

Metamodality of Psychotherapy – Draft Heward Wilkinson, July-October 2023

Note: I am very grateful for the contributions of Divine Charura, Siobhan McGee and Jonny White, and Susan Groves, which I believe are complementary to mine, but I have to get my own ducks in a row before I can fully engage with those dimensions of socio-historical thinking.

Summary

In summary: Interactionistic Dualism as a framework and Generic Field Theory of the Psychotherapies: this may comprise Ontological Dualism, or Aspect Dualism nested within a Monism, permitting dialogue between difference and different permutations. Behind that argument, the psychotherapies manifest a paradoxical primal or ontological causality which deserves fuller attention, and which, being characteristic of philosophically literate anthropologies, marks out psychotherapy itself as a form of philosophically, and historically, based anthropology. The limit of this in relation to Psychotherapy is defined by its Function.

All this manifests in many familiar polarities:

process/programmatic;
conscious/unconscious;
primary process/secondary process;
conscious/inanimate;
embodiment/introspection;
regression/creation;
habit/improvisation;
indeterminacy/goal directedness;
being-in-itself/being-for-itself;
death/life;
and many more.

This is the playground of interactive dualism, and the vortex of the genesis of the psychotherapies.

A Voyage of Discovery: searching for a Field Theory of Psychotherapy

For at least the last half of my life I have been thinking professionally and personally, about the problem of psychotherapy, what it is, how it came into existence, how powerful a thing it is. (For instance, Alain de Botton says: "Psychotherapy is the single greatest innovation of our times and the discipline on which the eventual flourishing of humankind rests": something which warrants serious consideration.) This present search for a field theory is a culmination of that pondering. The aim of this search for a field theory, generic model, or meta-model of Psychotherapy, is to produce a generic concept of the field at such a level of generality *that it does not conflict with either any specific modality of psychotherapy, or with any of the ethical, political, scientific, and human right and justice, connections of psychotherapy*, which are implicated in its identity. It is a difficult enough task to disentangle, of considerable scope, but will, I hope, gradually become clearer in the course of this exposition.

I am primarily drawing upon Western thought in this, but I do believe there is nothing in it which might succumb to a contextual reduction from other traditions. It may, positively, however also supplement the permutation model at which I arrive, and which (see, Levi-Strauss, *Wild Thought*, previously translated as *The Savage*

Mind) has affinities with the systematically transformational-semantic character of aboriginal thought, as we shall see. There is a question to be faced, however, which is that, in the West psychotherapy, broadly speaking, is underpinned by liberal individualist democratic, social contract and human rights, theory and vision, whereas in other parts of the world psychotherapy may develop within a more communitarian vision. We shall need to return to this vast theme in further later discussions. It may well not be an either/or situation for us, in relation to communitarian approaches and traditions, but rather a complementarity, as with, many including the Dalai Lama would argue, in relation to Western and Eastern approaches to medicine.

The search for a generic account of psychotherapy is a fundamentally Kantian aspiration. Kant, arguably the most influential Western philosopher of the modern age, sought to achieve a neutral, but comprehensive, universal, 'critical', framework for both Science and Religion in the Academia of his day, based upon a generic (or 'transcendental', in his language) concept of personhood, and correlatively upon a fully realised process concept of time and temporality, and a universalisable ethics. However incomplete, some may argue, is his actual achievement, the breadth of potential vision transformed Western understanding, more than any other single modern philosopher, even Descartes.

In the terms of the present day, Psychotherapy, as an essentially trans-empirical anthropological-historical Profession and Discipline, suffers in Academia and in Governmental connections, by its lack of *unity* as a Profession and a Discipline. To establish a generic theory of the whole field would assist in framing this problem in a way that makes it addressable, without reducing psychotherapy to a homogeneity stripped of modality. *For modality is indispensable, as it always expresses a unique potential in human nature, which some innovative psychotherapist has come to recognise, identify, and enlist as a method or attitude.* But, at the same time, *modality is not enough*; it needs to be correlative to a generic concept and this is what is lacking.

This exposition begins as an account of the journey by which I reached an understanding of a potential solution to the problem. I go by way of arguments with both Buber and Freud. From Freud I draw, in particular, from the exploration of *repetition in Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (BPP), which, despite its difficulty and mythic flavour, brings into view the salient tensions better than anything else I know.

But first, I highlight, for comment later, an incomplete, and non-definitive, no doubt biased, list of examples of characteristic psychotherapy processes and activities, whose function here will become evident shortly. These are very familiar psychotherapy modes, from various modalities, including examples from both ends and the middle of the *Process/Programmatic Spectrum*: experiment; script; homework on internal self-message systems; rehearsal and practice work; improvisation on a theme; indirect hypnotic inductions; free association itself; psychodramatic exploration of the past; narrational exploration of the past ('pasts' which may include intergenerational hypothesis); experimental or open-ended free flow conversation or non-directive listening; rehearsing 'possible conversation', in effect, and dialogical aspects of interaction; role explorations, even in two-chair work form; body psychotherapy exploration of embedded tensions and imagery; projective

exercises; process interactions which revisit script/transference themes again and again; and interpretative meta-commentary upon the same.

Actualism as a Temptation

I was aware that, both in literary studies and in psychotherapy, I feel suspicious of assumptions, or at least models (not truth as such is a problem but models of truth), of *present unitary actuality as default understanding*. Whether in fiction, - treating it as a representation of a 'fully actualisable' biographical reality of author and/or persons known to them, - or in psychotherapy, - being constituted simply as a presentation or realisation of a 'fully real relationship', or 'cognising being which is fully reality-based', - we seemed to be drawn towards a thoroughgoing here and now actualism. And the problem is not that those phenomena *do not occur and be real*, but that to absolutise them implicitly *as an ontological paradigm* is unduly restrictive and sometimes reductive. If all psychotherapy is, in some sense, method, can it ever be free of being identified through a framing?

Actualism I describe here as: *the attempt to only deal with actuality (opposed to possibility, potentiality, and hypothetical or fictional reality, etc.), whether as immediate presence, or as material/physical reality **as law**. In a broader definition, it would have to include potentiality, but potentiality would then be confined to being simply the **secondary background** of actuality or reality*. It is associated with forms of radical logical empiricism, such as Quine's (most entertainingly) in *On What There Is* (<https://rintintin.colorado.edu/~vancecd/phil375/Quine.pdf>).

This is a default *tendency* in much psychotherapy. The crucial requirement or criterion is to be *real*, and so the underlying default assumption is: *Only actuality is real*. There is no *a priori* or logical necessity; everything is contingent. And it is assumed to be, as such, unitary or monistic. (We shall be coming to the question of *monistic* accounts of the psychotherapy field later.) Psychotherapy has to be real, above all, - present actuality. But – in this sense – is it? Can it be? Is psychotherapy, in its bid for acceptance as realism or being real, missing the deeper implications of what it does? This is like, or parallel to, the transition in literature from 19th century realistic fiction concepts, to 20th century text-dominated understandings of fiction. Is psychotherapy still thinking in 19th century terms?

The dawning dimension of Fiction opposed to Actualism

I therefore was initially drawn, somewhat oppositionally to this emphasis, towards more subversive models, like those of Sartre (*Being and Nothingness*), Derrida (*The Postcard: from Socrates to Freud*), who includes a massive commentary on *Beyond The Pleasure Principle* (BPP), or Erving Goffman (*Frame Analysis*), all three which used forms of the *negative*, and of *difference*, to deconstruct an actualism.

Actualism, in its variants, seemed to be an assumption held in common between all of the very different approaches of, say: Person-Centred Therapy; Relational Psychoanalysis; and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, - to take them as instances of three major *super-modalities* (supermodalities are not the solution we need, I believe, but part of the mix): Humanistic; Psychoanalytic; and Cognitive-Programmatic. This similarity, in seemingly very different psychotherapy disciplines, may seem to point to a shared realism; could this not be a very potently attractive, and unitive, way of thinking, in each context? And what would be the alternative, if this way of thinking does *not* give us an ultimate frame? And how, then, if an

alternative needs to be found, would the element of validity in those ways of thinking be accommodated, since, clearly, elements of the *real* are indeed *part* of the core of psychotherapy?

Ultimately, it may seem to go back to the old Western philosophical and scientific paradigm of *objecthood*, *reification*, being like an object, being as full actuality - and with any hint of *potentiality* either suspended, or only recognised, as in Newtonian physics, as immutable law, or else as merely supplementary to actuality. This objecthood paradigm of science itself, to be sure, is looser than it appears and hides a multitude of knowledge puzzles, as Kant showed in *Critique of Pure Reason*. We shall come to Kant's vision of knowledge, and the two levels he brings into play, in due course. Objecthood, for complex reasons, turns out to be complicated, and to have a complex relationship with what Freud designated as *primary process*. This actualism, then, or, at the least, this tendency towards monistic actualism, might mask a fear of that paradigmatic bugbear of psychotherapists, Descartes' dualism, with its uncanny invocation of the *Other within the Self as Process* (see, e.g: Derrida: *Cogito and the History of Madness in Writing and Difference*).

For there are two levels of differentiations in Descartes, an inner and an outer dualism. The inner is the polarity between my ('my' as the generic experiencer) certainty of consciousness as such, as opposed to the – supposedly possible! - uncertainty of the external world. I cannot doubt consciousness without being conscious. The outer is the emerging development of the inner, that between the thinking entity (*res cogitans*, - which is not, for Descartes, confined to cognition but includes *all* awareness of imagination and sensation and the body and anything else which enters awareness), and the extended entity, the material world (*res extensa*).

Here is the foundation, via the route of Hume and Kant, of the later Hegelian-Sartrean contrast between the For-Itself and the In-Itself, to which we shall be coming. And the nature of the For-Itself, as consciousness and its analogues, is *process*; the In-Itself is homogeneous opacity, whether it is solid or fluid. From now on *conscious process* will become more and more central to our dilemmas. About Descartes' dualism, apparently, many psychotherapists seem to have to believe as a default assumption, almost as an article of faith, that it has been overcome. What is that about?

Primary Fideism

Nevertheless, against this appeal to subversive traditions, a colleague's chance remark, about the implications of attaining final personal truth, reminded me that there is a tradition of supreme and radical thinkers, with partly objectivist leanings, yet each of them outliers in certain ways to the orthodox belief and knowledge systems, - but constituting a tradition which, even so, tends towards something like a primally faith based, fideistic, epistemology/theory of knowledge.

