius. p. 158). Meltzer found this concept useful in the understanding of autistic children, whom he observed also utilised an identification process very much like mimicry, in which the mimicry was seen to represent both the phantasy and experience of sticking to an object rather than projecting into it.

Meltzer, like other contemporary Kleinians, has been concerned with the idea of a fixed structure or organisation of interconnecting defences, which have been shown to exist particularly in narcissistic or Borderline States. The two short papers in this volume, 'The Narcissistic Foundation of the Erotic Transference' and 'The Role of Pregenital Confusions in Erotomania', both written in 1974 and a third, 'The role of Narcissistic organisation in the Communication Difficulties of the Schizophrenic (1975)', illustrate these ideas. In the first and second, Meltzer's chief concern is the erotised transference, which as a powerful resistance leads to both acting-in and acting-out of the transference. His contention is that it is necessary to consider this type of transference structurally as an expression of a narcissistic organisation. Meltzer's technique for dealing with the erotised transference is to take courage in both hands and to meet it directly, using the analytic method to interpret the infantile nature of the desires and feelings, and the resultant masturbatory excitement pervading the consulting room. The desperate analyst, unable to confront such material, runs the risk of displacing the erotic attachment into an acting out.

The third paper, written in 1975, is to my mind the most useful of the three, and includes a clinical description of three schizophrenic patients. It focuses on their difficulties in verbalisation, where language as a link to good objects capable of containing emotional distress, confusion and projection of painful parts of the self, has been ruthlessly attacked. Meltzer asserts that this is not the result of some pathological process but is at its very core. As in most of the papers, theory is linked to clinical practice and the containment of such illness lies in keeping open the contact between analyst and patient, so that 'investigation of the actual process of communication, therefore, takes pre-

cedence over any other aspect of the phenomenology of the consulting room.' (p. 373)

In the area of psychoanalytic theory, which is underpinned by clinical practice, the breadth of Meltzer's interests are amply demonstrated. Of the earlier papers, 'The Lectures and Seminars on Kleinian Child Psychiatry' (1960), in collaboration with Esther Bick, are transcripts of a series of seminars given at the Tavistock clinic to child psychotherapists, some of whom have since become luminaries of the British Kleinian school. The chatty, informal style provides easy reading and is a good introduction to fundamental Kleinian concepts. It also illustrates Meltzer's use of part-object bodily language, not adhered to by most contemporary Kleinians, who choose to talk to the patient more in terms of psychological function than anatomical structure. The (1981) paper on the ego-ideal traces the development of this concept, and is concerned with changes which occur at the threshold of the depressive position. Through the patient's dream material, Meltzer demonstrates how the modification of a harsh super-ego gives way to the emergence of ego-ideal functions when projective identifications are withdrawn and internal objects have become rehabilitated. The last two papers in the book are refreshingly brief but encapsulate so much. Both are concerned with Meltzer's notion of the aesthetic conflict and his interest in the individual as part of a changing society. They show Bion as a major influence in his thinking and his interest in understanding the nature of violence so prevalent in adolescence.

It is difficult to do justice to all the material. For those readers interested in Meltzer's current ideas, notably on 'the claustrum', the origins of this concept can be found in the title paper 'Sincerity: a study in the atmosphere of Human Relations', which is a separate book in itself. Undoubtedly, this is a volume for dipping into, and the complexity of ideas demands rereading to 'bring out new shades of meaning that enrich in depth and further the understanding gained' previously (Editor's Introduction). This is no chore, especially since it is written in prose rich in striking imagery and apt metaphor, which is used to convey highly original ideas. A disappointment is that the editor has provided very little by way of placing Meltzer in an historical context, and offers no hint as to the nature of the controversy which surrounded his alienation from the British Institute of Psychoanalysis. Nevertheless, I would enthusiastically recommend this collection of papers to those practitioners interested in the development of the theory and practice of Kleinian ideas. In the author's preface, Donald

Meltzer describes writing as the 'last resort of the incapable', but excuses his efforts on the grounds that 'a lover must express himself'. Having read the book, the need for such humility becomes questionable.

