

Theory and Structure in Addiction and Cure

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By

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CONTENTS

Figures.....	xii
Acknowledgement	xiii
Preface.....	xiv
Chapter 1	1
Personality Theories.....	1
Theories of Other Personologists.....	1
Shoham's Personality Theory	3
Fixations.....	5
Perception of Space and Time	7
Conflicts and Double Binds	8
Personality Defects	10
Chapter 2	12
The Away and Beyond is Here and Now.....	12
Deprivational Interactions.....	12
Two Realities	16
Core of the Self.....	17
A Note about Method.....	18
Chapter 3	20
The Fist and the Open Hand	20
Two Vectors.....	21
Conceptual Analogies	26

Dual Orbits	30
Participation & Separation Vector Dynamics	33
The Tantalus Ratio	34
Tantalus Ratio Compared with Other Dynamics	36
Maturation and Decline of the Tantalus Ratio	40
Ego Boundary Formation	41
Socialization and the Achievement Motive	42
Achievement Motive and the Tantalus Ratio	43
<i>Ressentiment</i> Rejection vs. <i>Accidiac</i> Participation	46
Chapter 4	52
Sisyphian & Tantallic Personality Typologies	52
Where are the Fixations Fixated?	52
Object and Self: The Crucial Dichotomy	57
Other Dichotomies	62
Some Empirical Anchors	66
Square Pegs in Round Holes	71
Chapter 5	74
Dynamics of the Core Personality	74
<i>Atzmi</i> and <i>Ani</i> : The Two Faces of Man	77
The Poles and the Bridge	82
Dynamics of the Self	85
Phenomenological Reduction vs. Exclusion in Reverse ...	90
Dialectics of the Tantalus Ratio	93
Self-destructive Behaviors	98
The <i>Ani</i> -Skewed Self	99

Mystics	101
Husserl's Phenomenological Method of Reduction.....	105
Reaching the <i>Ani</i> via Peak Experiences	106
Summary Description of the <i>Ani</i>	112
The Interactive Self.....	113
Attributes of the <i>Atzmi</i>	115
Chapter 6	117
Self, Choice and Uniqueness	117
Structure of the Self	117
Developmental Forms of the Self	117
Core Dynamics.....	120
Uniqueness and Choice.....	124
Chapter 7	131
Personality Formation	131
First Phase – Early Orality	135
Second Phase – Later Orality.....	135
Third Phase – Socialization.....	136
The Unfulfilled Dialectic	138
Creativity and Revelation.....	139
Chapter 8	141
Personality Disruption.....	141
Double Bind Theory.....	143
The Black Hole	148
The Innovation of the Black Hole Model	150

Chapter 9	152
The Chasm and the Black Hole.....	152
Structure of the Addictive Personality	154
Case Studies	154
Reuben	154
Simon	156
Levi	157
Judah	157
Issachar.....	158
Zebulun	158
Naftali.....	159
Gad	160
Dan	161
Menashe	161
Joseph.....	162
Binyamin.....	163
Chapter 10.....	164
Black Holes <i>vis-à-vis</i> Internal Saboteurs	164
Chapter 11	170
The Insatiable Gorge.....	170
Case Studies	170
Reuben	170
Simon	171
Levi	172
Judah	173

Issachar.....	174
Zebulun	175
Naftali.....	176
Gad	177
Dan	177
Menashe	178
Joseph.....	179
Binyamin.....	181
Summation	182
Chapter 12.....	183
Philosophy of Treatment.....	183
<i>Acedia</i> , Disintegration of One's Value System	183
The Existentialist Approach to Treatment	190
Search for Authenticity	201
Philosophical Basis of Treatment	203
Mytho-Empiricism	204
Myths and Dialectics.....	206
Mythogenes.....	209
Chapter 13.....	211
Method of Treatment	211
<i>Third Floor</i> Treatment Group.....	214
Chapter 14.....	217
The Cure.....	217
Case Studies	217
Reuben	217

Simon	219
Levi	220
Judah	220
Issachar.....	222
Zebulun	223
Naftali.....	224
Gad	225
Dan	226
Menashe	228
Joseph.....	229
Binyamin.....	230
Summation	232
Chapter 15	233
Prognoses	233
Case Studies	233
Reuben	233
Simon	235
Levi	237
Judah	239
Issachar.....	240
Zebulun	242
Naftali.....	243
Gad	244
Dan	245
Menashe	246