These are commonly thinkers of *primal homecoming* and a certain associated nostalgia. *Their sense, within their belief systems, - some religious, some secular, - is that they have found their ultimate home and resting place, at the level of primary belief.* Might an element of fideism and a sense of homecoming have a positive, or containing, bearing on the actualism to be found in the Psychotherapy field? This might honour the sense of *reality* without it being confined to a default

actualism. (As it is lengthy, I have put the detailed list of them, with further remarks, in the *Appendix*.)

Fiction as Paradigm

So, then, a big risky step; I wondered, how would all that combine, then, with wondering, sceptically, in this age of textual process, what if fiction really is *fiction*, invention, construction, creation of form, manipulation of language and text at many levels, *repetition as possible transformation*, via rehearsal and reviewable process, not mere reproduction of reality as such? What if even ordinary apparent 'reproduction of reality' is an *historical attainment*, itself very recent and itself *constructed as much as discovered*? The modern meaning of 'fact' only came in in the 17th Century. Freud and Kant, between them, confirm this at the philosophical level, as we shall see. What if it is a textual art, a simulation, not simply a reproduction, in parallel to the way presentation of perspective of space in painting is an art which was only discovered, or rediscovered, at the Renaissance, and not something we are able to do without discovering the constructive method of it? And what if we apply something like this to both ordinary perception and to psychotherapy? *Is this the melting pot where the heart of psychotherapy is to be found?*

This may mean that the (possibly) realistic epistemology/theory of knowledge implied in the partial actualism common to all three earlier mentioned super-modalities (systemic therapies are already fairly constructivist) would actually, *partially*, falsify or at least undercut, and somewhat mislead in regard to, what, more closely understood, is *really* going on in these approaches. In pursuing this, we would not be disregarding truth, but focusing on *truth as process*, more than (though not in denial of) fact. That a trainer is conducting a *demonstration piece* of work, is indeed fact, but the *content of the work* might be in the 'as if' of imagined recollection, for instance. Process would turn out to be not a simple reality at all. The seemingly unexamined commonsense, with its probable or likely last ditch appeal to science, of the supermodalities' thinking, might itself turn out to be more hiddenly constructivist than is assumed.

This would not relativise truth but modulate the ways we think about truth. Again, it would be far from seeking to eliminate *relationship*, but it would suggest that 'relationship' is far more mysterious and opaque than psychotherapy mostly dreams.

Also, it would then be possible to begin to exchange the unitary tendency of this commonsense realism for a *spectrum*, in which various forms of paradoxically *repeating/reframing or transformatory understandings of existence would intersect or alternate*, and psychotherapy would become part of a *cluster of alternate but related* ways of analysing the world. Once more, this is close to what Levi-Strauss puts before us in his *Wild Thought*. If the ordinary world turns out to be in a sense a rehearsal, demonstraton, or exemplification, *then psychotherapy would be a rehearsal of a rehearsal*. This would indeed be a meta theory of meta theories, which would share a partial relativisation of commonsense realism and science, and even, - melodramatically, perhaps, - be the potential *melting pot for the genesis of the psychotherapies*. A different, more primary, more ontological, kind of causality may come into view. What is in common in the whole spectrum of these possibilities, and is the core generative/activist mode of psychotherapy, is **some form of repeatability**, with or without variation or transformation.

This will be developed more specifically later, and is particularly related to Goffman's *Frame Analysis* body of theory, and I shall also refer to Levi-Strauss, as indicated, and it will hopefully become clearer as we go on. Of course, there are approaches to science, such as those of Thomas Kuhn, Polanyi, Whitehead, Heisenberg, Koestler, and John Lukacs, which do not simply assimilate it to an advanced form of commonsense realism or positivism.

Suddenly, then, as soon as we consider all this, we can also consider, in its *different* light, the whole slew, already mentioned, of very familiar psychotherapy modes, from various modalities including examples from both ends and the middle of the *Process/Programmatic Spectrum*: experiment; script; homework on internal self-message systems; rehearsal; improvisation on a theme; indirect hypnotic inductions; free association itself; psychodramatic exploration of the past; narrational exploration of the past ('pasts' which may include intergenerational hypothesis); experimental or open-ended free flow conversation or non-directive listening; rehearsing 'possible conversation', in effect, and dialogical aspects of interaction; role explorations, even in two-chair work form; body psychotherapy exploration of embedded tensions and imagery; projective exercises; process interactions which revisit script/transference themes again and again; and interpretative metacommentary upon the same. *These are all permutations within which we work.*

Repeatability and Suspension of Belief and Disbelief

It begins to appear that this way of thinking about psychotherapy is actually, in practice, implicitly (though less in theory), very familiar to us all, in all modalities. What then does it imply? It is, then, not actualistic, despite appearances. It has a radical counter-factual element. It makes process central; even programme will emerge as a form of process. We may turn to a philosopher poet (the 'subtle souled psychologist', as the English poet Shelley wrote of him in *Peter Bell the Third*) of extraordinary genius, for a nuanced insight which may take us forward.

Thus the English poet-philosopher, S.T. Coleridge, writes (*Biographia Literaria*, ch. 14) that:

"the aim of poetry [is] to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that *willing suspension of disbelief for the moment* [my italic - HW], which constitutes poetic faith."

Suspension of disbelief and belief, (as in the phenomenological philosopher, Edmund Husserl's concept of *epoché*), implies the further step of *meta-reflection on process*. As it is suspension in thought of an *act*, even as speech or text, repeatability, with transformability, is built into it as its very possibility.

So this also suggests that psychotherapy is very analogous, in this respect, to poetry. Here we encounter one of the difficulties of this concept: is it not, arguably, *too broad* to define psychotherapy? Levi-Strauss, as well as Buber, do help us here, as we shall see, shortly. What then is the difference, what defines the boundary of psychotherapy? The short answer is, by Function. I shall leave that aside for the moment, to pursue first; what follows if we now pick up "repeatability" and "suspension of belief".

Consulting Freud: from the Fountainhead

So far, this seems reasonably intelligible. But hidden within it are deep puzzles for the psychotherapies. What do “Repeatability” and “Suspension of belief” amount to? As possible psychotherapy concepts, are they also fully fledged philosophical concepts? If we part company with actualism, where does it take us?

For this, now I turn to the gnarled and knotty wisdom and arcane thought of the later Freud himself: “Repeatability” and “Suspension of belief”? These, we know, are fundamental to Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (BPP). So yes, I now turn to Freud, to Freud the enigma.

Notoriously, Freud has something deep, elusive, and difficult, to say about all this, above all, in his most extraordinary and uncanny work, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (BPP), where he considers the implications of *repetition compulsion* and invokes *suspension of belief*. dualistically, in the form of what he calls *speculation*. This, for him, means detachment from the rightness or otherwise of his concepts, he says, and it is arguable that, also, at a *process* level, he is, in some sense, *playing*, metaphorically, with his concept of speculation, here, yet also very seriously; (see *The Postcard*, Derrida).

Arguably we find, that, in a most peculiar way, he straddles *both the sceptical-constructivist view and the ‘homecoming’/faith view*. He is a remarkable and disconcerting test case. It is fruitful to compare his dualistic tendency with another *apparent* one, that of one of the icons of relational approaches (with affinities to Ubuntu – translated no doubt clumsily, as ‘because you are, I am’), Martin Buber in *I and Thou*, published very close in time, in the nineteen twenties, to *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, who, despite possible philosophical oversimplification, unequivocally invokes a concept which has to be at the heart of understanding psychotherapy, *the concept of being a person*.

Now, repetition in some form or other, as Freud gradually grasped, is not only at the heart of psychotherapy but, as such, therefore, *since psychotherapy is the repetitional rehearsal, or reflexive improvisation, of qualities of human being*, qualities of being found in all human existence: therefore, it is at the heart of all human existence! It is, as many other thinkers, - sometimes in the guise of *mimesis*, that is, imitation/identification, sometimes in the mode of type and instance, - have grasped (for instance, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Leibniz, Hume, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Whitehead, Husserl, Auerbach, Girard, Derrida) a *primary (if not **the** primary) mode of human reaction and experience, and the basis of the genesis of extended mentality* (Rene Girard). We tend to overlook the obvious! Type and instance, for instance. So, just one prototypical example from these: Plato’s *Ultimate Forms, templates of reality*, have dominated Western philosophy and thought ever since. And here there might indeed be a challenge to hierarchical models implied, which is perhaps partly why, in deconstructive thinking, much influenced nevertheless by Freud, we move to a non-hierarchical concept of *repetition without a first instance* (see, for example, Derrida, *The Postcard: from Socrates to Freud or Limited Inc*).

But Freud makes a massive and very curious step forward, or inference, from his focus on *repetition compulsion*, namely that drives are *fundamentally regressive, backward looking towards death and the inanimate, or, as he tries to show with Eros also, at least towards an earlier, primal event of **some** kind*.

Freud is one of the great myth-makers, - in the sense of something like parables, not falsehoods. Freud's invocations of myth are congruent with his radical appeal to primary events. But he is dealing, profoundly, with a raft of polarities, and their full bearing, or implication, which ones take priority, and so on, is not always clear. Other powerful views, drawing again on philosophy, such as that of Gestalt Therapy, appeal to the effects of interruption by trauma as producing repetition, and deferral, but, on their model, they conceive it as seeking a *future* corrective experience, which Freud would not deny, but would say was secondary. These apparent differences, if they are such, as we shall consider, have a bearing on the question of the dualism/monism system of permutations, and we shall converge on this. But repetition and repeatability, and suspension or transformation of reality assumption, - *rehearsal of rehearsal!* - are the common thread.

Now, to keep track, and so begin to answer the earlier question about the correlated boundaries of psychotherapy, the *function* of psychotherapy is correlated with the suspension and the repeatability, - *and therefore the partially and contextually frame-restricted, essentially or specially to emotions, but so also therefore richly specialised, scope of it*, - is what defines its difference from ordinary, and other special, modes and roles, such as advocacy roles, in human existence. So its function, - and its specialisation as repetition and meta-suspension, - are correlative. We shall come back to this after seeking to reach the core of the understanding we are pursuing.

Now, Freud, then, characteristically, turns repetition into an ultimate ontological *myth of origin*. How may this help us? It draws us nearer to what I may call primal causality, an originating ontological causality. This stunning creation of a "myth of origin" (myth, once more, in the sense of something like a parable, not in the sense of an illusion) is something he effects in several contexts. (For instance, there is the appeal to *Oedipus Tyrannos* and *Hamlet* in *Interpretation of Dreams*, as paradigms of the male child's identity transformations; the, as he says, "phantastic", invocation of the primal murder hypothesis in *Totem and Taboo*; and the *Fort/Da* - 'Gone/There', child's play with the reel, episode in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* itself.) Jean-Jacques Rousseau has a similar gift for mythic evocation, with a similar transitional function.