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EVELYN KATZ

Psychotic Metaphysics

By Eric Rhode. The Clunie Press. Karnac Books 1994. pp. 325.
Pb £14.95

This is an unusual and ambitious work, rooted in the more philosophical aspects of post-Kleinian thought. Conceptually the author follows on particularly from Bion and Melzer in taking the nature of thinking and psychic functioning as the area of discourse. Stylistically, as did Bion in some of his later work, he would seem to be aiming to demonstrate something of the nature of the processes under consideration. Although some of the conceptual content is deeply theoretical, ideas are conveyed in a densely metaphorical, incantatory style. Theoretical, clinical and aesthetic judgements are expressed in an almost poetic way, interspersed with an abundance of varied illustrations and associations culled from such diverse areas as art, literature, cultural anthropology, clinical observation and aesthetics. The names of Lévi-Strauss, Barthés, Baudelaire, Cicero, rub shoulders with those of Bion, Meltzer, Bick, Money-Kyrle and Klein, and the text may move from a philosophical observation to an example of a rite in ancient Greece to a depiction of a West African sculpture with lightning speed. The effect is fairly over-whelming on first reading; but soon it becomes clear that this is the author's purpose, since the purview of the book is to explore aspects of what Bion termed mind in turbulence during the process of catastrophic change.

The author also recalls Bion in considering the most basic issues in epistemology. To think seriously about the nature of thinking is ulti-

mately to have to address philosophical issues about the nature of mind. Psychoanalysis has traditionally been rooted in a biological conceptual framework; but post-Kleinian thinking looks for explanations of psychic phenomena that are not adequately elucidated in terms of empiricism. In *Transformations* (1965) Bion formulates his theory drawing on Platonic aspects of the philosopher Kant, in which he uses the notion that there are universal abstract notions, ('Forms' in Plato), that can be perceived only by intelligence and are not dependent on sensory experience. In this connection is the famous postulate that thoughts pre-date the mechanism of thinking. Eric Rhode refers to Bion's notion of foetal preconception as incipiently a concept of pure thought: 'It implies that the capacity to reason (to reason even about reason itself) may precede the capacity to think about nature, and it may be in operation during the time of pre-birth.' (p. 5). This is not reason as in ratiocination, but as 'the primary imagination by which the eternal act of creation is enacted continuously in every finite mind.' (Watson (1975) p. 167, quoted p. 9). A new and important addition to the theory is the inclusion of good objects identified with reason, as part of the neo-Platonic view. In this he follows Donald Meltzer whom he quotes in this context. Good objects help mind move from the paranoid-schizoid to the depressive position, but are logically prior to the individuals who embody them. Later he speaks of 'the turbulence by which the individual becomes an agent for the good object' (ch. 2) and speaks of how 'the generation of depressive meaning requires the functioning of the concepts of goodness, truth and beauty which nature alone cannot endorse.' (p. 3)

Thus reason, in Rhode's sense, including the idea of good objects within it, is given a place within the traditional Platonic world of Ideal Universals which logically precede the empirical world of sensory, including psychic, experience. This mirrors the description of the way that experience (realisations) mates with logically prior pre-conceptions to form conceptions, the alpha-element building blocks of thoughts in Bion's theory of thinking. (Bion 1962).

Psychotic Metaphysics is divided into two books. The first is called 'The Unborn' which has meaning at a number of levels. There is the literal level of the foetus, and metaphorically the unconscious and the level of alpha-elements and waking dreams. The second book is called 'Disappearing into Light' and is concerned with literal and psychic birth, the latter referring to entry into the depressive position and the light of reason. Each book is richly elaborated with abundant images and associated themes, ideas and illustrations.

Bion's theory puts forward a view of thinking in which mind goes through a series of transformations via what he called alpha function. This is a directly unknowable and empty function whereby preconceptions respond to raw sense data (realisations) to generate mental contents (conceptions) which have meaning and can be used for thinking. Bion said these could be the material for 'dream thoughts', 'waking dreams' and hence for 'the capacity to wake up or go to sleep, to be conscious or unconscious'. (1962, p. 115) In *Psychotic Metaphysics* we are in the area of dream thoughts, and the area of turbulence where we could become more conscious through thinking and reason, or remain unconscious. For Bion, psychoanalysis could be seen as part of a set of transformations. In order to learn, to think, to allow change, we have to allow ourselves to stay with a kind of annihilation of our habitual ways of thinking, a process which may involve states of extreme turbulence, so that change can be felt to be catastrophic. It is again the point where there are possibilities of growth on the one hand or breakdown on the other. In *Psychotic Metaphysics* we are in this level of turbulent dream thoughts. The idea of a notional choice at this level allows the author to develop a mythological theme of his own, about the journey of creative reason personified as the mother-foetus couple. There is a twin couple, of which one lives, helped by the good objects through the turbulence of the threshold between paranoid-schizoid and depressive thinking into the light of reason and truth; whilst the other is buried in the underworld of thought. This idea then forms part of a hypothesis about the nature of psychosis. The alpha-element level connects with mythic thinking, and the transition into depressive level meaning can fail in various ways. 'The newborn may be unable to tolerate the conditions existing in nature and history and refuse to give up the mythological type of thinking' (p. 9).