Joseph.....	246
Binyamin.....	247
References.....	248

FIGURES

Figure 1: Early and Later Oral Stages of Development.....	6
Figure 2: Predispositions to Structural Personality Defects	10
Figure 3: Avenues and Modes of Participation	26
Figure 4: Schema of the Dual Conflictual Cycle.....	31
Figure 5: Maturation and Developmental Processes	48
Figure 6: Decline of Tantalus Ratio Potency.....	50
Figure 7: Fixation and personality development	58
Figure 8: Personality: types, dimensions and traits	71
Figure 9: <i>Atzmi</i> and <i>Ani</i> : Polar components of the self	81
Figure 10: Continuum of the self.....	85
Figure 11: Dialectical Processes in the Tantalus Ratio.....	97
Figure 12: Developmental phases of the self.....	118
Figure 13: Dialectical dynamics of the Tantalus Ratio.....	119
Figure 14: Structure of the self.....	120
Figure 15: Dialectics of choice and uniqueness.....	125
Figure 16: Composition of Ideal Self	130
Figure 17: Mother and Child Axes	134
Figure 18: Dialectics of the quest for dialogue.....	196
Figure 19: Myths and Sisyphian-Tantallic dialectics	206

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PREFACE

The present volume is an attempt to interpret Prof. Shlomo G. Shoham's personality theory through Ronald Fairbairn's theoretical premises and some research findings in the etiology and rehabilitation of drug addiction. Shoham has previously published two volumes in the field.

- *The Insatiable Gorge*¹ deals with the original theory and its initial verification by case studies including their inductive content analysis by qualitative methods. It then presents a method for the treatment of drug addicts and case studies to illustrate this method.
- *The Promethean Therapy*² presents existentialist philosophy as a basis for the treatment of offenders in general and the rehabilitation of drug addicts in particular.

In this book, the etiology of drug addiction is being related to the concept of psychopathy. This term was dealt with at length some years ago by Prof. Shoham in conjunction with his personality theory³ as a structural pathology of the infant at the oral stage of development. In the present volume, however, we elucidate the syndrome of learned psychopathy as an acquired trait by the drug addict that aids his survival and enhances his ability to acquire drugs. Also, at the early stages of the child's development, skewed relationships with his/her parents may create a 'black hole' personality whose constant craving to fill this gaping cavern in the soul may contribute to the ingestion of narcotics.

The choice of addiction is a bio-psycho-social configuration starting with the mechanism of neurotransmitters and neuroreceptors within the synapses between the neurons in the brain. The 'Insatiable Gorge' personality is the psychologically skewed developmental process that creates a black hole within one's personality which longs to be filled with creativity and love but *faute de mieux* with junk. The social interaction level of acquiring the drug habit is the learned psychopathy of the addict acquired by the dire fight for the acquisition of the dope for which all means are justified and all of them are employed by associating with criminal groups, drug traffickers and pushers.

The process of rehabilitation from drug use is the reverse of the bio-psycho-social configuration of the etiology of drug abuse. First, the cure

from addiction is triggered by an indeterministic decision following a traumatic experience. Some examples are the following.

An addicted father was doped with heroin and did not go to the synagogue to hear his son chant the *haftarah* at his bar-mitzvah. The son's reaction to this public humiliation was: "You proved that dope is more important to you than I am. Therefore, to me, you are not a father any more." This rebuke by the son was sufficiently devastating to the father that he swore not to touch dope any more. He swore this oath as an initiation into a lifelong abstention from the use of drugs.

A second case was a heroin addict in a middle of a weaning crisis who came to his mother and demanded that she give him the gold pendant she was wearing. "I am not giving you this pendant" she reacted adamantly "to get you a fix. I got it from my mother and she got it from her mother, and I am not going to support your habit which is ruining you. Look at you," she cried derisively. "You are a mess, your hands are trembling and your puffy eyes are swollen." The guy grabbed the pendant and pulled. He did not intend to kill his mother, but the pendant was attached to a heavy gold chain and pulling it broke her osteoporotic spine and tore her spinal cord. He was sentenced to life and there he did penance for killing his mother by undertaking to stop using dope and helping other prisoners get rid of their habit.

The third instance was a heroin addict who came to buy a fix at a drug vending location in a large city. While he was examining the quality of the dope, a young man approached him holding the hand of a boy of five and proposed that if the addict buys him a fix, his young son would perform fellatio. The older addict was tremendously shocked and decided that if the habit could lead a father to prostitute his infant boy, he would never touch the vile stuff again.

The first stage of detoxification is the bio-physiological withdrawal of the narcotic poisons from the addict's body. With opiates, this process takes about 72 hours unless assisted by weaning drugs that shorten the detoxification time span. Even with weaning drugs, the detoxification period is hellish. The lack of morphine flowing into the synapses of the neurons in the brain causes excruciating agony in the body's muscles. These pains do not subside until the weaning crisis is abated and some aberrant neurological processes related to neurotransmitters and neuroreceptors in the synapses of the brain's neurons are re-regulated.

The second stage is the emotional containment of the addict's personality by sponsors from the Narcotics Anonymous organization (NA), an offshoot of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). NA adopted the basic idea of

AA that reformed addicts who had extricated themselves from their habit are the persons who are most likely to facilitate the cure of practicing addicts. NA also adopted the AA's 12-step program, a self-help spiritual program that is widely used by addicts both in AA and NA with remarkable success.