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, then, Freud ultimately, awesomely, with stark grandeur, turns the *emergence of repetition* into a *cosmo-biological* myth; in chapter 5 of *BPP* he writes:

"At some point or other, the attributes of life were aroused in non-living matter by the action upon it of a force that we are still quite incapable of imagining. Perhaps it was a *process similar in essence to the one that later, at a certain level of living matter, gave rise to consciousness* [my italic, HW]. The tension generated at that point in previously inanimate matter sought to achieve equilibrium; *thus the first drive came into existence* [my italic, HW]."

Here there are the two steps: first, the self-differentiation of non-living matter, which we shall come back to in a moment; and, secondly, the analogy that this process emerges *in a way similar to consciousness*.

Let us look at this, his 'myth of origins'. I shall include his lead in to it, this time: "It would contradict the conservative nature of drives if it were the goal of life to

achieve a state never previously attained to. Rather it must aspire to an *old* state, a primordial state from which it once departed, and to which via all the circuitous by-ways of development it strives to return. If we may reasonably suppose, on the basis of all our experience without exception, that every living thing dies, - reverts to the inorganic, - for intrinsic reasons, then we can only say that *the goal of all life is death*; or to express it retrospectively: *the inanimate existed before the animate*.

At some point or other, the attributes of life were aroused in non-living matter by the action upon it of a force that we are still quite incapable of imagining. Perhaps it was *a process similar in essence to the one that later, at a certain level of living matter, gave rise to consciousness* [my italic, HW]. The tension generated at that point in previously inanimate matter sought to achieve equilibrium; *thus the first drive came into existence* [my italic, HW].”

Here we see how Freud’s ‘impossible narrative’ enables us to glimpse a mystery. The inanimate is miraculously inaccessible to change (mythically, it is Objecthood, which is related to primary process, as we shall see, primal causality, envisaged “out of time”, pure unity and opacity, to all which we return). One day, a tiny sliver of negation and differentiation somehow arises, driven by the intrusion of some alien force. We are unable to conceptualise this! But this is indeed the birth of *life as process*! And next then there arises of necessity the mysterious *reaction back*, which defines the dynamic of a *drive*, towards the previous status quo of the inanimate, a drive which must obey the hidden causal and homeostatic assumption *that everything seeks dynamically to revert to what is already established*, in order to *maintain its own identity in absolute terms*, and the process of change, as a divergence, has to be learnt, so to speak, before it is incorporated. Drive, then, has affinities with consciousness. On this model there was absolute opacity before, which seems deeply oversimplified, but as a myth or parable it brings phenomena into view: “The fact that remains is that the organism wants only to die in its own particular way; and so those guardians of life, too, were originally satellites of death. Thus arises the paradox that that the living organism resists in the most energetic way external influences (‘dangers’) that could help it to take a short cut to its life’s goal (to short-circuit the system, as it were); but it is precisely this sort of behaviour that characterises purely drive-engendered strivings as against those of intelligence.” (BPP, ch. 5)

Here, then, in effect, he is also postulating drives as a primary prototype of *defence*, in the sense that defence is a reversion to the familiar or a previous state.

However, now we come to the foundational problem of dualism I have already mentioned, and this is where Freud is so valuable and takes us into the depths of the problem, in his mythic way:

“The tension generated at that point in previously inanimate matter sought to achieve equilibrium; *thus the first drive came into existence* [my italic, HW].” This is a *new* situation, and, in the description of it, “*One becomes Two*”, monism becomes dualism, something that regularly happens in mythic creation stories (see, again, Levi-Strauss *Wild Thought*). The inanimate, which had been a primal inanimate, simply all there was, unconnected with anything in the nature of an utterly embryonic beginning of consciousness, now becomes an **anti-animate**, if I may so distinguish, *correlated* with the newly emerged *animate*, life, which is now the first drive and the first process. So the drive is intrinsically contrasted with, and correlated with, the *anti-animate*, - an *anti-animate* which, in turn, by analogy, is

correlated, and contrasted, with the drive as something like consciousness. From now on it, the previously monistic *anti-animate* **is part of a dualism**, something which, in a sense, is retroactively striven for, and which *had the capacity* to generate a drive, which is what, regressively, strives for it.

So, here, mythically, a dualism emerges from a primal monism, which is also what happens in Aristophanes' sorb-apple myth, quoted from Plato's *Symposium* by Freud, and discussed in depth in this connection (*The Postcard*). Obviously there are affinities here with human 'fall' myths the world over, including Rousseau's *Man is born free but is everywhere in chains*.

So there is a primordial causality here, prior to the causality which belongs to the systemic sequential realm of 'secondary process', whose workings are what Kant analyses. Is this causality *primary process*? Or something prior to both primary and secondary process? Freud here is reminding us of the systemic polarity-logic, logic upon which Levi-Strauss bases his analyses of myth (Levi-Strauss, *Wild Thought*).

This is taken further in the paper on *Negation*, (1925), developed from *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, which I have discussed in my paper on Freud and Hegel:

<http://hewardwilkinson.co.uk/sites/default/files/Freud-Hegel-and-Dialectics2.pdf>

In that paper, he defines this point twice, in analogy with this cosmic gesture:

"With the help of the symbol of negation, *thinking frees itself from the restrictions of repression* [my italic, HW] and enriches itself with material that is indispensable for its proper functioning."

"But the performance of the function of judgement is not made possible *until the creation of the symbol of negation* [my italic, HW] has endowed thinking with a first measure of freedom from the consequences of repression and, with it, from the compulsion of the pleasure principle."

Here are the two Hegelian levels I have evoked in the above paper. Freud also says, using Hegel's keyword *Aufhebung* ('supersession' or 'transformational reversal', see my above paper):

"Thus the content of a repressed image or idea can make its way into consciousness, on condition that it is negated. Negation is a way of taking cognizance of what is repressed; indeed it is already a lifting/transformational reversal [*Aufhebung*] of the repression, though not, of course, an acceptance of what is repressed."

In relation to the first remark, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, on consciousness above, we can see the parallel between the two pieces of theory. Something emerges which is apparently unprecedented, transformatory, and incommensurable with what preceded it, and which is deeply opaque to ordinary analogies and understanding, but which is a *leap* which makes possible paradoxical further advances, and transformations - but here in the form of a *drive* defined as attempting to return to the *status quo ante*, the primordial previous state. Now, all of this is entangled with Freud's distinction between primary and secondary process.

Let us begin to look at this. Freud, who admired the Greek pre-Socratic (- the philosophers who preceded the trinity of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle -) philosopher and shaman, Empedocles (c.f., *Analysis Terminable and Interminable*, 1938), for using a similar life versus death contrast to that he had arrived at, often writes as

cryptically and epitomisingly as the veriest pre-Socratic philosopher [c.f., “Wo Es war, soll Ich werden”: “Where It (Id) was, there shall I (Ego) come to be”, *New Introductory Lectures*]. Now, Freud’s *It-Id*, in relation to the *I-Ego*, correlates with the distinction of *primary* and *secondary process*. The *primary* and *secondary process* distinction is also reflected in the remark in the paper on *Negation*, that: “Fully consonant with this view of negation is the fact that in analysis we never find a ‘no’ in the unconscious, and recognition of the unconscious by the ego is always expressed in negative formulations.”

There is no ‘no’ in the unconscious, or primary process, because negation introduces irreversible difference, as in linear causality, and in primary process, everything is reversible, or symmetrical, as we shall see.

Behind his cryptic ways, I am more interested in the hidden assumptions he communicates, not whether his cosmic mythicising is, in some sense, literally valid or not: interested in *his actual logics of thinking and inference, and gestures of thought*. For those assumptions are radical in enabling us to integrate our diverse aspirations, both sceptical and primary faith based, for a general field theory of psychotherapy. What Freud’s formula, then, startlingly does is to combine the maximum of the *effect of the negative* with the maximum of *primary homecoming*.

Freud, and Kant

Freud’s thinking about all this opens up the logics of it all, more primally than Buber, to whose interestingly contrasting vision we shall come shortly. Freud’s approach presupposes the analysis of commonsense and scientific knowledge developed by Immanuel Kant, which is Kant’s account of the logic based analysis of consistent judgement – the “function of judgement”, of *Negation* - the foundation of the step into what Freud calls “secondary process” in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

Kant’s delightfully magical model is, then, startlingly, - once one notices, - radically *repetitional* enough, (and Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, and Wisdom, *Other Minds*, follow Kant here). And if we also here invoke David Hume, it is mythic enough as well!

Kant’s implicit *reductio ad absurdum* argument runs:

“If cinnabar were sometimes red, sometimes black, sometimes light, sometimes heavy, if a man changed sometimes into this and sometimes into that animal form, if the country on the longest day were sometimes covered with fruit, sometimes with ice and snow, my empirical imagination would never find opportunity when representing red colour to bring to mind heavy cinnabar. Nor could there be an empirical synthesis of reproduction, if a certain name were sometimes given to this, sometimes to that object, or were one and the same thing named sometimes in one way, sometimes in another, independently of any rule to which appearances are in themselves subject.” Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 100-101

This is supplemented by the positive explanation, even if it is somewhat opaque in the characteristically Kantian fashion. Nevertheless, it makes the core Kant differentiation between, on the one hand, *the self in its pathway through the world*, and, on the other, *the systematic organisation or constitution of the experience of an objective world*, which presupposes our *rule-organisation and repeatability of experience*:

“This transcendental unity of apperception forms out of all possible appearances,

which can stand alongside one another in one experience, a connection of all these representations according to laws. For this unity of consciousness would be impossible if the mind in knowledge of the manifold could not become conscious of the identity of function whereby it synthetically combines it in one knowledge. The original and necessary consciousness of the identity of the self is thus at the same time a consciousness of an equally necessary unity of the synthesis of all appearances according to concepts, that is, according to rules, which not only make them necessarily reproducible but also in so doing determine an object for their intuition, that is, the concept of something wherein they are necessarily interconnected. For the mind could never think its identity in the manifoldness of its representations, and indeed think this identity *a priori*, if it did not have before its eyes the identity of its act, whereby it subordinates all synthesis of apprehension (which is empirical) to a transcendental unity, thereby rendering possible their interconnection according to *a priori* rules.” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A 108)

So, this is Kant’s core argument for *how the unity of self-consciousness* is made possible by the possibility of differentiating out a *constructed phenomenal objectivity* in *Critique of Pure Reason*, and it clearly implies, by the above *reductio ad absurdum* argument, that the objectivity of experience is based upon *reliable repetition*. Now *this* account of objectivity is based upon *the consistency of experience*, out of which (repetition as consistency of experience) it is a construct, that is, in Freud’s framework, *secondary process*. The Objecthood paradigm, by contrast, is arguably a core mythic metaphor and is *primary process*, as we shall see.