The idea of an imaginary twin was one brought forward originally in a paper by Bion (1950) and Money-Kyrle (1963 & 1968) also developed an analogous theme. The author gives particular significance in this context to actual sibling deaths or miscarriage in the consequences for the psychic health of surviving children; the psyche can be possessed by a presence buried in the mind that insists on being released, and thus links with the view of psychosis. There are images that linger in the memory because of their clinical reference: 'the dead twin foetus returns as a murderous avenger in narcissistic organizations' (Rhode p. 77). There are many other themes throughout the

book developing this idea of the twin couple, including many examples drawn from tribal rituals and from clinical observation.

It must be the task of the reviewer to ask for whom the book is written. It is a demanding work in many ways and probably not readily understood in its theoretical aspect without a working understanding of Bion's writings. It is not an easy book to read. The writing is extremely dense and the illustrations can be so personal to the author that one can sometimes feel invited only to admire, not to participate. At the same time, the whole point is that the reader should be able to allow their mind to be affected by the plethora of extraordinarily rich ideas. The reader is to form their own conceptions. It is a book that provokes turbulence and deserves to be read and re-read so that the imagery and ideas can be allowed to have their effect on the waking dreams of the reader.

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JESSICA SACRET

Becoming attached – Unfolding the Mystery of the Infant-Mother Bond and Its Impact on Later Life.

By Robert Karen. Warner Books 1994. pp. 500 Pb £19.95 (Imported
by and available from Karnacs Bookshop)

This book traces the early roots and subsequent development of the attachment theory pioneered by Dr John Bowlby. It also examines the work of, amongst others, Mary Ainsworth and Mary Main. It considers the wider implications of attachment theory as well as its influence upon psycho-analytic research and theory. It offers a thorough examination of how early attachments contribute to both normal and pathological development.

Robert Karen is an American clinical psychologist, author and journalist. It is the quality of his journalism that makes the book so readable. His fluently narrated account should make this book accessible and attractive to a wider audience as well as to the reader with a professional interest.

The first part of the book is devoted to Bowlby himself and his developing theory on attachments. This includes an account of the struggle he faced from his psycho-analytic colleagues to get his basic tenets accepted. As is now widely accepted, he argued that real-life events were of key importance in determining a child's development. Fifty years later it is hard to comprehend that this was a radical and challenging idea. Melanie Klein, who was initially Bowlby's supervisor, held passionate views on the importance of the child's psychic reality. By contrast, Bowlby's mission in life was, in his own words, 'to demonstrate that real life experiences have a very important effect on development'. No wonder then that two such formidable people should fall out. The ensuing debate turned very bitter, particularly as the Kleinians had become the dominant influence at the Tavistock Clinic where Bowlby was still officially in charge.

At the same time, Karen explores the way Bowlby was also influenced by Klein. His words echoed not only her belief in childhood fantasy and her belief in the infant's capacity to form early relationships but also her focus on loss, mourning and depression. The book also considers the difficult and ambiguous relationship between Bowlby and Donald Winnicott. Both had been analyzed by Joan Riviere and supervised by Klein. Their views were in many ways similar, but while Bowlby concentrated on the environment and the scientific underpinnings of intimate relationships, Winnicott focused on the child's subjective experience.

Karen reviews Bowlby's collaboration with Mary Ainsworth and her subsequent independent research. He particularly focuses on the 'Strange Situation' assessment. This was a 20 minute assessment in a controlled environment where the mother briefly left the infant and particular emphasis was paid to the infant's reaction when mother returned to the room. This assessment came to be seen as a kind of Rosetta Stone by pioneer infant researchers. The assessment helped to decipher the infant's experience with its parents and enabled the categorization of children into one of three groups, the Securely Attached, Avoidantly Attached and Ambivalently Attached. Karen catalogues the flood of American studies which followed and devotes a great deal of space to the intense and hostile debate which these

findings gave rise to. The debate revolved round the axis of Nature versus Nurture, Genetics versus Environment. At times it became more important to report politically correct research findings and to utilize data in a political debate than to explore a fruitful scientific dialogue. Representatives of attachment theory were seen by radical feminists as Public Enemy Number One, binding women to the cradle. The debate still continues to this day in the industrialized world, though perhaps it has now become less heated.

