Foundations of Psycho-Social Analysis
Part I: Diagnosis

CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Creative psychoanalysts have repeatedly sought, with more or less success, to generate a system of understanding of human behaviour which reaches from the depths of intrapersonal unconscious, through the family and the small group, to the boundaries of major social systems. This search for universally applicable laws of psychology parallels the similar search in theoretical physics for the elementary, or unified field, uniting otherwise apparently disparate phenomena and generating a continuity of explicable behaviour from fundamental particle to cosmic entity.

Previous attempts have tended to founder at the boundary between person and social system. Theories arising from the realms of individual psychoanalysis have apparently broken down when applied to social systems, or at least the connections have been difficult, if not impossible, to validate. Conversely, approaches that originate in the field of social psychology often lack the psychoanalytic perspective and depth to bridge the gap in the opposite direction. Social psychology tends to be too generalised and superficial to shed much light on individual behaviour, whereas intrapersonal psychoanalysis is too specific and personalised for more general application. So social psychology and psychoanalysis are separated by a great gulf, which is yet less than a hair's breadth across. The split represents the skin boundary of human being.

This paper, or rather series of papers, is an attempt to bridge the gap, to generate a synthesis between intrapersonal and social analysis. The first, **Diagnosis**, examines the problem, identifies the blockages which have thwarted previous attempts at synthesis and develops a

model of defensive neurosis which can be applied to all levels of the system from the depths of the intrapersonal primal unconscious through all levels of social aggregation to the boundaries of global process.

The second part, **Analysis**, examines the origins of those deep, common, social defences against anxiety, having their roots within the multiple experiences of individual traumata patterned out in evolving systems through time. The section concludes with an examination of some of the effects of these defences, both dysfunctional and stabilising within social process.

The third, and final part, **Integration** (still be written) moves beyond the descriptive into the application of the material to individual and social development and maturation and the possibility of reducing or even partially dismantling the social defences within the process of psycho-social synthesis.

Part 1 : Diagnosis

l. INITIAL POINT OF VIEW

Conclusions commonly reflect beginnings. The shape of a final construct reflects the assumptions, the starting point and the basic discipline of the analyst concerned. Those whose initial orientation was toward individual therapy, like Freud, Jung, Adler, Rank, Reich, et al, tended to generalise from individual to social system. Society was treated, as in "Totem and Taboo"[1], as if it were a single, complex individual, its present neuroses the products of past history, traumatic conflict or corporate puberty. There was typically inadequate direct analysis of the psychodynamics of social systems themselves.

The second starting point can be broadly described as sociological. Marx, Durkheim, Weber and their many related and inter-related followers, began with the study of social systems as such. Few within this field had any personal experience of psychoanalysis and so remained fundamentally unconscious at an intrapersonal level. For them, formative power lay within social process and the individual was a comparatively impotent reactor within the social context.

In both cases, we have examples of projection from areas of competence into areas of ignorance. The first group saw through the social descriptors of individual behaviour as naively superficial attempts, caught up collusionally in the denial of unconscious depth. On the other hand, the sociologists perceived the projections of the analysts as atomisingly simplistic and quite inadequate to explain the great resonant movements of common social process. Synthesis across the boundary requires a different origin.

Older approaches may be illustrated by positions on a straight line, of which the left end represents the deepest intrapersonal level, and the far right the highest aggregation of social system (see diagram).

Intra-personal depth   **Social depth**

Personal boundary

Typically, psychoanalysts, positioned far to the left, viewed social systems from the perspective of the individual, while the social analysts, positioned far to the right, postulated individual behaviour as a reflection of social parameters. Within this single variable the central position represents study of the interaction between the individual and the social system, while remaining equally distanced from both major disciplines.