Now Hume’s myth is about Objecthood, in effect. It, too, assumes a primal causality he officially rejects. Parenthetically, here then is Hume’s myth: “[The sceptic] must assent to the principle concerning the existence of body, though he cannot pretend by any arguments of philosophy to maintain its veracity. Nature has not left this to his choice, and has doubtless, esteemed it an affair of too great importance to be trusted to our uncertain reasonings and speculations. We may well ask, *What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?* but it is in vain to ask, *Whether there be body or not?* That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasonings.” (Hume: *Of scepticism regarding the senses* – Treatise of Human Nature, Part I)

This, for Hume, is, therefore, a *primary belief*. It is what Kant partly accounts for, phenomenally, with the above arguments. With his usual irony, Hume almost reverses course and disowns it at the end of the chapter, and then swerves back: “This sceptical doubt, both with respect to reason and the senses, is a malady, which can never be radically cured, but must return upon us every moment, however we may chace it away, and sometimes may seem entirely free from it. It is impossible upon any system to defend either our understanding or senses; and we but expose them farther when we endeavour to justify them in that manner. As the sceptical doubt arises naturally from a profound and intense reflection on those subjects, it always encreases, the farther we carry our reflections, whether in opposition or conformity to it. Carelessness and in-attention alone can afford us any remedy. For this reason I rely entirely upon them; and take it for granted, whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment, that an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and internal world...” (Hume: *Of scepticism regarding the senses* – Treatise of Human Nature, Part I)

Kant’s account brings into play the unity and stability of the world, the interaction of

all aspects of causality in the world, and the irreversible linear character of specific causality. This is what Freud assumes in secondary process, which, then, is contrasted with what he calls “**primary process**”. His account in the paper on *Negation* is **his solution to how we make the transition from primary to secondary process**, how the Kantian framework itself becomes possible, which is Hegel’s contribution, in the footsteps of which Freud (and also Melanie Klein) treads. And this is what current thinking (Fonagy et al, *Affect Regulation, Mentalization, and the Development of the Self*) calls *mentalisation*. Again, my outline account of it is at:

<http://hewardwilkinson.co.uk/sites/default/files/Freud-Hegel-and-Dialectics2.pdf>

Freud characterises “primary process” in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* at one point, as follows (BPP, chapter 5):

“We found that the processes in the unconscious systems are fundamentally different from those in the (pre-) conscious ones; that within the unconscious, cathexes can easily be completely transferred, displaced, compressed – something that could only produce flawed results is applied to pre-conscious material, and indeed for that very reason produces the familiar peculiarities of manifest dreams, the preconscious residues of the preceding day having been processed according to the laws of the unconscious. I termed this kind of process in the unconscious the “primary” psychic process in contradistinction to the “secondary” process that obtains in our normal waking life.”

Elsewhere (e.g., *Interpretation of Dreams*, Ch. 7, and elsewhere in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*), at the heart of his thinking, he adds that *the law of contradiction and temporality* do not apply to primary process.

Primary process is pure being in which everything (symmetrically – see Ignacio Matte-Blanco’s account in *The Unconscious as Infinite Sets* – If I am above you you cannot be above me, but if I am next to you you are next to me, it is symmetrical and Freud means *all* primary process relations are symmetrical and reversible – father of son is son of son as father, etc) coexists in an eternal now, *without linearity (irreversibility) of causal-temporal sequence*, and is in the realm, broadly, of *phenomenology*, pure experiencing, whereas secondary process is in the realm of *dialectic*, experienced conflict conceptualised and seeking resolution, and *with irreversible linearity of causal sequence*, as articulated in my Freud/Hegel paper.

Martin Buber and the I-It

Now we have a first outline of this distinction, by way of comparison and contrast, and illuminated by this distinction, I shall also illustrate from the case of a thinker and thought, one which placed personhood absolutely central, and much esteemed in Humanistic and Relational theory traditions: Martin Buber and the *I-Thou*. My first commentary relates to *I and Thou*, but he has a quite different model in *Between Man and Man*. Buber, too, sounds very pre-Socratic and his basic idea of the *I-Thou* is very attractive, but at least at outset, it is muddled, and sloppy philosophically, (unless the translation is misleading), from the very first page. The muddle is very instructive, however, and corresponds to a faultline which comes out more clearly, but with far greater reflexive awareness, in Freud, and it is one which affects all the psychotherapies, one which I shall now explore.

But, first, to make clear that I am not challenging the *phenomenon*, which is indeed part of what we have to include in a comprehensive understanding, and to give us a kind of partial glimpse of it, - whilst accepting that there may be variant understandings and instantiations, - here is Dickens's character Arthur Clennam wasting away in the Marshalsea debtors' prison, and responding (incompletely, at this point, and without knowing) to Amy Dorrit's loving gesture, arising out of radical personhood, in Dickens's *Little Dorrit*:

"Dozing and dreaming, without the power of reckoning time, so that a minute might have been an hour and an hour a minute, some abiding impression of a garden stole over him—a garden of flowers, with a damp warm wind gently stirring their scents. It required such a painful effort to lift his head for the purpose of inquiring into this, or inquiring into anything, that the impression appeared to have become quite an old and importunate one when he looked round. Beside the tea-cup on his table he saw, then, a blooming nosegay: a wonderful handful of the choicest and most lovely flowers.

Nothing had ever appeared so beautiful in his sight. He took them up and inhaled their fragrance, and he lifted them to his hot head, and he put them down and opened his parched hands to them, as cold hands are opened to receive the cheering of a fire. It was not until he had delighted in them for some time, that he wondered who had sent them; and opened his door to ask the woman who must have put them there, how they had come into her hands. But she was gone, and seemed to have been long gone; for the tea she had left for him on the table was cold. He tried to drink some, but could not bear the odour of it: so he crept back to his chair by the open window, and put the flowers on the little round table of old." (Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, Part II, Ch. 29)

This incandescent poignant *I-Thou* moment, I hope, speaks for itself.

So my problem with Buber, as he frames it all in *I and Thou*, is not with the phenomenon itself, but just with how he frames what is going on. And in *Between Man and Man* he offers something different but equally relevant and more coherent.

In *I and Thou* Buber begins:

"To man the world is twofold, in accordance with his twofold attitude.

The attitude of man is twofold, in accordance with the twofold nature of the primary words he speaks.

The primary words are not isolated words, but combined words.

The one primary word is the combination *I-Thou*.

The other primary word is the combination *I-It*; wherein, without a change in the primary word, one of the words *He* and *She* can replace *It*.

Hence the *I* of man is also twofold.

For the *I* of the primary word *I-Thou* is a different word from the primary word *I-It*."

But now he goes on, at first in line with the above, but then a change comes in:

"Primary words do not signify things, but they intimate relations.

Primary words do not describe something that might exist independently of them, but being spoken they bring about existence.

Primary words are spoken from the being.

If *Thou* is said, the *I* of the combination *I-Thou* is said along with it.

If *It* is said, the *I* of the combination *I-It* is said along with it.”

And then:

“The primary word *I-Thou* can only be spoken with the whole being.

The primary word *I-It* can never be spoken with the whole being.”

So the primary word *I-It* is spoken from the being, its existence is being in relation, because it is a primary word, and yet never from the *whole* being. What, then, is excluded? And if it too is a *primary* relation, conversely, what does *it* do that the *I-Thou* does not do? Must not the *I-Thou* also be incomplete in another way? Surely there is ambivalence here? It becomes even more pronounced a little later, when he vehemently denounces *It* based thinking: “O secrecy without a secret! O accumulation of information! *It*, always *It*!”

And yet, considering the relation to the tree, of which he gives a vivid account, he can also say:

“It can, however, also come about, if I have both will and grace, that in considering the tree I become bound up in relation to it. The tree is now no longer *It*. I have been seized by the power of exclusiveness.

To effect this it is not necessary for me to give up any of the ways in which I consider the tree [my italic, HW]. There is nothing from which I would have to turn my eyes away in order to see, and no knowledge I would have to forget. Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and type, law and number, indivisibly united in this event.”

Here the shift is not an *annulment* of the categories of analysis, in the Kantian sense, the dimension Buber is invoking in the *It*, but rather something like a *suspension* (c.f., again, Coleridge and Husserl) of them, so that a *non-reflective unitive experience* may transpire. If Buber had consistently pursued this line of approach, we would have had, if need be, the possibility of a (merely) retroflective exploration of the quality of immediate unanalysed ineffable experience, and there would have been no contradiction or inherent separation, between such unitive experience, and analytic-differentiating (secondary process) reflection.

They would have been, in Goethe’s analogy, Systole and Diastole. Together, they would constitute a monistic ontology, with two interactive aspects. By privileging the *I-Thou* at the expense of the *I-It* in the way he at times cannot resist, he risks forcing the dualism of aspects into the appearance of a dualism of being/ontology.

So, one of the oscillations we are heading towards dealing with in relation to dualism is that between Aspect Dualism and Ontological Dualism.

I shall call his more inclusive latter position, the “Integrating” account of the *I-Thou*, opposed to the “Denigrating” account which I have touched on and am coming to. For something badly sticks in his throat about this.

And so the paradox of the other, more ‘*It*’-intolerant aspect of Buber’s stances, is that he wants to make a *meta-ontological differentiation* to establish the *non-ontological* character of the *I-Thou* (for the ontological would be an analytically uncovered relation, and so ‘secondary process’). He wants the *I-Thou* to be both a unique ontological category *and utterly unanalysable*. But thus he defines it ontologically! Additionally, in his ‘postscript’, he says that neither the educator nor the psychotherapist role is capable of symmetrical (equal in personal expressive and

managed capacity) *I-Thou*, thus implying a developmental (*It* - analytic) model, by which the pupil or the client comes to attain that potential. The *I-It/I-Thou* dualism is a classic slippage dualism, a classic emergence, by slippage from valuation judgement to ontology, squarely in the realm of the analytic *It*, which is, precisely, repeatability, of the conceptually repetitional type we are beginning to see is at the heart of psychotherapy, as well as of classical metaphysics. So what is going on when Buber remarks of it that:

“The primary word *I-It* can never be spoken with the whole being”,
when previously he has said:

“Primary words are spoken from the being.