Karen perceives Mary Main as representing a second revolution in attachment studies. Her premise was that people with different attachment histories not only have different patterns of behaviour but different 'patterns of language and structures of the mind'. She believed that we reveal our inner selves in what we say and she devoted much of her career to establishing this. The resulting body of work became a meeting point for attachment theory and psycho-analytic concepts. Main and her colleagues developed the Adult Attachment interview, a kind of Strange Situation assessment for adults where the parent's internal model of attachment was investigated. Karen quotes Peter Fonagy's research on expectant parents as one example of the many follow-up studies. In this particular research, Fonagy was able to predict correctly infant Strange Situation classifications in 75% of the cases. The results were based upon interviews with the mothers prior to giving birth.

Karen's work offers well rounded biographical portraits of all the main characters. He describes how Bowlby's experience of his parents, nanny and boarding school might have formed his early attachment pattern. This may in turn have generated the powerful pull towards Bowlby's later investigation of attachment. He also reveals Bowlby's less likeable characteristics. Nonetheless the overriding picture is of a man who pursued his goal with extraordinary persistence and generosity of spirit. Karen also confronts the inevitable limitations in early attachment theory and research which were later used by its detractors in attempts to undermine the basis of its empirical findings.

The quality of Karen's research appears both extremely thorough and impressive. He was fortunate in being able to interview Bowlby himself and was greatly assisted by the cooperation of Bowlby's wife, Ursula. He was also assisted by, amongst others, Juliet Hopkins, Charles Rycroft, Anthony Storrs, Colin Murray Parkes and John Byng-Hall.

One shortcoming is Karen's analysis of links between current attachment work and psycho-analytic concepts. Although the examples he

refers to are interesting and thought-provoking, he fails to elaborate on them in greater detail.

Since the outset, Bowlby has largely been persona non grata to the upper echelons of the psycho-analytic community. For example Karen quotes Hanna Segal's scathing comment on Bowlby; 'What's the use to Psychoanalyze a Goose?' Her dismissive tone is arguably echoed by our own organisation. I have no recollection of Bowlby's work nor any other body of attachment theory being referred to during my training as a psycho-analytical psychotherapist. Yet, attachment theory offers a cohesive structure for understanding both pathological and normal early development. Furthermore, the theory is solidly underpinned by empirical research. Few psycho-analysts have made a comparable impact upon our social consciousness. Bowlby and his followers have profoundly influenced the way children are treated in hospitals, in nursery care and in children's homes. They have helped parents and professionals to understand how loss and separation can cause severe trauma and distress. Karen's contribution is a timely reminder of the debt we owe to Bowlby's groundbreaking investigations.

VIVEKA NYBERG

The Newborn in the Intensive Care Unit: A Neuropsychanalytic Prevention Model

By Romana Negri. Karnac Books 1994. pp. 260 Pb £18.95

During normal pregnancy a mother's omnipotent fantasies quite understandably centre on the idea of having created a perfect thriving baby. But what happens if these fantasies are interrupted by the reality of a seriously premature birth? What is the emotional impact on parents of a child in danger of not surviving? To what extent does an incubator disrupt the natural bonding process? What does a mother feel if the baby she has produced could easily be confused with dirt and she is forced back to the toddler's dilemma of 'have I made a mess or a baby?'

Romana Negri, an Infant Neuropsychiatric Consultant, working in a Neonatal Pathology Unit in a hospital in Italy, has had 18 years experience of the enormous anxieties aroused in dealing with these fragile and sometimes handicapped infants. She is, therefore, in a

privileged position to observe the parents, the staff who look after the babies and the babies themselves. From this vantage point she tries to identify the main problems and find the best ways of dealing with them.

From her considerable experience, Negri observes that the emotional impact of producing a child in danger of not surviving can seriously affect the maternal attachment process. She is keen to help parents make a life-supporting contact with their baby and this is not always easy. If the mother's depression and anxieties about death are too high, she will want to split off the experience and stay away from the incubator. It is important to distinguish between the parent's and the newborn's problems. A mother may lose any sense of her own aliveness or mothering abilities and be consumed with guilt at having delivered so early in which case she may take on an 'adhesive identification' with her baby.