The third stage is a socio-interactional group addiction treatment devised by Prof. Shoham based on Buberian dialogue.⁴ This treatment utilizes a group communication technique between ex-addicts and university students as a normative mirror to help clean addicts abide by their abstention from drugs.

This text includes the qualitative inductive analysis of 12 case studies of ex-addicts. This analysis provides an initial empirical anchor for the hypothesis presented in this text.

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CHAPTER 1

PERSONALITY THEORIES

Theories of Other Personologists

Freud's basic innovation was his theory of the libido as a hedonistic (mostly sexual) pleasure seeking and pain avoiding entity.⁵ This pleasure seeking is curbed by the superego which is human conscience, the internalization of the authority of the father and/or God, the universal father.⁶ Freud's id radiates its libidinal search for pleasure without vectoral direction. Hence, its energy expends itself quickly and ineffectively. Freud's ego is an organizer bereft of indigenous energy. It is, so to speak, a go-between utilizing the instinctive, impulsive, raw, unharnessed, animal force of the id and the internalized curbing, moralizing power of the superego. The superego channels the chaotic outbursts of the id into socially acceptable normative avenues.

The ego, lacking any power of its own, tries to march the conflicting dialectical clashes between the id and the superego into the nascent structure of the emerging human personality. This basic Freudian insight into the nucleus of the human personality was subject to criticism and amendment by Freud's disciples, notably, Karl Abraham, Melanie Klein, and Ronald Fairbairn. Fairbairn, who led quite a reclusive and isolated life in Scotland, hardly ever left the Highlands. When asked why he was so reluctant to leave his homeland, he answered in a sing-song intonation "Because good malt whiskey shouldn't travel!"

This seclusion by Fairbairn from his peers was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it allowed him a tremendous upsurge of innovation and creativity. When asked "How did you become so insightful?" He replied "I was a sickly child and did not go to school. Hence, the authoritarian school did not curb my imagination and soaring ideas and I could let my innovation run wild." On the other hand, a lack of constructive peer criticism could lead to intellectual solipsism with its adverse results.

Fairbairn's main modification of Freud's ideas was that the id's energies are not diverging outwardly from the personality seeking pleasure but are

directed as a cathexis vector towards objects.⁷ At early orality, when the object-mother is not yet differentiated from the pantheistic self, the id focuses on the injection of food by sucking from the all good giving breast-mother. In later orality, Fairbairn hypothesizes that the ambivalent nascent mouth-ego of the infant bites the bad mother-breast which does not adequately supply the growing baby's ever increasing need for food.

John Bowlby enlarges this basic premise set out by Fairbairn into a full-fledged theory of the object relationship of the child with its attachment to and loss of his mother.⁸ Fairbairn argues in favor of a vectoral object relationship with an early oral good mother and a later oral bad mother and against Freud's idea of non-directional radiation of libidinal energy. Fairbairn asserts that erotogenic zones such as the breast serve as a sign-post for the baby to direct his pleasure seeking. Hence, pleasure seeking is a directional vector towards an object: the mother's breast, and not as Freud claimed that the erotogenic zones are a sign-post for the baby's pleasure.⁹ Consequently, Fairbairn argues, the infant sucks his thumb, not only because it is an erogenous zone together with its mouth, but mainly because the erotic breast which also spurts food is not available.¹⁰

Fairbairn's object related theory can be also applied to Freud's topographic model of the mind, where the ego represses undesirable choices at the behest of the mobilized superego.¹¹ Hence, the superego as a moralistic repressor is 'good'. But when the late oral mother is internalized as bad because her breast does not spurt milk, Fairbairn denotes her as an 'internal saboteur' seen responsible for all the mischiefs which ego brings upon himself inadvertently.¹² Fairbairn based himself on Edward Glover's notion that the ego is being integrated from primal nuclei¹³; relying on Freud's theories about the oral, anal, oedipal, latency, and genital phases of personality formation.

However, Fairbairn says that the ego also uses such dichotomies as active and passive personality tendencies, male, female, and superego moralizing structures, to build up its basic nucleus. This process of integrating all these partial nuclei into a functioning ego may fail and lead the ego into various stages of disintegration. This would form a continuum moving from the well-integrated ego to the incompletely structured ego forming schizoid personality types. These are not full-fledged psychotics or neurotics, but 'half-baked' personalities with faulty processes of integration. One of these is very relevant to our present context. These are the 'takers' who have inherent difficulties in 'giving'. We claim that these takers eventually develop a 'learned psychopath' behavior that characterizes many of the drug addicts whose psychopathy and obsessive taking represents the syndrome that enables the drug addict to survive with his habit.