If *Thou* is said, the *I* of the combination *I-Thou* is said along with it.

If *It* is said, the *I* of the combination *I-It* is said along with it”?

Is not restricted or technical, meta-level, thought-based relation also relation, and has he not, here, confused the normative with the ontological, in a very familiar classical metaphysical gesture? *Yet in fact this is an ostensible dualism, aspect dualism, more deeply embedded in a monism.*

As indicated, a good deal of thought about what Buber is talking about with the *I-Thou* actually presupposes that a developmental shift making possible mentalisation is a necessary prior ground, or assumed to have occurred, in *I-Thou* experience being able to transpire for us. It therefore *builds* upon the Kantian dimension according to the “Integrating” account. The kind of ontological account Freud gives us in the paper on *Negation*, and which I have sought to elaborate in my account of it, seems to be presupposed by this development.

In relation to all this Buber laments something he at the same time grasps as necessity (significantly this involves bringing in the non-actualistic ‘difference’ via *potentiality*, which is the Freudian territory; the hint is that *I-Thou*, as such, is pure actuality, - that is, pure Objecthood, seemingly paradoxically):

“And love itself cannot persist in direct relation. It endures, but in interchange of actual and potential being. The human being who was even now single and unconditioned, not something lying to hand, only present, not able to be experienced, only able to be fulfilled, has now become again a *He* or a *She*, a sum of qualities, a given quality with a certain shape. Now I may take out from him again the colour of his hair or of his speech or of his goodness. But so long as I can do this he is not more my *Thou* and cannot yet be my *Thou* again.”

But, in relation to this, for example, a great musical artist may have rehearsed a work to perfection, drawing on *deeply repetitional habit*, but in one live performance inspiration strikes and it is incandescent, while another is flat. This is the oscillation of habit and inspiration, and it equally, as Buber implies, applies in relation to the moments of *I-Thou* meeting. In parallel, loving is learnt, yet happens through a leap of inspiration also. Where does one end and the other begin? This seems to me only a relative antithesis. There is, to be sure, a leap of logic we are coming to, which is something about what is going on when there are two correlative concepts which complement or contrast one another.

What then motivates Buber’s deep and sad “Denigration” view that:

“The primary word *I-It* can never be spoken with the whole being.”

It seems that Buber would feel that the *sacred* or even *divine* (“Eternal Now”) character of the *I-Thou* I, that of personhood, is protected by this. Something like mysticism’s ineffability of absolute presence, which in Buddhism goes so far as to

make somethingness and nothingness dissolve, beyond personhood and the self, indistinguishably in that indescribable, seems to be involved. But what then prevents him from espousing a sacredness of the ordinary (including the *It*) which would follow from so many elements in the Jewish and Christian traditions (c.f., George Herbert, *The Elixir*: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44362/the-elixir>)?

In short, it seems that the demarcation line between the two domains, besides itself violating the rule of ineffability for the *I-Thou*, is much more porous than Buber would hope, - monistic, but in a way not whole heartedly, or fully, acknowledged, monistic, - oscillating, in an unexplored way, between the two possible forms of dualism (Aspect Dualism and Ontological Dualism). In the process he treats the richness and subtlety of what he calls the *I-It* realm as if it were homogeneous, and often with an element of actual insult and disrespect. The implicit analogical connection with the Kantian model, nevertheless, has validity, but is marred by the dismissals. In that respect, he treats it as if the objectivist paradigm of a *thing* was literally all there is.

But, to the extent that it is an actualism, denuded of potentiality, the *I-Thou* is *also* being modelled on objecthood, in the sense of primary process. This is in effect an extension of the 'ineffability' account of the *Thou*. This seems close to belittling, for instance, the work of a great scientist like Newton or Darwin, or indeed a great philosopher like Kant (Buber might say, perhaps, that they had graduated into the *I-Thou*!). Of course, we are today all too well aware of terrible and genocidal forms of ostensibly objectivising thought and design which are profoundly life-destructive, in a technological world, which then were already all too clear from World War I, but Buber strongly tends towards tarring all of it with the same brush.

However, as perhaps hinted in the discussion of love, the account which becomes explicit in *Between Man and Man*, when Buber is discussing fundamental anthropology in the wake of Pascal, is both more substantive and more sustainably straightforward. The *I-Thou* is thinking primarily about personhood and, broadly speaking, first person expression. The *I-It* is simply analytical, third person, reasoning, using the paradigm of a spatio-temporal object (see, Strawson, *Individuals*). For Buber, Hegel illustrates the latter, third person reasoning, and Kierkegaard and Buber himself and Jewish Messianic thought, the former, because faith *addresses* a person. A person is one who may be *addressed* by a person. Buber does not spell this out but it is implicit in *Between Man and Man*. This concept, however, is compatible with a full awareness of the two level argument of the above Freud-Hegel paper of mine.

In this connection, Buber argues significantly with Hegel in another way; he says that a *cosmic home* would need to embrace, as is the case with Aristotle and Aquinas, *both* space and time, whereas Hegel's synthesis concerns history. It is founded on time alone, and this cannot be third person time, and the only first person time which genuinely embraces the future must be that of faith, Messianic time. Hence, he believes, there takes place the rapid collapse of Hegel's great synthesis; *man, humanity, cannot find a home in time and history alone*. This seems a quite regressively concrete, atavistic, primary process based kind of view. The unparadoxical security of a divinised space is assumed to be lost to us, after Copernicus, Kepler, Newton and Pascal. But is not this the Hegelian advance, which

is alive and kicking in our post-modern world? Is it not this we have to come to terms with, the huge opportunity missed, so far, by psychotherapy?

Was it, then, this the terror that led to the destruction of Hegel's powerful synthesis? Or are we, as Karl Barth hints in *From Rousseau to Ritschl*, rather, - unknowingly, to be sure! - just *beginning to reach the Hegelian era of the infinitisation of time*, of the concept, and of text and historicity as text. As the first object relations/psychotherapeutic thinker, Hegel addresses this terror (Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Lordship and Bondage chapter), and via Nietzsche we reach Psychotherapy with this unresolved. To this very interesting argument, deeply relevant to psychotherapy, we shall return.

Freud once again

We now turn back to Freud, who inaugurates, in the *Negation* paper, a modern version of the Hegelian evolution that brings the reflexive, dialectical 'secondary process' realm of mind into view, and we gain a far deeper understanding of the abysses which await us in exploring these crevasses of near-mythic thought!

However, now we come to the foundational problem of dualism I have already mentioned: "The tension generated at that point in previously inanimate matter sought to achieve equilibrium; *thus the first drive came into existence* [my italic, HW]."

As noted, this is a *new* situation, and, in the description of it, "*One becomes Two*", something that regularly happens in mythic creation stories (see, again, Levi-Strauss *Wild Thought*). So, what of the primordial causality that appears to be here, prior to the causality which belongs to the systemic realm of 'secondary process', whose workings Kant analyses. Is this causality *primary process*? Or something prior to both primary and secondary process? Again, Freud here is reminding us of the systemic polarity-logic - logic upon which Levi-Strauss bases his analyses of myth (Levi-Strauss, *Wild Thought*). Let us delve in that territory of the reciprocal dualities, as mentioned!

We can compare this with what Robert Pirsig says, in a parallel way, about reason and madness in *Lila: an Inquiry into Morals* (p. 335):

"Insanity on the other hand is an intellectual pattern. It may have biological causes but it has not physical or biological reality. No scientific instrument can be produced in court to show who is insane and who is sane. There's nothing about insanity which conforms to *any* scientific law of the universe. The scientific laws of the universe are *invented* by sanity. There's no way by which sanity, using the instruments of its own creation, can measure that which is *outside* of itself and its creations. Insanity isn't an 'object' of observation. It's an *alteration* of observation itself."

Here, again, as Foucault and Derrida (see: Derrida: *Cogito and the History of Madness in Writing and Difference*) struggled over where to locate it, is *the impossible primordial concept of a totality prior to both reason and madness*, both consciousness based and bicameral (see also Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, and the paper below, where I refer to what I am here calling primal or primordial causality as *grounding causation*), <http://hewardwilkinson.co.uk/docs/PaperonJulianJaynesandSchizophrenia.pdf> out of which both are to be generated.

Behind the struggle over monism and dualism in psychotherapy which is coming into view, and because the psychotherapies are, or seek to be, unitary wholes, there lies at the deepest heart of the psychotherapies, as anthropological-historical forms of enquiry, also, the question of primordial causality. The foundational process of psychotherapy belongs to the transcendental, the generic meta-level, in Kant's sense, and is not, or not all of it, part of ordinary causality. This is closer to Buddhism's 'co-dependent origination' than it is to classical western linear or law-based causality.

The logic of this is most peculiar. We are dealing with polarities we *cannot directly think behind*. Hume's dilemma, already quoted, - the most available example of this problem, - is based on the following argument: I have no evidence of the external world beyond the senses. If I say there is a causal argument to the physical world, I have *no direct evidence whatsoever for it*. It would be, *all of it, Absolutely all of it*, circumstantial, with *no possibility of back up by direct verification*. At the same time, as he argues, we cannot help believing in it, though in view of the mentioned argument, it is hard to envisage what Hume actually thinks primal commonsense does believe. And his *sceptical* arguments *do* depend upon invoking causality, as with the double vision argument, as I note later on.

What would be the unitary root of sense experience versus external world? Schopenhauer and Nietzsche (and implicitly Dr Johnson, kicking his large stone till he rebounded from it, saying of Bishop Berkeley's phenomenalism, "Sir, I refute it thus") would say, the Will, the primordial world-will, which, as Schopenhauer indicates, is correlative to the irreducible idealism with which Hume and Kant shackle us. *But the world will is not a phenomenon*, in the sense of secondary process. In fact, it is implicitly *primordially world-creating*. But we do know Schopenhauer's world-will through our *volitional action*, and this goes back to Kant's distinctive insight into ethical choice ('Practical Reason'), and also on to the later Wittgenstein, the successor of Schopenhauer. We shall come to Nietzsche's version of all this shortly.