What is special about Negri's contribution is her ability to listen and observe with meticulous care. While she acknowledges her debt to the pioneering work on mother-baby observation done by the British Kleinians Esther Bick and Martha Harris, it seems a strange oversight to ignore her compatriot Alessandra Piontelli's recent research in foetal behaviour by means of ultrasound.

Even from as early as 26 and 27 weeks Negri confirms the veracity of object relations: the infant seeks contact through smell, touch and sound. Around 31 weeks she fascinatingly illustrates the baby's need for the other and his tendency to split between good and bad objects. She affirms the importance of the need for the parents' presence and containment.

In fact, the concept of containment is a key one in this book. There is a hierarchy of holding and containment. The parents' need to contain their infant, the staff must contain the parents and baby, whilst their leader has to contain all of them. The intense emotional atmosphere due to the possibility of imminent death and irreparable events means that anxiety and guilt can frequently reach persecutory levels. Just as maternal functions can be split off and projected, nursing functions can be seriously impaired. Hence Negri has evolved a routine of regular staff meetings focused around the most seriously premature baby at the time. This helps the nurses to look at the child as a whole and endeavours to bring their anxieties into the range of normality by minimising their defence mechanisms of splitting, projection, rationalisation and idealisation.

Infant observation has grown to be an accepted part of any serious-minded psychoanalytically based training and Negri's book offers a

real contribution here. By closely observing these normal and physically damaged pre-term babies, who are subject both to hyperstimulation and also serious sensorial and affective deficiencies, she concludes that they are more prone to lack of containment and 'fragmentation anxieties'.

By watching these infants with their mothers she stresses the intensity of a baby's relationship to the breast but notes the importance of individual differences in 'consolability' and 'cuddliness', attaching a favourable prognosis to a child's ability to accept its dependence on the adult. This pinpoints her conclusion that after birth merging is not an inevitable part of the developmental process and that healthy relating, even from earliest times, is based on separateness and *not* on fusion or symbiosis.

Moreover, although the importance of a mother's visual contact with her infant has been emphasised by many theorists, Negri sees that where the birth experience has been too persecutory, some infants react by being afraid of taking anything in: they avert their gaze, cry, or display psychosomatic disturbances such as eczema and colic, in an attempt to expel or isolate feelings and sensations in their bodies. In these instances it is the baby who contributes to the lack of mirroring from his mother.

Obviously if a child is not just pre-term but physically damaged, parental anxieties are increased. The formation of a mothers' group to help them accept their helplessness as well as the more painful and destructive parts of themselves, can be very helpful. Similarly, the staff group has an essential function here, for the integration of a handicapped child depends, to a large extent, on the integration achieved by his carers.

Negri prides herself on her painstaking neuropsychological screening of each infant, particularly assessing his 'state of consciousness', before his discharge from hospital and there are several photographs to illustrate each stage of this examination. The screening, which takes place in the presence of the parents and the caretaking nurses has both a physical and therapeutic significance. It provides an opportunity for all those who have been involved with the infant to come to terms with the whole experience.

Although the constant repetition about the devastating anxiety around the plight of these pre-term infants served to underline it, the book could have been shorter. But in any event it did convey how much one can learn from infant observation, not just in terms of neurological development but more significantly in terms of object

relations theory. It is compelling to read how even severely pre-term infants are sensitised to seek out an object.

JUDY COOPER

Psychoanalytic Studies of Personality

By W R D Fairbairn. Routledge 1994. pp. 312 Pb £14.99

More than forty years after the first publication of this collection of papers fresh interest seems to have been kindled in Fairbairn's work by the publication of a commentary on his ideas by Grotstein & Rinsley (1994), reviewed in these pages in the Winter edition, as well as work by David and Jill Scharff (1992, & 1994); and now by the publication in paperback of the original material. Why this renewed interest? Anna Witham in her review of Grotstein & Rinsley remarked that she had the impression that they were writing for the American market. In that comment I believe the answer lies, for there has been considerable suspicion of the Kleinian object-relations theory in the United States, described by one American analyst as 'the mythology of the id'. So perhaps Fairbairn offers a more acceptable paradigm. But I think that there may be a further reason which is connected with the turmoil in the United States about the loss of a unifying paradigm formerly provided by the ego-psychology theory, which has recently come under challenge from a variety of sources (Wallerstein 1992). This concern has also been fuelled by the attacks during the past ten or more years on the scientificity of the classical theory of Freud which was itself the foundation on which ego psychology stood. Meissner (1991) and Wallerstein (1992) have each expressed their concern that the natural science credentials of psychoanalysis should be re-asserted, and recent editions of the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* have been devoted to exploring some of the same ground. So Fairbairn's ideas may seem to offer a way of doing this.