The task of psycho-social analysis requires a different vantage point - one which denies the either/or implications of previous analyses, allowing both the depths of intrapersonal insight and the heights of macro-social understanding, as well as acute awareness of the boundary between individual and society, and of the dynamic interactions both ways across that boundary. Such a stance effectively treats the subject as a two-dimensional field (see following diagram). In this case, awareness of intrapersonal and social psychodynamics are treated as independent variables, and plotted at right-angles. The X axis signifies level of awareness of social process, graded in 10 divisions from low to high. The Y axis represents awareness of intrapersonal psychodynamics, similarly graded.
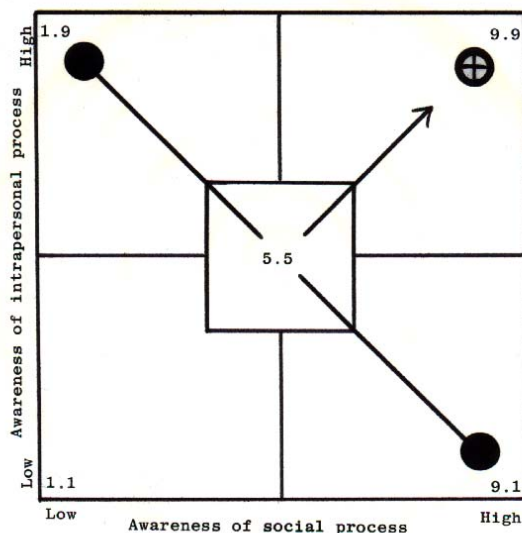
Various positions within the field can be described. The area near the origin (l,1) represents people who remain quite unconscious and unaware of either intrapersonal or social processes. The top left hand corner (1,9) is held by the individual analysts, lacking the experiential awareness of social process, while the bottom right corner (9,1) represents those sociologists who remain unconscious of the depths of intrapersonal process.

The centre (5,5) is held by those who, while aware of both disciplines and their insights, are caught in ambivalence between the two schools. They perceive the varying insights and constructs as conflicted and contradictory. The line (1,9 to 9,1) now corresponds to the single dimension presentation in the first diagram.

The top right hand corner (9,9) sustains the rigour of both disciplines, working with high levels of awareness of intrapersonal unconscious material, as well as acutely sensitive analysis of the high levels of aggregation in social process. The fields are seen as creatively complimentary and continuous across the skin boundary of interaction between individual

and social system. It is from this position that the next section approaches the relationship between intrapersonal and social analysis.

2. THE ONE AND THE MANY

In the I-Thou relationship the intrapersonal depth of 'I' is the social depth of 'Thou'. The intrapersonal depth of 'Thou' (the other) is the social depth of 'I'.
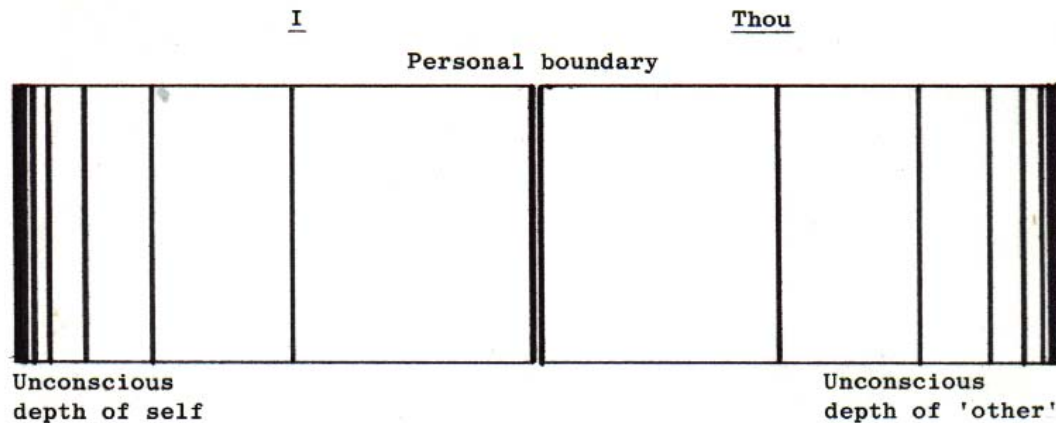
For every 'I' there are many 'Thous', which collectively become 'You' - the social environment, shading out beyond the primary group through the community to the anonymous crowd whose boundary is the ends of the earth. In short the intrapersonal depth is a mirror image of the social depth.
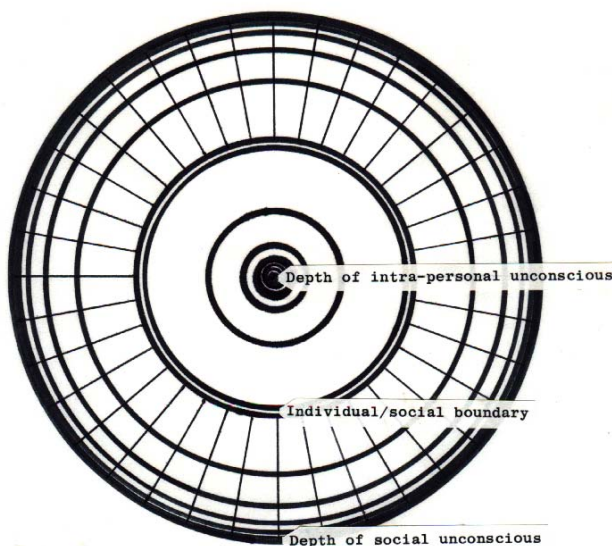
The inward journey, pushing ever deeper into the reaches of the individual unconscious is seen as antithetical to the task of social analysis, which moves outward in its probe of psychosocial processes. Each perceives the other to be diverging and yet in the curvature of psychological space both are also convergent. As the individual analyst drives beyond the superficially individualistic pattern of behavioural deviation into the deeper areas of primitive anxiety defences, paranoid-schizoid mechanisms and primal regression, he finds himself face-to-face with a stranger, for the social analyst has arrived in his journey at the same point. As long ago as 1953, Elliott Jaques wrote :