For Fairbairn, schizoid personalities include those whose ego has not reached a structural level of functional integration. Therefore, the phobic obsessional, hysteric paranoid, and Jungian introvert that we denote as Neurotic, Fairbairn denotes as Schizoid because a segment of their personality is faulty or disintegrated. These are the personalities that did not reach a reasonable degree of integration, or after they did, split back to partial discord. The Schizoid in its neurotic stage is a *sui generis* psychopathological syndrome. Consequently, the deep structural defect of personality inherent in psychosis, according to Fairbairn, is manifest by a radical split in the ego between thought and affect.¹⁴

We only partially follow Fairbairn's ideas about the nature of psychosis as a deep split in the ego. We do agree that his Schizoid, for us a Neurotic, has personality disintegration, but we claim that he does not merely have one or more splits in his ego. As we explain later, he has a basic structural defect in his personality that was formed very early in its development and not a post-facto split or disintegration of his ego.

Freud proposed a division consisting of 3 components: id, ego and superego. Fairbairn's personality structure has 5 components:¹⁵

- 1) Central Ego
- 2) Libidinal Ego¹⁶ reaching the maternal breast-objects
- 3) Internal saboteur¹⁷ which is the internalized, later oral, bad mother
- 4) The exciting object which is the erotogenic breast
- 5) The rejecting object-mother

These last two have a major role in generating the maternal early oral proscription of incest in our personality theory. Another analogy between Fairbairn's personality theory and ours is that we include in a blanket concept of sexual deviance all sex aberrations as psychoneurosis. In a similar manner, Fairbairn includes sexual perversions as Schizoid behavior, since these sexual aberrations did not reach a steady structure within the Central Ego.

The examples described by Fairbairn connect rejection of the bad object-penis by the developing girl with lesbianism and rejection by the developing boy of the bad breast-mother with homosexuality.¹⁸ Structuring the libido of masturbation to the sexual object ruins the possibility of satisfactory Buberian I-Thou intercourse.¹⁹ Cunnilingual licking and sucking represents mouth-genital transference of a hysterical (neurotic) psychopathology.

Shoham's Personality Theory

Shoham's personality theory does base itself on the primacy of Freud's

theories and his tripartite division of the human person as follows:

- The Id radiates raw non-directional libidinal energy.
- The Super-ego is an internalized largely sub-conscious entity promulgating norms to the human person.
- The Ego is the synchronizer and organizer of these three parts into one functioning whole.

Shoham is also influenced by Fairbairn insofar as he sees the personality as built up from the interactions of parts, in Shoham's case two vectors,²⁰ each one divided into three parts:

- 1) The Separation vector, which tries to swallow the other object, has 3 developmental stages: from birth to the formation of the psychological ego-boundary, from that time until the formation of the social Ego-identity that contains the essence of normative socialization, and after the formation of the Ego-identity.
- 2) The Participation vector, which tries to coalesce with the other object, also has 3 stages. In the first, the Ego identity wants to revert back to the family fold where most adult proscriptions do not apply. In the second, it wants to dissolve the Ego boundary and fade into pantheistic early orality. In the third, it wants to annul its birth and sink into the nothingness of the womb.

Integration of the Separation and Participation vectors coagulates the personality as a structure. In this we follow the structuralists Claude Lévi-Strauss and Jean Piaget²¹ who claim that the structure – in this case, the personality – is *sui generis* an entity that differs from its original components. The two vectors interact to produce a personality structure that has a life of its own and is capable of self-regulation.

This coagulation is a complementarity which keeps the dynamic equilibrium between the two vectors intact. The most crucial difference between Fairbairn's theory and ours is that Fairbairn envisages the splitting of some pathologies from the Central Ego whereas we claim that the structural defects of the personality, both psychosis and neurosis, are incomplete inchoate personality aberrations due to faulty formation of the human *proprium*, or parts thereof, due to skewed developmental processes.

The rather mechanistic disjunction of Fairbairn's 5 personality components seems to be brusque and difficult to follow. His etiology of both the genesis of General Ego and the splintering away of the four deviant personality formations from the Central Ego are likewise difficult to accept.

We hypothesize a 3-layer personality configuration structured

hierarchically from biological foundations through psychological framing to social assimilation. Unlike Freud's personological primacy of Id, Ego and Super-Ego which is disconnected both frame-wise and content-wise, our theory is related to the two core vectors of the personality and the configurational bio-psycho-social personality structure: the objectless *Ani*, the interactional *Atzmi*, and the organizing *Ity*.

We do agree with Fairbairn and Melanie Klein that the oral stage of development is the most basic phase of human development. However, we add three fundamental psychological conflicts to describe the dynamic mechanisms of our personality structure. These are: *approach - approach*, the dilemma of choosing between the two favorable choices; *avoidance - avoidance*, the evasion of two undesirable alternatives; and *approach - avoidance* which is the stultifying quandary of adopting a personality which inherently blocks the other.

We will illustrate these conflicts later when we portray the early oral maternal proscription of incest. Finally, unlike Fairbairn's scattered and disconnected personality types, ours are ordered within a paradigm of four Cartesian property spaces combining our two Separation and Participation vectors with early-oral and later-oral developmental fixations. This paradigm will be displayed and explained presently *in extenso*.