This reprint of the collection of articles published under its original title, with an Introduction by David Scharff and Fairbairn's daughter, (both of whom work in the United States although Ellinor Fairbairn Birtles is not herself a psychoanalyst) may require little introduction to an English audience since the original work is readily available in libraries of psychoanalysis in this country, although citations have been much fewer than in the 1960's when Guntrip (1961 & 1969) was

producing lengthy commentaries. It is interesting to follow the development of Fairbairn's ideas about object-relations and to examine his attempts to differentiate his ideas from both Freud and Klein. He wanted to depart from Freud's drive/structure theories and I think he perceived that Freud's theory of the directionless energy located in the id required a structure theory to supplement it. He thought that Freud's structural hypotheses were unsatisfactory and were a consequence of the 19th century positivistic scientific tradition in which he was trained. He proposed to substitute the drive theory with an object seeking theory and believed that the infant's impulse was directed towards finding an object in the environment rather than being expressed through an objectless drive. In this he agreed with Klein but departed from her quite radically in the way he conceptualised the earliest phases of development. But like her he found that he was unable to dispense with the concept of libido and in the paper entitled 'Endopsychic Structure considered in terms of Object-Relationships' he examined this issue in depth. It is, I think, much the most profound paper in the collection. What is relevant to the issue of the natural science credentials of psychoanalysis, and hence, I believe, the American interest, is his use of relativity theory to provide a solution to the problem created by Freud's old-fashioned concept of free-floating energy. Fairbairn used the current scientific theories of energy, which hypothesised that energy cannot exist alone, to create what he called dynamic structure, or structure/energy. This structure/energy composite results from the split ego, which is a consequence of internalising an original bad object, in the various ways he described. The various split-off ego structures embody the energy as an aspect of themselves in the way that he believed that relativity theory conceptualised. There was no directionless, free-floating energy as hypothesised by Freud.

This is an interesting concept and appears to relocate psychoanalytic thought within the boundaries of natural science as redefined by relativity theory. However it suffers from a major defect in that the theory of relativity does not make the assumption that structure and energy are a combined entity. It hypothesises that *mass* and energy are the aspects which combine to form the single entity. Psychic structure by definition has no mass and it can therefore have no energy either. Moreover, the concept mass/energy has substantial proof derived from mathematics, which underlies Einstein's famous equation. Fairbairn did not offer similar mathematical support for his reconceptualisation and none has been offered subsequently. So while Fairbairn's use of

this concept seems at first sight capable of regrounding psychoanalysis in the objective world of natural science it in fact has only heuristic value, and is no different in that respect from many other psychoanalytic propositions.

As with most versions of object-relations theory there is in Fairbairn a considerable ambiguity about the use of the term 'object'. He differs from Klein that he does not believe that there are any original representation of objects in the mind of the infant at birth which it then seeks to find in the environment. He suggests that so long as the infant does not experience frustration in his relations with the world as represented by the mother then no internal objects appear. Frustration gives rise to bad feelings (of hunger, for example) which are attributed to the object (mother) which is then hallucinated as a bad object with the intention of controlling it. To do this the ego is split and the bad object attaches itself to the split-off part of the ego and both are repressed. In addition to this it is hypothesised that the bad object has two aspects which then cause *it* to be split into an exciting object and a rejecting object both of which attract a part of the ego which now has three parts, namely a central ego, a libidinal ego and an anti-libidinal ego. The situation is further complicated by the development of the super-ego which is yet another split-off aspect of the central ego. All of this is a far cry from the external world and what is going on in it. Fairbairn went on to assert that even the Oedipus Complex is not founded upon the external world of two parents but is created by the endopsychic world of internal objects and split-off aspects of the ego, and it is only latterly that the infant projects it on to the real parents. So in using the term 'object' it is evident that Fairbairn is not referring to the actual parents with whom the infant is interacting, but to some subjective process where aspects of the infant's self are experienced as alien, hence objects, and the relations are with these objects and are not relations in the first instance with real persons in a non-subjective world. Thus the hyphenated term 'object-relations' is intended to indicate this difference. Fairbairn's use of the term 'endopsychic structure', if it is not tautologous, by implication suggests that there might be such a thing as an *exo-psyche* structure' which might consist of the interactions in a real objective world meanings as contrasted with the subjective meanings in the internal world. Unfortunately, Fairbairn does not explore this possibility and I think that his views if supplemented by those of H S Sullivan and D W Winnicott might have led to an unhyphenated object relations theory which referred to observable relationships in the objective world which

could have been correlated in a different way with the subjective individual experience of them.