"Many observers have noted that there is a strikingly close correspondence between certain group phenomena and psychotic processes in individuals. .... institutions are

used by their individual members to reinforce mechanisms of defence against anxiety, and in particular against recurrence of the early paranoid and depressive anxieties first described by Melanie Klein. It is as though the members of groups unconsciously place part of the contents of their deep inner lives outside themselves and pool these parts in the emotional life of the group. May not sufficiently detailed observation of social behaviour, then, take us inside the individual? And may not sufficiently deep analysis of the individual take us into the group?"[2]

The depth of common social defence is recognised as precisely the depth of intrapersonal defence shared among many, or as Roberto Assagioli put it: "... the psychological life of a nation corresponds to a great extent to that which is <u>unconscious</u> in individuals."[3]

3. 'NORMALITY' AND THE CRITERIA OF SIGNIFICANCE

Barriers to the progress of analysis of the individual stem from the powerful taboo of social prohibition. Conversely, barriers to insight into social process emerge from the depths of intrapersonal collusion. The last bastions to yield to analysis are inevitably those shared most deeply and in common between most people. The residual blind-spots of social and intra-personal analysis are the commonly shared neuroses and psychoses holding behind their defences the most deep, most primitive, most painful and most common traumata.

It is from this material that our concepts of 'normal' behaviour are constructed , both social and individual, so hiding in tautology the pain of insight that common social behaviour is normal <u>not</u> because it is non-neurotic or non-psychotic, but precisely because it is commonly shared neurosis, collusionally conducted psychosis.

NEUROTIC/PSYCHOTIC BEHAVIOUR
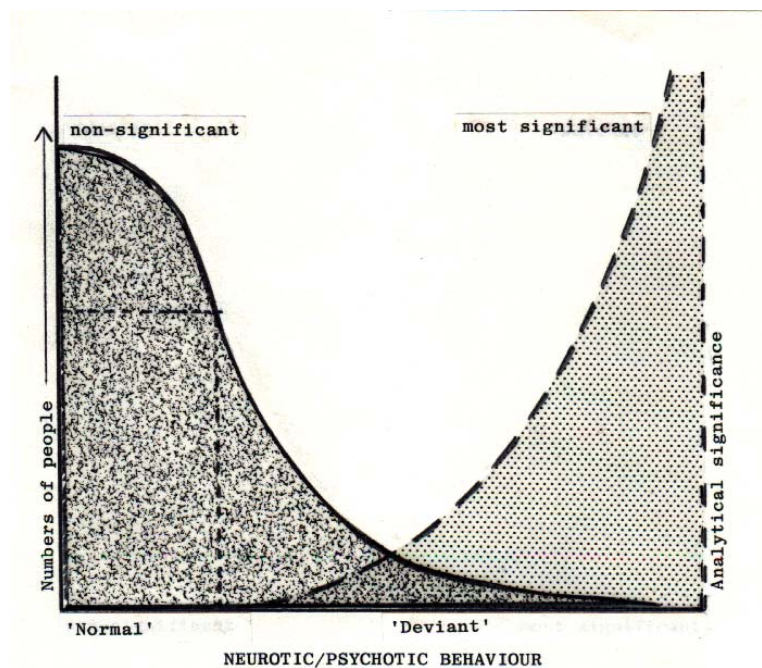
The occurrence of unconsciously generated patterns of behaviour is represented by the distribution curve of this diagram.