But logically must it not be something that *resolves the dilemma*, not something which is part of it, or is that asking too much? Discussions of so-called primitive thought, or aboriginal-communal modes of logic, give us the notion of two primary stages of thought, which may correspond to Freud's concept of primary and secondary process, or, via his paper on *Negation*, of phenomenological and dialectical phases of development, or to Buber's two categories.

Thus, Heidegger, just prior to giving his first indication of *being-in-the-world* in *Being and Time* (H84), which, though he denies it, is almost certainly a form of volitionalism, turns his attention to such modes of thought, in a way which notes them as anomalous in relation to his project, (*Being and Time*, H82):

"With regard to the phenomenon of signs, we might give the following interpretation: for primitive people the sign coincides with what it indicates. The sign itself can represent what it indicates not only in the sense of replacing it, but in such a way that the sign itself always is what is indicated. This remarkable coincidence of the sign with what is indicated does not, however, mean that the sign-thing has already undergone a certain 'objectification,' that it has been experienced as a mere thing and been transposed together with its what is signified to the same region of objective presence. The 'coincidence' is not an identification of hitherto isolated

things, but rather the sign has not yet become free from that for which it is a sign. This kind of use of signs is still completely absorbed in the being of what is indicated so that a sign as such cannot be detached at all. The coincidence is not based on a first objectification, but rather upon the complete lack of such an objectification. But this means that signs are not at all discovered as useful things, that ultimately what is 'at hand' in the world does not have the kind of being of useful things. Perhaps this ontological guideline (of handiness and useful things), too, can provide nothing for the interpretation of the primitive world, and certainly for an ontology of thingliness."

This clearly is very close to the non-linear fusional reality Freud invokes in Primary Process.

Buber, too, in valuable dicta in the later parts of *I and Thou*, offers (a characteristic) thought in this territory:

"In this total situation the persons, as expressed both in nouns and pronouns, are embedded, still only in relief and without finished independence. The chief concern is not with these products of analysis and reflection but with the true original unity, the lived relation."

Levi-Strauss's concept in *Wild Thought*, which plays with polarities and identities in ways parallel to what Heidegger and Buber are here saying, but going further and more explicitly, is also absolutely relevant to this two level model:

"Neolithic or protohistoric man was thus heir to a long scientific tradition; nonetheless, if the spirit that inspired him, as well as all his predecessors, had been exactly the same as that of modern people, how are we to understand that he *came to a stop* and that several thousand years of stagnation intervened, like a landing on a stairway, between the Neolithic revolution and contemporary science? This paradox admits only one solution: that there are two distinct modes of scientific thought, each of them a function, not of unequal stages of the development of the human mind, but of two strategic levels at which nature allows itself to be grasped by scientific knowledge – one approximately congruent with perception and imagination, and the other at a remove. It is as though the necessary relations that are the object of all science – whether Neolithic or modern – might be attained by two different paths, one very close to sensory intuition, the other further from it." (Levi-Strauss, *Wild Thought*, p. 18)

And he argues that, already, because these networks of meaning are extracted directly from the sensory, early humanity had, in effect, already, the Hegelian concept of the primordially of meaning: McLuhan's "The medium is the message," and that this has now returned to us, following the hiatus of the Christian and Newtonian epochs, in a vast plenitude of forms and reflexivities.

So, now, returning to Freud, in terms of content, relevantly, here Freud, in his paradoxical, very disguised, way, has strayed into Nietzschean volitional pastures and dynamics. Here Nietzsche, creatively inconsistent as so often, has taken the plunge into full fledged primal metaphysics or ontology, - despite his empiricist secular leanings in the inferences from historical process, invoked in his critique of religion, which are nevertheless conversely correlated with his attacks on the British Empiricists, such as John Stuart Mill's Utilitarianism ("only the Englishman pursues happiness", *Beyond Good and Evil*), and Hume's attack on causality ("it was against Hume that Kant rose up", *Beyond Good and Evil*).

Here, with his radical ontology, as progenitor of the psychotherapy movement, he has entered into the realm of primal causality, and this forms the background of his contextual ambivalences about truth at various points of his works (for instance, in *The Genealogy of Morality*). Like Freud, he never quite resolves this dilemma about truth, and the recognition of a primal ontological foundation for psychotherapy remains to this day, except in isolated works like Matte Blanco's *The Unconscious as Infinite Sets*, an optional extra and not something fundamental to the Psychotherapy movement. This begins to make sense of something which astute psychotherapists have probably often been puzzled by, namely that modalities (Gestalt Therapy, for instance, to which we come in a moment) appear to have independent theories of human nature, only loosely connected with empirical anthropology and ethology, and yet, as ostensibly empirical, they are not presented as ontologies. But they *are* non-empirical ontologies!

Nietzsche writes:

“Above all, a living thing wants to *discharge* its strength – life itself is will-to-power – self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent *consequences* of this.” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §13)

This implies that he believes he has gained a *universal description of human processes*, an ontology. And obviously here the thinker has a meta-existence, despite the ostensible monism. It is, indeed, not a description ‘from behind’ the veil of perception, as in Locke and Kant, and possibly Hume, nor a description ‘from beneath’, in the sense of an ontological-developmental analysis, such as the above anthropological accounts give us. It is a self-contained dynamic phenomenological circle, complete in itself, self-creating *ex nihilo*. It is the anthropocentric divinity we are familiar with in Nietzsche!

And the same applies to a version of this which is also at the heart of the response by Paul Goodman to Freud in *Excitement and Growth in Human Personality* (Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, PHG);

“In this book we attempt to..... regard the development of the actual experience as giving autonomous criteria, that is, to take the dynamic structure of experience not as a clue to some unconscious unknown or a symptom, but as the important thing itself.”

And:

“Intrinsic evaluation is present in every on-going act; it is the end directedness of process, the unfinished situation moving towards the finished, the tension to the orgasm, etc. The standard of evaluation emerges in the act itself, and is, finally, the act itself as a whole.” (*Excitement and Growth in Human Personality*: Perls, Hefferline and Goodman, PHG)

The appeal to ‘intrinsic evaluation’, again, expresses an implicit understanding in PHG that we are dealing with something *beneath* the level of ordinary causality here. The schematic account here is very relevantly challenged within Gestalt by Gordon Wheeler in his *Gestalt Reconsidered*. But it is very hard to get anywhere near this issue in theoretical discussions of the knowledge foundations of the psychotherapies. It is very hidden, as if psychotherapy were exceedingly liable to be afraid to look itself in the mirror.

Monism and Dualism

But Nietzsche's, and following him, also, PHG, is a monism, unguardedly revealed as something which oscillates between a radical phenomenism (which would fall foul of the dualisms of Descartes and Kant), and a kind of organismic version of a

doctrine of commonsense. In PHG the vivid life is either a phenomenism, or a commonsense begging the question of the knowledge of the external world, of the contact boundary! (Unless, as Wheeler and Lewin argue, we invoke a widened concept of the *Field*.)

Whereas, what is to be seen *here*, in Freud's paradoxes, is a mythic version of a dualism something very like Sartre's (*Being and Nothingness*) postulation of an evocation of primal process as *indeterminable nothingness/negation which characterises consciousness*, in contrast with and opposed to the mythic absoluteness of *being-in-itself*. Creation *ex nihilo* indeed! But, whatever we think about shackling it to the notion of a drive, how powerfully it expresses that *gap of consciousness* from world about which Sartre is so eloquent!! And so, we now begin to feel ourselves drifting into the ('mythic') harbour of an interactive dualism, as we undertake the analysis of process!

But here it is connected with a mythic homecoming, a homecoming to an oblivious oneness, indeed total unity of being, based on a primordial unity of being, once more. It is reminiscent of one of Wordsworth's greatest and most unfathomable poems:

*A slumber did my spirit seal
I had no human fears
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years*

*No motion has she now, no force
She neither hears nor sees
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course
With rocks and stones and trees.*

The strangeness in this poem is that, even though in the silence between the two stanzas, an emotional catastrophe has taken place, there is an uncanny affinity between the idealised permanence evoked in the first stanza, and the desolate and diurnal permanence of the second. Thus, a deep stoic impulse underlies both Freud's and Wordsworth's "homecomings", something deeply mystical but also somewhat macabre. Is this what underlies the 'interminable' work of the psychotherapist! Let us look at this!

The Inanimate and Primary Process

There is something deeply uncanny about Freud's drive to return to the inanimate. It is as if there is something magic and animistic in the inanimate world for Freud. It is irradiated, as it were, by the frisson of primary process, and it is superseded by something like consciousness/secondary process. It is glimpsed through the lens of the irretrievable negation which, mythically, has overtaken it. We may find ourselves thinking of the primeval inanimate basis of aboriginal relation in Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. By the same token, is all psychotherapy implicitly animistic (caught in, or even celebrating, the world of Piaget's *Language and Thought of the Child*)?

It is useful to our thinking about all this if we are also reminded of the *monistic primary process* world of the highly numinous chthonic/earth-embedded symbolism of Jung's *Symbols of Transformation*, a monism which Freud (with dogmatic

contempt) wishes so much to avoid, and seeks to do so, in some way, by invoking *consciousness*, if we follow the arguments of BPP and *Negation*. But, as we see, Freud's dualism mythically emerges from an absolute monism of the inanimate. Was Freud's struggle with Jung to do with the sense we have that, in Jung, however rich and richly elaborated his symbolic world may be, it is *all primary process*, in Freud's sense? Does all this also connect with the notion of psychotherapy as secular religion, which scientifically minded psychotherapists also so deeply fear and embarrassedly recoil from, and which Freud rejected in the form of the *occult*, in his discussions with Jung (*Memories Dreams and Reflections*, Jung)?

A well known Jungian thinker, Anthony Stevens, in his book about dreams, *Private Myths*, sides with Jung over Freud's theory of the censorship in dreams: "What Freud called the manifest content or the dream's façade, was in Jung's view merely an expression of the dream's obscurity, and this, he comments, 'is really only a projection of our own lack of understanding' (CW, 16, para. 319)." But, while Freud is more of a trickster than anyone imagined, as Philip Kuhn argued in his discussion of the genesis of the 'Key' dream of 'Irma's Injection' in *Psychoanalysis and History*, Vol 2.2, September 2000, the manifest dream is secondary process, and this implies that neither Jung nor Stevens has grasped the great creative leap envisaged by Levi-Strauss, Freud on *Negation*, and Rousseau and Hegel, in their differentiation of the public social contract and causality realm, from that of *primary process* based on imagination and perception, and conceptual merger. How far the merger theme, for example, in Jung's analysis of the mediaeval images of the *Rosarium* in alchemy, the fusion (Hegelian?) of polarities or opposites, support this primary process model; would require much more depth of exploration, but this is at any rate where it starts. And, - on the other hand, - Freud, Rousseau, Jaynes, and Levi-Strauss, express their visions, precisely, in primary process terms, in the form of myths.