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R E MORLEY

The Curve of Life: Correspondence of Heinz Kohut 1923–1981

By Geoffrey Cocks (Ed). University of Chicago Press (1994) pp. 456
h/b £31.95.

Heinz Kohut was one of the 20th century's most influential figures in the psychoanalytic movement. A rebel in psychoanalysis, he challenged basic tenets of Freudian orthodoxy. And the success of his Self Psychology in treating the narcissistic personality disorders established it as one of the leading rivals to traditional psychoanalysis on the American Psychoanalytic stage.

The Curve of Life is made up of 300 letters taken from the personal files of Heinz Kohut and his colleagues and covers his life from his childhood in Austria in the '30s to his death in Chicago in 1981. The book may be divided into two main parts: That which more directly reflects his private self; and another which is more concerned with his professional interests. Because of the overlap, in most of his letters the reader gains an appreciation of the breadth of Kohut's interests, ranging from literature and music to social, political and historical matters.

Kohut's private life is most clearly revealed in letters to his son, Tom, his wife and a lifelong friend and musicologist, Siegmund Levarie. From the letter of July 4, 1963 to Tom, who was away at holiday camp, we gain some insight into the family side of Kohut

when he writes: 'And now good-bye my boy. Be a good camper and a good sport. Don't show it too much if you are out of sorts or a little homesick, but keep your chin up and your spirits high. Keep playing your best even if you are losing in the game; and keep on trying with any skill that you don't master: time, effort, and repetition can do a great deal.' (p. 83) The '60s was the decade of student protest on American college campuses, when adolescents transferred their struggle for independence, their feelings of injustice and impotence and their search for their own set of values from their parents onto the university authorities and the political system. Letters from the 1968–1970 collection indicate that Tom got caught up in this movement, wanting to fight his draft classification and to join a group of anti-Navy recruiter protestors. Several letters from the 1968–1970 group reflect Kohut's agonizing over the implications of his son's proposed actions. In his February 4, 1969 letter to Tom, Kohut writes: 'You are young and are just making the first steps toward independence.' (p. 226) And later Kohut wrote to Tom: 'I believe you should think long and hard before committing yourself to extreme causes and, especially, to extreme means of furthering them.' (November 17, 1968, p. 217)

During a large part of his career Kohut's relationship with Anna Freud was both intellectually enriching as well as a source of encouragement. Although he seemed confident that he was making a significant contribution to the psychoanalytic movement and always remained active on the analytic stage (as reflected by his membership on various committees, President of the Chicago Psychoanalytic Association, President of the American Psychoanalytic Association and Vice-President of the International Psychoanalytic Association) the despair he felt at times as innovator is reflected in his November 3, 1967 letter to Miss Freud: '... the narcissism studies ... I consider at times to constitute a substantial contribution to our field, while at other times I feel desperate about their worthlessness ...' (p. 181)

During his work with narcissistic patients Kohut had identified two main types of transference-like phenomena one of which he called the 'idealizing transference'. It was thought to represent the revival in the therapeutic relationship of the need for soothing that comes from merging with a strong and good self-object. He had brought his ideas together in chapter from and had sent his introduction to Anna Freud for criticism and comment. In her letter to him of December 10, 1967 she acts as editor, as well. We learn that she agrees that the reliability of empathy declines where the observer differs from the observed. But

she questions if, in the first year of life, it is the dissimilarity of the infant to the adult or more likely the absence of speech which reduces the reliability of empathy. Miss Freud reminds Kohut that wherever speech is absent we are kept guessing which, she says, is really the reason that child analysis is often unreliable. 'These,' she says, 'are some of my thoughts . . . they are: signs of interest in what you are producing.' (p. 184) It is in this vein that his correspondence with her about these and other theoretical matters runs throughout this volume.

But we learn also in *The Curve of Life* that both he and his wife enjoyed a warm and mutually rewarding relationship with Miss Freud; and from the 1966–1967 group of letters the reader discovers that Miss Freud was a guest of the Kohuts' when she was bestowed with an honorary degree by the University of Chicago. Not only did the Kohuts arrange social activities for Miss Freud, but his wife acted as her guardian at University functions to help protect her from undue strain (December 6, 1966).