Therapeutic initiatives are taken by 'normal' society towards those persons or social sectors presenting behaviour which deviates significantly from the norm. The most abnormal individuals and those most resistant to therapy are constrained in various ways. The social ("therapeutic") task is to restore deviant behaviour to within tolerable limits of the norm, or failing that, at least to protect "normal" society from its disturbing effects.

Historically, psychoanalysis developed from this therapeutic agenda. Behaviour which lay within standard deviation from the norm was fundamentally non-significant. The pathologically most deviant was the analytically most significant, and it was out of the analysis of pathology that the great classical theories of psychodynamics were developed.

Social sanction is most freely given for the analysis and modification of behaviour which is most deviant from the social norm. Conversely, social resistance is most acute in response to analysis of behaviour which is most central to the distribution i.e. most 'normal'. Only in so far as normal social behaviour is consciously perceived to be socially destructive can society tolerate its own analysis. Those analysts who have ventured into this taboo zone unsanctioned, or have stumbled upon its dynamics inadvertently have been subject to social talion, persecution and scapegoating. They have commonly been evicted by their colleagues from those 'professional' institutions which preserve the collusional social contract of non-exploration of norm behaviour.

What Nietzsche[4] affirmed philosophically, Wilhelm Reich[5] confirmed psychologically, pre-figured by Rank[6] and followed by Janov[7]. Whoever dares hold a mirror to the common social psychoses is perceived as a common social threat. He is identified with the material to which he points. He is subjected on his own person-boundary to those same primitive defence mechanisms used both socially and individually to deal with deeply disturbing psychotic material: eviction, destruction, denial, projection, alienation, dissociation. Like the Christ figures of history he is cast out of society carrying the denied unwanted parts of the social unconscious which he has dared to name. Sadly, the social talion is introjected and such men, and the institutions which flow from their work, commonly act out the primitive paranoid-schizoid behaviour which justifies their social crucifixion. Society is thereby absolved for its madness, justified in its judgement and affirmed in its psychotic denial. The social defences hold. The analysts, fingers burnt, retreat to the safer areas of pathological deviance.

Although unable to handle the agenda himself, Freud pointed prophetically forwards when he wrote in "Civilization and its Discontents":

> "There is one question which I can hardly ignore ... would not the diagnosis be justified that many systems of civilisation, or epochs of it - possibly even the whole of humanity - have become neurotic under the pressure of civilising trends? I would not say that such an attempt to apply psycho-analysis to civilised society would be fanciful or doomed to fruitlessness. But it behoves us to be very careful.... The diagnosis of collective neuroses, moreover, will be confronted by a special difficulty. In the neurosis of an individual we can use as a starting point the contrast presented to us between the patient and his environment, which we assume to be 'normal'. No such background as this would be available for any society similarly affected; it would have to be supplied in some other way. And with regard to the therapeutic applications of our knowledge, what would be the use of the most acute analysis of social neuroses, since no-one possesses power to compel the community to adopt the therapy? In spite of all these difficulties, we may expect that one day someone will venture upon this research into the pathology of civilised communities ."[8]

Freud is himself caught in ambivalence on this frontier. At one point he describes the great institutions of civilisation as social neuroses and then almost in the same breath denies the

description 'neurotic' to the social institutions, reserving it for private or individual behaviour which deviates from the social norms[9]. The ambiguity reaches its apogee in the tautological absurdity of D.W. Winnicott[10]. Having carefully described clinical trauma as impingement in conditions of helplessness, he then defines certain such events as non-traumatic because, being common, they do not generate behaviour which deviates significantly from the norm. The normal is non-significant for the analyst and therefore the events which generate normal reactions are by definition non-traumatic[11]. In such ways is the analyst caught up in collusional denial of the neurotic and psychotic elements of social process.

The sociological forefathers had different criteria of significance. For them it was the common patterns of social process which held the centre of the stage. The deviation of minority groups or the bizarre behaviour of comparatively disturbed ("abnormal") individuals was non-significant. Their description was, however, essentially non-psychoanalytic, so serving the same collusional agenda as that imposed upon their therapeutic colleagues. The more normative the phenomenon, the less analytically critical the sociology. Anthropology could describe dynamics of alien cultures in critical analytic terms, but was resisted if it brought such tools to bear on its own culture. Sociology of religion was permitted in examination of other faiths but frowned upon when applied to the sociologist's own confessional grouping. Even in the post-Christian West of today the psychoanalysis of the Christian religion is still tantamount to blasphemy, while the analysis of other great social institutions like the monarchy, the penal system, education, or political ideology generates similar reactions.