Fixations

As for fixations, Freud indeed coined the concept. But he did not describe and explain it fully. Often, great men assume that other people less initiated than themselves would understand their concepts and ideas the moment they express them. Unfortunately, interpersonal communication does not work that well or that fast.

A Freudian fixation is a cathected anchorage of libidinal energy on an early stage of human development which blocks this phase of growth. Hence, this tends to be an attachment of fixated individuals to patterns of behavior in their later years, which stem from and are based on these early blockages of libidinal energies.

We prefer to explain human developmental fixations with the help of the following metaphor: when woodland burns and the singed cypress, spruce and maple trees are cut down, cross-sections of the trees reveal concentric circles, each of which represents a year. Wide contours are the result of a good rainy season, thin, crooked rings indicate a bad dry stretch, and a black layer signifies a fire. The rings of a tree are therefore a record of its life history; with the twisted, meager, dilapidated layers signifying fixations.

If there is no mother, or an absent or neglecting one, we may expect an early fixation at the oral phase of development with its related pathogenic structured personality defects. A schizophrenogenic or rejecting mother would be linked to later oral libidinal pathologies. Fairbairn places the cart before the horses when he claims that first the personality is structured within the General Ego which is then splintered into inchoate, incomplete and partial personality frames.

We hold that the personality is slowly and gradually built by a bio-psycho-social configuration from parts, and interaction by dual vectors structures a scaffold that eventually supports a complete personality. However, if the inchoate structure did not reach a fair degree of interaction, it would fracture into a severely deformed psychosis quite early in the process of personality formation. A later fracture produces a neurosis that is a partly formed personality with some missing segments.

The etiology of the psychosis according to our model is a two-step process: the pre-disposed psychotic is very much like Fairbairn's schizoid. When the proper trigger materializes, the predisposition erupts into a full-fledged psychosis. As we shall elaborate later *in extenso*, the trigger that catapults the predisposed psychotic into full-fledged morbidity is actually a participant forfeiture of sanity in favor of the chaos of madness without the ego boundary curbing morbidity.

The psychoneuroses are single stage processes, since the lack of a segment in the personality structure which indicates a neurosis is a gradual sequential formation without any discreet steps. Our basic paradigm of the oral stage of human development, which is related partly to Fairbairn's ideas, may be presented as follows:

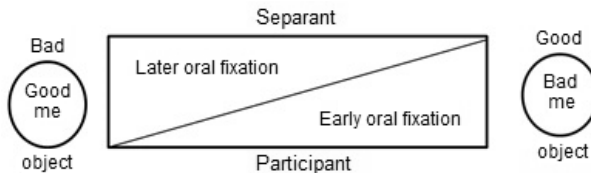


Figure 1: Early and Later Oral Stages of Development

At early orality which stretches until about the end of the infant's first year of his life, no separate self has yet been coagulated from the non-descript mass of non-differentiated essence. At later orality when the breast-mother has been crystalized in front of the infant's suckling lips, an ambivalence is formed between the infant loving the milk sprouting breast-mother and his biting the depriving breast-mother which withholds its

nourishing food.

Therefore, a dichotomy is formed between the participant and separant poles of our continuum. At the participant pole, a chaotic 'bad' self feels it is both the source and recipient of the disasters which befall it. At the separant pole, the 'good me' has already emerged from early orality and confronted an erratic, unpredictable 'bad' breast-mother.²²

Rosenzweig has described the early oral fixated personality type as intro-punitive since it blames itself for any frustration it experiences. The later oral fixated 'good me' surrounded by a 'bad breast-object mother' was denoted by Rosenzweig as extro-punitive since it accuses the 'bad unreliable breast-mother' for all its misfortunes.

One dynamic remark relating to fixations is necessary here before we embark on a deeper analysis of fixations and their links to human developmental phases and personality types. Fixations are 'normal' in so far as they stabilize a light skewedness to allow a reasonably stable structure leaning towards one type of personality or another. However, if conflicts and traumas at the early phases of human development are strong, the more violent they are, the more powerful would be the fixations with a higher probability of deformation of neurosis and psychosis.

Perception of Space and Time

To come back to our paradigm and concentrate on the early phases of our personality development, we wish to relate to the oral and anal stages of personality development and a basic perception of space and time. The concern of philosophers with space and time is as ancient as the pre-Socratic savants and as modern as quantum mechanics. Immanuel Kant, the 18th century German thinker postulated the subjective nature of time and space, calling them "the human presumes of perception."²³ Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity decrees that as objects approach the velocity of light, their speed shortens time and their size shrinks²⁴. This implies that our developmental aquarium is constructed from space and time and enables us to exist and evolve with handy confines of these dimensions.