Freud also argued revealingly with Groddeck's unitary monism of the *It*, substituting his own dualistic and localised concept in *The Ego and the Id*, much to Groddeck's chagrin at this dismissal. We have touched on the hidden 'primary process' implicit in this demarcation. At the same time, despite this alignment with their views (Jung's widened concept of libido in *Symbols of Transformation*), Groddeck was nevertheless exonerated by Freud from identification with the positions of Jung and Adler, and duly accepted as a member of the 'wild gang' of psychoanalysis by Freud, who was never incapable of great, if creative, inconsistency. And Groddeck's "It" derived from Nietzsche himself, about whom Freud was so ambivalent, even though he places an allusion to "the eternal return of the same" at the very cusp of cusps of BPP.

Consciousness as Negation

But all that is still to revert to looking at *content*, content, however, which we must continue to bear in mind. But if we stay with the *form* of what has caught Freud's attention, even in the extraordinary passage we are considering:

"At some point or other, the attributes of life were aroused in non-living matter by the action upon it of a force that we are still quite incapable of imagining. Perhaps it was *a process similar in essence to the one that later, at a certain level of living matter, gave rise to consciousness* [my italic, HW]. The tension generated at that point in previously inanimate matter sought to achieve equilibrium; *thus the first drive came into existence* [my italic, HW]."

we are dealing with something akin to *consciousness based upon negation*, as Freud himself indicates, and develops in the paper on *Negation*.

And what Freud is telling us is, not only that something in us recoils with utter exhaustion and agony from this Hegel-like development, but that this development is based upon a *conceptual shift* of which we can describe the functions but the very possibility of which, though closest to us, is impossible for us to conceive (it is caught most vividly, however metaphorically or mythically, by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*, but it is deeply implicit in Freud also). He does this in the twofold form of this impossible narrative and the postulate of an absolute regression of the drives at the heart of identity. Let us explore this some more.

As indicated above, immediately before the passage I am quoting, Freud famously writes:

“If we may reasonably suppose, on the basis of all our experience without exception, that every living thing dies, - reverts to the inorganic, - for intrinsic reasons, then we can only say that *the goal of all life is death*; or to express it retrospectively: *the inanimate existed before the animate*.” [Freud’s italic]

In *Totem and Taboo* Freud, like Rousseau, half recognises that his primal event, for which he notes there is no direct evidence remaining in human societies, is a (“phantastic”) myth, or at best an extreme inference; Rousseau, in the Preface to the *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, says the epitomising and heuristic thing: “..it is no light enterprise to separate that which is original from that which is artificial in man’s present nature, and attain a solid knowledge of a state [the original state of equality] which no longer exists, which perhaps never existed, and which probably will never exist, yet of which it is necessary to have sound ideas if we are to judge our present state satisfactorily.”

We can describe the goals and forms, and, metaphorically, something of the content, of consciousness, but not without metaphor; we can evoke its *primal indeterminacy*, which is indeed based on negation, and can only be evoked by the use of the identifiability of text and imagination, in a negatory mode (*via negativa*).

To notice this, considering music, we only need to notice the oscillations within our temporality, our time processes of imaginative anticipation and memory, between “Not Yet”, “Now”, and “Before, Having Led Up To This”, of our experience of the peak moments in music. The “Not Now” is as essential as the “Now”, and negation, the ‘*not being absolutely what it is*’ (Sartre), is at the heart of that. This, I reminded myself, is where Hegel absolutely begins or takes off at the beginning of *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, when he is evoking consciousness as immediacy as such, and Hegel is the nearest to a proto-psychotherapy theorist that we have.

The Lure of the Inanimate

This, then, is where the nostalgic pull towards the inanimate arises. There is something both psychologically excruciating, - and conceptually utterly opaque! - about consciousness, and the conditions of its possibility, including the whole matter, potent since Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*, of Other Minds (see John Wisdom, *Other Minds*, on all this), which is a philosophical problem which has emerged in full force in parallel with the increasing experience of alienation and derangement, which have, more and more, come to characterise the experience of consciousness, opposed to the machine, in modern human existence. The otherness

of our own experience is entangled with the sense of the otherness of other persons' experience.

In the contemplation of the inanimate there is both the determinacy – the simply being-what-it-is-ness! - and the unitary stable permanence which consciousness lacks. Freud's theory of the death drive is the ultimate and most emphatic expression of this hankering, though Descartes catches some of it in his stark yet still hardly assailable conception of dualism, a simultaneous regression to two absolutes, two *Res*, thinghoods, as it were. Now, the paradoxical tendency of psychotherapy is that it too hankers after the unitary determinacy of the inanimate, *but seeks to attribute it to consciousness in a variety of actualistic ways.* Of this Buber's concept is a striking instance. Buber, arguably, denigrates the *It* (being a dialectical level reality, secondary process), so emphatically, precisely because it does offer, as Freud glimpses, as the inanimate, the unitary paradigm he wishes to attribute to ineffable inclusive consciousness. But this is complex in ways we are coming closer to, due to the connection with primary and secondary process, and *their* entanglement. Buber of course was not a psychotherapist, but is deeply associated with various dialogical approaches in Humanistic Psychotherapy (<http://www.society-for-philosophy-in-practice.org/journal/pdf/8-1%2017%20Kellebrew%20-%20Dialogical.pdf>).

With this, we are beginning to bring into view the full potential of this twofold understanding, for the oscillation between its twofold aspects and the spectrum which arguably unites them, enables endless variation between the double metaphors, those of the elusive primal indeterminacy and negation-derived mercuriality of consciousness, and, secondly, of the fixity and stability of the object or the inanimate, - or of course the ineffable, - as a paradigm. Here we have something which is reminiscent of the contrast of Dynamic and Static Quality which Pirsig made his trademark (*Lila: An Inquiry into Morals*) in his later work on the Metaphysics of Quality, and Sartre uses the same contrast in his discussion of Time in *Being and Nothingness*.

We are beginning to see that perhaps the form: interactive dualism/alternating with monism - takes as a meta-perspective *does not in fact have to be resolved, but is part of a system of permutations* (see, Wisdom, *Other Minds* as well as *Wild Thought*). If, in this spirit, we wished to be really ecumenical we might avoid the word *dualism* altogether and simply talk of *Interactionism*. But, within the coming to grips with the overall theoretical possibilities, the *dialogue* between the different positions, and the recognition of their proximity, is what is necessary.

Interactive Dualism and Psychotherapy

So perhaps we may be beginning to see interactive dualism (but in a meta-level way, undogmatically) as a basic paradigm of human existence. However this may be, let us let it simmer in relation to our understanding of Psychotherapy. What, despite the tendencies of thinking in both Freud and Buber, seems to be decisive about this complex of knowledge, is that dualism, - as at least a secondary, interactive, understanding, - is both irreducible and, secondly, decisively also, indeed interactive. I am not going to argue this at length but shall epitomise it in two observations:

1. In the spirit of Hume's puzzle, if anyone who possesses visual binocular perception looks at a distant object and holds a finger up, they will see, in ghostly form, "two fingers", where, in their body, they know there is only one. *The*

perception, therefore, is within consciousness only, and only very roughly corresponds to, or represents, what exists apart from consciousness. It is our foremost and most immediate example of primal causality, in that it leaves sense evidence for an objective world entirely circumstantial and inferential. Normally, if aware of it at all, we are virtually all of us oblivious of this in our daily lives. Common sense realists find this possibility very disconcerting. The most extreme example is the near genius of linguistic philosophy, J.L. Austin, who is so incensed by A.J. Ayer's phenomenalism in his *Sense and Sensibilia* that his logical contortions of the evidence almost amount to actual dishonesty. But this cognitive dissonance is why this is also such a wonderful example of primal causality, causality only to be hypothesised beyond the level of direct evidence altogether!

Whitehead (*Process and Reality*) calls all this the perceptual mode of "presentational immediacy", which is therefore phenomenalistic, in the sense of experiencing. This actuality is shared by *all* forms of perspectival visual perception. However, as we recall in a moment, it is also connected with causal information.

2. So, on the other hand, the "two fingers" image does give causal information about how eyes function, since the person in question can make the images converge to "one finger", in full perspective, by altering the focus of their eyes, thus *having knowledge of causality of the body and embodiment* (Whitehead calls this the perceptual mode of "causal efficacy"), and by means of intentional embodied volition. But, as just seen in 'presentational immediacy', this grasp of causality is not to be distilled into *immediate phenomenal knowledge* of the causal nexus.

Now there are some striking features in what psychotherapists do and evince in their attitudes, which I put forward as grounds for why Psychotherapy does not examine its foundational predicament:

1. Psychotherapists of experience, of any modality, display a high degree of confidence, whether or not justified, or overconfident, in managing people; whether, however, for instance, they are leading the agenda, or "allowing" a process which might lead to an *I-Thou* moment, is not, at this level, an ultimate distinction. Both are forms of frame based management, and subject to the (dialectical level) social contract of consent. Authorised in this way, psychotherapists commonly have a kind of faith in their work and process which gives them confidence.

2. Psychotherapists' work embraces a great deal of "causal efficacy" modes, at the level of "intentional causality", not only in a variety of modes of experiment and specific methodologies such as free association and use of the couch, but in process modes also, for there is abstention from normal causal modes (from topical conversation, linear sequence of ideas, social expectations of direct answers, and much else of a similar nature); such abstention is also "causal efficacy" intervention, through words and silence. Despite psychotherapists' aspirations, there is nothing neutral in psychotherapy, at the level of intentional-causality-based "causal efficacy". This interactionism seems, practically, indubitable.

3. There is, therefore, in all psychotherapy work, a play of consciousness, with the physical world, in the form of embodiment and the environmental and field setting, and, while this is 'socio-physical', it is still through and through physical, and most approaches today will make a merit of this, either directly or metaphorically. Pure consciousness, the primal presence of sheer conscious process, is a more forbidden

polarity, often presented in anodyne as ‘awareness’, and also our publically approved approaches are mostly not pure conscious process but programmatic!