For the serious student of psychoanalysis these letters are guaranteed entertaining, lively and informative reading and are certain to enrich his appreciation of this innovator.

MARJORIE NEWSOME

The Man Who Never Was (Freudian Tales)

By Janet Sayers. Chatto & Windus 1994. pp. 236 h/b £15.99.

This book challenges stereotypical and unconscious views of men. It reassesses the place of men and fatherhood in psychoanalytic theory, and alerts us to the damage done to everyone – women and men alike – by our defensive fictions of masculinity.

The book is in three sections:

- (1) Childhood Fixations;
- (2) Acting-out Rebels;
- (3) Inward Defences.

Each chapter begins with a quotation – mostly from Freud – which unifies the text and gives the book a sense of cohesion. Each topic is based on a case-history – 'Tales' – thus bringing the theoretical concepts alive and making for easy reading.

In Childhood Fixations, we meet Tessa, who by phobically avoiding men remains 'fixated to the myth of the Virgin Birth'. Chris, the Don

Juan, having invested his self-esteem in his penis, becomes ridiculous: 'a dandy, foppish and a spiv'. Lacan is quoted to explain Chris's phallic quest as deriving from the wish to be everything the mother needs, while with women, it may involve adopting a 'masquerade of femininity,' of being the 'phallus for the other desires'. The writer sees 'Penis Envy' as so destructive that neither 'therapists or feminists want to know about it' Sarah's tale illustrates this destructiveness as Sarah 'tears not only men but herself apart with her lacerating envy'.

The Oedipus tale of Celia should be compulsory reading for all, especially for those working with families, and couples. The tale highlights the triadic factors involved in family conflicts and sexual violence. The author thinks that these conflicts are often, nowadays, understood in dyadic terms to the total exclusion of their triadic components.

In the second section of the book, the reader is introduced to the pervert, Mr Benn. He denies his maleness, power and potency, but goes on to use them to sexually abuse his daughter.

Bernie, the 'wimp', becomes involved in dangerous and delinquent activity in his search for 'phallic completeness'. Totally different from Bernie is Keith, 'the Tough Guy', who acts out 'a tough stereotype of masculinity to defend against his unhappiness'.

In the tale of The Tomboy, the writer paints a very moving picture of Toni's unhappiness. Toni suffered greatly 'by virtue of her sex, against which her tough-guy acting out caused her more trouble than it cured.' The last tale of this section of the book, Steve, The Conman, illustrates charlatanism as clear example of an acted-out defence.

The final section of the book is devoted to Inward Defences. To illustrate the Defence of Repression, the patient, Sarah, is used to show that by the lifting of repression by interpretation she was able to verbalise 'the immobilising, exaggerated snake images of her abusive stepfather so that she could move on'. The author reminds us of the importance of repression as a defence in the history of Psychoanalysis – an importance she feels gets lost nowadays. Two further tales illustrate how depression can be a defence against disillusion, and psychosomatic symptoms can defend against loss.

The chapter on Mania illustrates the author's skill as a powerful descriptive writer. One is enabled to sense Peter's 'gargantuan Gobbling' and empathise with Sayers' feelings as she listened to it. Klein's emphasis on mothering in the aetiology of mania is thought to have 'lost sight of its patriarchal aspects'.

In describing a schizoid patient, David, the writer emphasises that

Freud 'regarded fathers – and men generally – as central to the genesis of Schizophrenia' (Schreber case).

The final chapter is an impassioned warning of the dangers of 'succumbing to our imagined images of men – as Patriarch, Phallus, Monster or Idol'. Throughout the text, there are many warnings to therapists not to attend exclusively to mothering at the expense of fathering.

Therapy is seen by the writer as not enough to undo the damage done by false notions of men; it also needs political action, since our distorted views of men are 'rooted in power, privilege and wealth enjoyed by men in the ruling classes', as well as in our unconscious.

This book is clearly written. The author's clear descriptions of her clients and her own countertransference responses are illuminating, honest, and brave. It is rich in clinical material, theoretical concepts and literary references. It should appeal to a large readership. While not neglecting the 'Kleinian Mother', Sayers continuously reminds her readers of the importance of the 'Freudian Father' as well.

DANIEL TWOMEY

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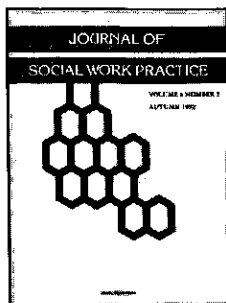
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