An article in *Scientific American*²⁵ takes as its starting point the Copenhagen interpretation of quantum mechanics: its hypothesis being that spatio-temporality is generated by Schrödinger's equation of motion interacting with human consciousness. This article states that: "our subjective experiences of the world may be like a visit to a gallery where the artist is our brain." In other words, consciousness via the brain actually creates space and time. The article concludes "the eeriness of consciousness changes your

sense of who and what you are. It feels your sense of who you are. It feeds your joy in life, your fear of death. Perhaps the evolutionary function of ‘consciousness as art’ is to make you fall in love with the artist – yourself.”²⁶

We hold that the developmental formation of the sense of time is initiated at the early oral stage. The ‘bad me’ surrounded by the ‘good object breast-mother’ feels the flowing of the nourishing food from the breast-mother into its digestive tract. This sequential flow of the food from the outside with the gradual movement from the infant’s mouth towards his stomach and then within its long and convoluted intestines create the sense of time.

The conception of space stems from the anal phase of the infant’s development. The urine, feces and the phlegm when contained in the body of the infant are either favorably or neutrally accepted by him. When these are expelled with their vile smell and disturbing texture, they mark immediately the difference between the inside and the outside of the infant’s body and hence mark the boundaries of space.

Conflicts and Double Binds

As for the Oedipal stage of the infant’s development, together with Fairbairn we differ from Freud by arguing that the Oedipal fixations are maternal and not paternal, as held by Freud, and are generated at the early oral stage of the infant’s development.

The reasons for our stance are as follows: the timing of the Freudian Oedipal phase of development is about four to five years of age. Therefore, a boy of this age would be able to remember his incestuous attraction to his mother. Since no boy remembers his sexual passion for his mother except in some overt pathological cases; the proscription of incest happens much earlier during a phase when cognitive awareness does not exist. It must be not later than early orality.

Also, the proscription of incest is so profound, intense, and repressed to such a deep level of unconsciousness that with most males the mere thought of an incestuous relationship with their mother is impossible. This abysmal depth of repression must be the result of a most violent mental conflict. Indeed, this is the *approach - avoidance* conflict.

Of the three conflicts, the first is the *approach - approach* quandary: a Polish, Italian or Mexican girl reaching matrimonial age is attracted to a sharp-dresser who plays the guitar and all the patrons of the dance hall stop their wriggling and make a circle to watch him jitterbug. Her mother, however, prefers a pudgy balding youth, his own mother’s golden boy. He

has a creaky voice and cannot sing; he does not have an ear for music; he cannot walk straight let alone dance. But he is the director of a high-tech start-up, earns \$30,000 a month, and drives a black Mercedes.

“You Idiota, Stupida, Cretina,” her mother would say in Polish, Italian or Spanish. “Thirty years ago your father was a smart dresser with a thin black moustache and brilliantine on his curly black hair. He played the guitar and danced the tango with me so close you could not push a piece of paper between us. Now look at him, a jobless alcoholic with a pot belly, not a hair on his head, only one tooth, and a stinking mouth. All my life I mopped floors to support all of you, including your good-for-nothing father. I was too proud to ask support from my mother or to show her the black eyes I got as thanks from time to time from your bullying father. I could afford only two second-hand dresses a year, one for New Years and the other for Passover. So you marry baldy, fatty whose monthly salary amounts to five years’ earnings of your father and me together. When he brings your children to kindergarten in his black Mercedes, the teachers would whisper: ‘Here they come with their father. He is the director of a high-tech start-up.’ If you marry your asshole brilliantined gigolo, in five years he will be bald and ugly with a triple fold of fat under his chin. His belly would have half a dozen hernias protruding with wriggling intestines. And, you, my love, would be ashamed to show me the black eyes your ever-loving gave you. So the choice is yours!”

The *avoidance - avoidance* conundrum is mytho-empiricized by the passage of Odysseus’ ship between the sea monsters of Scylla and Charybdis on the opposite sides of the Strait of Messina. Scylla was a rock shoal portrayed as the 6-headed sea monster daughter of Crataeis on the Italian side of the strait. Charybdis was a whirlpool off the coast of Sicily. Scylla dwelled in a cave, barked like a dog, and had twelve feet. Each of her six heads had three rows of sharp teeth. Scylla devoured all creatures that came too close to her cave. Charybdis lived under a fig tree on the shores of Messina. Every day she tried to swallow all the waters of the sea. In order to avoid being killed by Scylla or swallowed by Charybdis, sailors had to maneuver very close to but not become grounded on the shoals near Italy.

The third and the most forceful psychological conflict is the *approach-avoidance* predicament. The early oral fixated boy-infant is being suckled by his mother who is aroused sexually because the breast and nipple are erotogenic zones. The boy is likewise aroused by his sucking the breast with his mouth which is also an erotic zone. This is the approach phase of the approach-avoidance interaction between the mother and boy-infant. The avoidance modality of the *approach-avoidance* co-relationship is initiated by the mother’s realization of her incestuous conjunction with her child and

her subsequent transmission of the harsh proscription of this non-normative passion by tacit non-verbal body language. It is forcefully and deeply internalized by the infant as lust.