4. Psychotherapists, philosophically, are often radically *unsceptical* about both all aspects of the external world, and equally about other minds (PHG is a classic illustration of this). They are convinced they have solved, or dissolved, Descartes’ problem. They, as John Henry Newman (*Apologia Pro Vita Sua*) might have said, herein recognise *difficulties but no doubts*. Psychotherapists have faith in psychotherapy as a medium for reaching the client, and the psychotherapy industry today is leaving no methodological stone unturned (particularly from neuroscience) to colonise more and more ways of being able to treat or help those suffering from or struggling with a wide variety of troubles and wounds, some enormously more desparate than others.

Psychotherapists, then, mostly embody what we might label the “charisma” of psychotherapy, and my belief is that the tendency of the field to oversimplify what it does conceptually, and maintain an apprenticeship model, is connected with their confidence, and normal lack of direct scepticism, about what they are doing. The faith in *Other Minds*, implicit in our work today, is as radical as that of David Hume about the “existence of body”.

5. The part played by the mystery of consciousness as such in this whole process is underplayed in the unsceptical confidence psychotherapy plays or displays in an increasingly media-text based world today. Sartre’s extraordinary work on this probably seems somewhat passé nowadays, but remains the most potent evocation, - apart from the Freudian topologies we have glanced at, and also a good deal of 20th Century literature about madness, near-madness, and its fringes.

6. If we were to accept that the whole realm of societal transformations and often paradoxical reversals which Erving Goffman discusses in *Frame Analysis*, (pretence, deception, staging, ceremonial, play and sport, and much else – one example: the Southern US legislature which could not pass legislation against pornography because it had to, but could not bring itself to, quote samples of what was objected to in the drafting of the legislation) is a “third realm” (to use Winnicott’s, Leavis’s, and Popper’s term) then it is and would be a realm which mediates between *the realm of embodiment*, and *the realm of consciousness*, a third realm being, as it is, truly real but in a most peculiar and elusive way, which gives us an emblem or epitome of the realm of psychotherapy within an interactive dualistic ontology. As systemic approaches perhaps suggest, the scope of this in the social realm is capable of massive extension and expansion.

7. The two variations of stark simplification or mythological presentation we have seen in both Buber and Freud, in their different ways, which have led us to this point, nevertheless do vividly communicate the melting pot fusion yet differentiation of body and consciousness, in the work, wherein the reality of what passes is very commonly in suspense, and where truth-expression is a much more difficult construct than modalities mostly envisage.

Example

To illustrate this a little: imagine a classic situation where someone has been very blocked and wooden and abstract in their defensive responses to a psychotherapy trainer’s challenges. Perhaps through a shift in the balance of their confidence,

suddenly they realise that an internalised person, man or woman, perhaps projected on to the trainer, has been pervasive in their responses, with a hidden frightened inner child recoiling. Whether or not there is some transference similarity here, this recognition releases them from the constraint they have been operating under. They realise this has been a projection or a transference.

But, staying with the prior state, the conflation itself had led to cognitive dissonance and the condensation of unconsciously remembered sources of fear. The conflation itself meant that it was impossible for them to know what would release them, or to fully understand what was blocking them. They cringed and squirmed with bodily knots manifesting themselves in their movements. Only afterwards, when the insight broke through, could they relax and grasp what had been going on. The trainer might, or might not, also have been caught in it, and so, of course, might the group.

This is a familiar kind of situation in therapy, training, and groupwork. But it is the phase *prior* to the insight, that of embodied cognitive dissonance that I wish to notice. Consciousness has, in a sense, failed. It half knew what was wrong but it also did not know. We return to Freud and the symbol of negation. They half know that they do not know. Consciousness has an inherent tendency to be partial and partly unconscious.

“But the performance of the function of judgement is not made possible *until the creation of the symbol of negation* [my italic, HW] has endowed thinking *with a first measure of freedom from the consequences of repression* [my italic, HW] and, with it, from the compulsion of the pleasure principle.” (*Negation*)

We experience the capacity for both ‘directions’: the ‘backwards’ repression and the subsequent ‘forwards’ unravelling, as it were, of the dissonance, and which is what Freud is evoking in his own way. Repetition compulsion rules, at both the primary process level and, as we have later seen in Kant, at the secondary process level also. This may perhaps be a part of the realm of the *transitional* and of *suspense*, which is the realm of psychotherapy. In effect, Freud, in his startling myth, equates the *inanimate* with the return to primary process, before the emergence of negation/consciousness/secondary process, in which is *also* embedded repetition, as we saw with Kant.

So we have a possible fourfold identification he is making, of:

1. the inanimate, which is non-conscious, standing in relation to, and in distinction from, consciousness, with all consciousness’s flaws, consciousness yet still marking a radically different realm from the inanimate, with:
- 2, Freud’s distinction of *primary process* in relation to *secondary process*.

This can be confusing, since primary process seems to have the animistic floridity (witness Jung!) we have touched upon. In contrast, is not secondary process rational and linear? But we project upon primary process, and primary process is the realm of the concrete, in Piaget’s sense, and the literally repetitional (e.g., children’s stories), while consciousness is the realm of the indeterminate in Sartre’s sense already touched upon, the ‘*not being absolutely what it is*’ (Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*).

Habit as a Familiar Level of Secondary Process Repetition Compulsion

The connections are commonplace enough. We do not have to resort to Freud’s fascinating last ditch appeal to Aristophanes’ Eros myth in Plato’s *Symposium*,

opposed to Thanatos, to obtain versions of repetition/regression in both the aspects of an interactive dualism. Consciousness, secondary process, as identified with Kantian idealism, is, as we have seen already, radically repetitional and based in habit-knowledge. Secondary process acquires the unconsciousness of primary process quite effortlessly in childhood. Habit knowledge is only established when it has regressed to what I might call the body-unconscious of reflex. And it is the body in which habits and repetitions are embedded and embodied, though not confined to it, and it is definitely the body (at least) which dies. The body is “arrested”, and condemned to death, that ‘fell sergeant’, as Shakespeare says (*Hamlet*, Act V), by its contingency, or its *facticity* as Sartre calls it. The inanimate, for the living, expresses, therefore, the heuristic extreme, as primary process nostalgia, which our repetitional being always holds before us, in our hankering for the permanence evoked in the famous FA Cup hymn *Abide with Me*:

*Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away
Change and decay in all around I see
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.*

Consciousness has the *internal* capacity to be partial, to both be (emergently), and not to be (nihilitatingly). Embodiment is part of it as well. The duality of the transition between the half-aware, stuck in a logjam, mode, and the reflexively aware moment, makes clear that consciousness, very real in its own right, not reducible to embodiment, but integrated with embodiment, is at the same time caught half unconsciously in the frozen transition, which shows itself in bodily compulsions.

Summary

In summary: Interactionism, which may comprise Ontological Dualism, or Aspect Dualism nested within a Monism, and permitting dialogue between difference permutations, may be offered as a Generic Field Theory of the Psychotherapies, as well as other disciplines. Behind that argument, the psychotherapies manifest a paradoxical primal causality which deserves fuller attention, and which, being characteristic of philosophically literate anthropologies, marks out psychotherapy itself as a form of philosophically, and historically, based anthropology. The limit of this in relation to Psychotherapy is defined by its Function. All this manifests in many familiar polarities:

process/programmatic;
conscious/unconscious;
primary process/secondary process;
conscious/inanimate;
embodiment/introspection;
regression/creation;
habit/improvisation;
indeterminacy/goal directedness;
being-in-itself/being-for-itself;
death/life;
and many more.

This is the playground of interactive dualism, and the vortex of the genesis of the psychotherapies.

And, as noted, the Boundary of Psychotherapy is defined by its Function.
For instance:

Definition of the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP) :

“The practice of psychotherapy is the comprehensive, conscious and planned treatment of psychosocial, psychosomatic and behavioural disturbances or states of suffering with scientific psychotherapeutic methods, through an interaction between one or more persons being treated, and one or more psychotherapists, with the aim of relieving disturbing attitudes to change, and to promote the maturation, development and health of the treated person. It requires both a general and a specific training/education.”

<https://www.europsyche.org/about-eap/documents-activities/definition-of-the-profession-of-psychotherapy/#:~:text=The%20practice%20of%20psychotherapy%20is,or%20more%20psychotherapists%2C%20with%20the>

Appendix: Primary Fideism

I mention some names, some familiar and some little known. They are very different from each other¹: Pascal; Hume; Hamann; Rousseau; Wordsworth; Kierkegaard; Newman; Hopkins; Proust; Eliot; Barth, Russell, and Wittgenstein in their later periods; J.L. Austin; John Wisdom and G.E. Moore; Derrida; John Lukacs. They are often sceptics trying to undercut their own scepticism, in a beneath the radar kind of way. Is there a whole dimension of psychotherapy which belongs in this territory? Relevantly to this dimension; to Freud and Jung, in their conflict, and in relation to their successors and significance, we come later.

Heward Wilkinson, July-October 2023

¹ Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) Mathematician and Catholic early ‘existential’ Philosopher; David Hume (1711-1776) Sceptical Greatest Empiricist British Philosopher; Sam. Johnson (1709-1784) Great Lexicographer, Critic, Conversationalist, and Sage; Johann Hamann (1730-1788) Lutheran convert and Proto-Linguistic Philosopher; Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) Radical Thinker who wrote about Education and the Social Contract and his own life; Jane Austen (1775-1817) Iconic English Novelist of Enlightenment Social Manners; Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the greatest Enlightenment Philosopher, and perhaps of the Modern Age; William Wordsworth (1770-1850), the most formidable of the English Romantic Poets; Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), Radical Individualist Existential Theologian; John Henry Newman (1801-1890), leader of the High Anglican Tractarian Movement of the 19th Century and eventual convert to Catholicism in 1845, now canonised; Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), most innovative later 19th Century English poet and likewise a Catholic convert; Marcel Proust (1871-1922), the great French novelist of remembering; Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888-1965), American-English great 20th century poet; Karl Barth (1886-1968) author of the massive Church Dogmatics, Great Reformed Theologian; Bertrand Russell (1972-1970) Logical-Empiricist Philosopher and Political Campaigner; and Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) neo-Kantian enigmatic Revaluer of the Positivist Tradition; all three, in their later periods; J.L. Austin (1911-1960) Radical Linguistic Philosopher of Commonsense; John Wisdom (1904-1993), enigmatic neo-Wittgensteinian Philosopher of Mind; and G.E. Moore (1873-1958), sceptical philosopher of commonsense; Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), post-modernist pioneer of deconstruction; John Lukacs (1924-2019), Historian of Historical Consciousness and also, especially, Second World War.