Personality Defects

We are now in a position to present the paradigm of our personality theory. The diagram in Figure 2 can be seen as a general guideline to our deliberations.

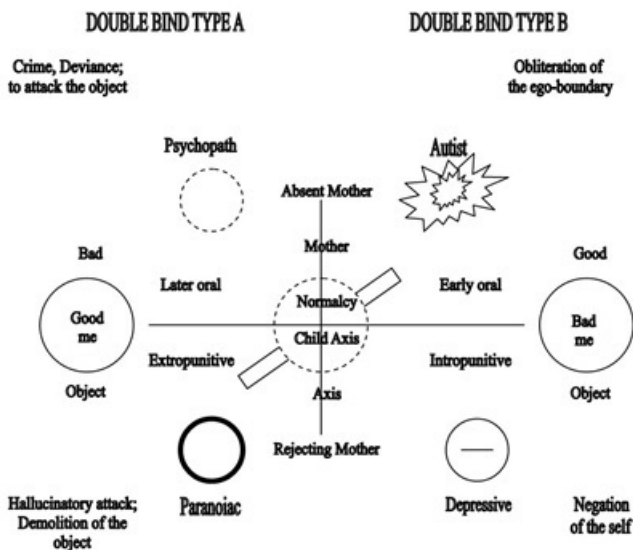


Figure 2: Predispositions to Structural Personality Defects

The Autistic predisposition is related to a hazy and amorphic ego boundary, which becomes vulnerable to any outside pressure or trigger, which may catalyze the onset of morbidity. The relative indifference of the autistic schizophrenic to outside stimuli is, therefore, both a syndrome and the external evidence for the weakness of his ego boundary. His difficulty in differentiating between himself and the object is a measure of his uncertainty concerning the strength and direction of the stimuli transmitted to him.

The Paranoiac reaction is explained by the 'good me' surrounded by the 'bad object', linked to interaction with a rejecting mother. This is related hypothetically to double bind type A, which generates a very strong

conflictual relationship, and consequently a thick, robust ego boundary. We hypothesize that the ego boundary is generated by deprivational interaction and that when a severe conflictual relationship occurs, as is inherent in double bind type A, we may expect more and stronger scar tissue to cover the nascent self in order to isolate it from painful outside stimuli. This hypothetical model of the paranoid predisposition is related to a later, post-oral fixation, because the coagulation and separation of the self happens here rather quickly. Because of harsher and more frequent injuries, the aggressive object is identified more readily, so that the differentiation between the 'me' victim and the object as aggressor is more clearly perceived.

As for the Psychopathic reaction, it may be what Hervey Cleckley calls the mask of sanity.²⁷ Cleckley claims that psychopathy in its true form is a morbid syndrome covered by a fragile façade of partial sanity, which collapses under pressure when the individual experiences a severe shock. Indeed, the interaction of the 'good me' with an (absent) neglecting mother leaves a rather inchoate interaction with the bad object, which is not as potent as the actual deprivational interaction with an attendant mother or mother surrogate. The interaction with the bad object thus results in a partial ego boundary, in the sense that it has the outward appearances of a boundary, but is punctuated by gaps, which make it vulnerable.

Finally, we have hypothesized the Depressive reaction as linked to the interaction with a rejecting mother at the early oral stage. This produces a 'bad me' surrounded by a good object. This is the ideal intropunitive reaction, constantly reinforced by the aggressive object, whose authority to repress the 'bad me' is legitimized by the core personality structure, which imputes positivity to its surrounding object vis-a-vis its self-concept.

CHAPTER 2

THE AWAY AND BEYOND IS HERE AND NOW

We burn with the desire to find solid ground and an ultimate sure foundation whereon to build a tower reaching to the infinite, but our whole groundwork cracks and the earth opens to abysses.

—Blaise Pascal, *Pensees*

Personality theories have much to lose by pretending to greater coverage or rigor than they in fact possess. In following this time-honored primrose path to damnation, they easily leave the field of science altogether.

—Hans J. Eysenck, *The Biological Basis of Personality*

In this life, everyone is a failure.

—Anonymous

Deprivational Interactions

Upon Man's expulsion from the womb and his fall from the pantheistic omnipresence of early orality, he is left with a lifelong longing to annul the consequences of these catastrophes and revert back to the sheltered self-sufficiency of non-being. This longing, which can never be realized, creates much dynamism that can never be fulfilled and quenched. This dynamism remains with the force of growth. In the chapters that describe the difference between our conception of these core vectors of the self and the exposition of other personologists, we will structure these vectors into more concise models.

The conflict between the vectors of growth and regression makes the self an arena of constant battle. Moreover, the relationship between the individual and his surroundings is also marked by conflict, pain and deprivation, which alternate with sporadic spells of contentment from the very beginning of life. Out of the womb, the neonate needs shelter and food, which are not always forthcoming, and a bump on the head from a hard surface proves to the infant that his days of omnipresence are over. He has a limited *Lebensraum* in this world, which is going to be delimited further by his socialization into the normative system of his group.

This deprivational interaction is not only painful, but also incomprehensible. Why has he been thrown out into this world? His *Geworfenheit*, to borrow Heidegger's apt term, is confounded by his sense of negative choice. Why has he been burdened by cognition? Why must he of all people serve as a channel to cosmic awareness? These are questions without answers. The individual is confronted with the outrageous silence of God and the catastrophic indifference of the Universe. All he has left is his intense longing for the blissful and perfect state of pre-awareness and non-being. This longing in itself may serve as a base for religious belief and mystical experiences. A previous work of the author – *Salvation Through the Gutters* – revealed how these pressures for the annihilation of cognition and separate awareness may express themselves as predispositions for a wide range of deviant modes of behavior.²⁸

The present volume traces the formation in early orality of the boundaries around the self that are coagulated as a form of scar-tissue following the conflictual traumas of the neonate with the breast mother, their surrogates, and surrounding objects. The longing of the self to disentangle and free itself from its delimiting boundaries is another lifelong passion, which we shall define and deal with. We shall be concerned with its inevitable frustrations: the barriers of meaningful communication between Ego and Alter; the reaching out of Ego towards Alter, only to be rejected because of misunderstanding, competition or sheer lack of interest; and above all, the tendency of Ego to project on Alter his subjective motives, assuming that Alter understands them, which he does not.

Inter-subjective communication is a cherished myth, ever longed for but never achieved. The emotional subjugation of Ego by Alter, or vice versa, depending on the circumstances, which have been expounded philosophically by the Existentialists, becomes in our context a function of different levels of affect, sensitivity and hence vulnerability. If Ego is deeply attached to Alter because of greater sensitivity or his ability or willingness to 'open up' to him more thoroughly, he becomes so vulnerable that he is virtually dominated by him. As there can be no free flow or inter-subjective emotions between Ego and Alter, an emotional dialogue on an equal basis is an ontological impossibility. Consequently, the longing for dyadic emotional rapport is truly Tantallic, in the sense that the more Man longs for it, the less he is likely to achieve it.

This Tantallic dilemma of the inverse relationship between the intensity of Ego's desire to communicate with others and his ability to fulfill this desire will be the main foci of our interest and explanation of human interaction. Novelists and playwrights, with a keen psychological insight that is very often lacking in correlation-seeking behavioral and social

scientists, have succeeded in portraying the devastating painful failure of Man to convey his miseries and sympathies to his fellow-men: Chekhov's bereaved fathers and estranged wives; Dostoevsky's 'underground people', fuming inwardly with spite and *ressentiment* yet hardly noticed by others. The Theatre of the Absurd no longer bothers to deal with non-existent human communication: it lets its characters interact with the void. Jean Genet went even further: some of his *dramatis personae* perform a solipsistic passion in which they are both executioner and victim.

Even worse than lack of communication is Alter's tendency, whether naïve or malicious, to take parts of Ego's communication out of context and fit them into Alter's own Gestalt, which is different both because of personality determinants and cultural imprints.

The epitome of betrayal, however, lies in what has been denoted as the 'Least-interest Principle,' according to which Ego has less chance of being emotionally palatable to Alter if Ego's needs and desire to communicate are greater. In courting behavior, in business relationships, in the circles of social climbers, those who are radiating a desire to communicate, those who are emotionally involved from the outset, are less likely to fulfill their aim. The indifferent, the blasé, those who take others with a uniform, easy smile of shallow emotions are more likely to be in the receiving end of affective communication, for which they might have no desire or use. In interpersonal relationships, one seems to approach people by walking away from them.

While structuring our personality core model, we are greatly concerned with the inter-relationship between the polar components of our self-continuum: our interactive self, which reaches out towards the object, and the quietist self-defacing component of our self, which longs for the contentedness of pre-awareness and the bliss of nonbeing.

We shall define and describe our continuum of the self and its structure within the personality core. An important dynamic that characterizes the interaction or the polar components of the self is this: We tend to admire and sometimes envy the non-involvement and peace of mind of the self-effacing, relatively self-sufficient modest person, even if we burn with ambition and are driven by achievement motivation, because the quietist component of our self, however subdued, projects its identification onto the person whose serenely detached behavior is diametrically opposed to ours.

Real but theoretically problematic mechanisms, such as Fairbairn's 'Internal Saboteur,' get a structural vindication by our continuum of the self. An activist, successful businessman, entrepreneur or academic 'operator' may suddenly make a gross mistake or launch a self-defeating venture. This is the subterranean doings of the suppressed quietist vector of the self. On