So in the study of the normal social, the psychoanalytic is taboo, while conversely, in the study of psychoanalytic phenomena, the normal is taboo.

In contradistinction to both fields, the study of psycho-social analysis has other criteria of significance. It takes as its field the 'normal' zone of behaviour distribution. The most significant phenomena are the most common dynamics of the highest aggregation social systems. In this it affirms the criteria of the sociologist and inverts the criteria of the therapist.

On the other hand, the discipline of psycho-social analysis seeks to break through the collusional repression of both sociology and psychoanalysis by affirming the psychoanalytic approach to normal phenomena. It understands common social processes as energised by unconscious material, just as are the less common neuroses and psychoses of social sub-sector or individual deviation. It is committed to the analysis of those deeply repressed areas of common psychotic anxiety, defence against which constitutes the driving dynamic of normal institutional process[12].

Such a position requires a shift in origin of the distribution curve of the last diagram. If the origin coincides with the peak or mean distribution, then no critique of the mean (and therefore no relative movement of the mean) is possible. It is a pre-Copernican view of the centre of the psychological universe.

Suppose, however, that the origin is placed not at the mean but at the point of nil traumatic experience, nil anxiety defence, nil unconscious content, then a figure like that in this diagram emerges:

NEUROTIC/PSYCHOTIC BEHAVIOUR
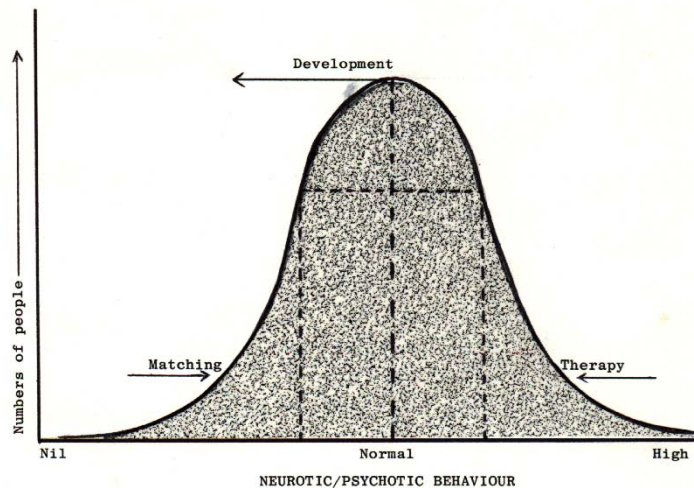
No persons are completely free of unconsciously repressed material. The peak of the distribution curve corresponds to the most common level of stressing, coinciding with the most common level of individual defence. The core of the population lying near to this 'norm' position reacts in concert with matched multi-individual or social patterns of behaviour. This position is itself flanked by wings of the distribution, those to the left being less stressed, less defended, less neurotic/psychotic than the norm, those to the right have higher levels of repressed trauma, are more heavily defended and present as more neurotic/psychotic than the norm.

If the therapeutic task was seen as restoring deviant behaviour to the norm, then the developmental task involves shifting the norm itself to the left. Here lies the fundamental distinction between psycho-social analysis and classical psychoanalysis. Contemporary movements of human potential and social development recognise the possibility of such norm shifts. They occur in a context of rising social stress, accelerating change, proliferating population and attenuating resources which tend to shift the normal distribution to the right, into more psychotic patterns of social system behaviour. Significantly it is precisely this trend which has raised awareness of the possibility of norm-shift. In so far as the normal responses of macro-social systems become threatening to the very survival of the species, just so far does society sanction the analysis and possible healing of its own normal neuroses. It would appear that, possibly for the first time in history, mankind stands at such a threshold.

4. ALTERNATIVES TO COLLUSION
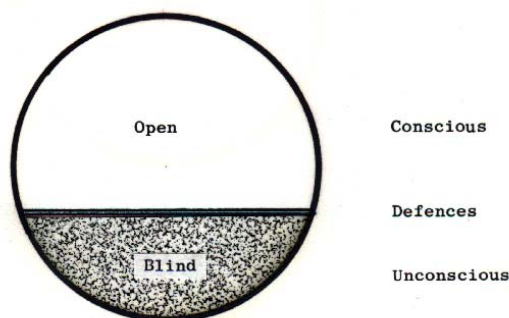
The psychic space of a person may be pictured in two distinct zones, which may be described as "open" and "blind", "conscious" and "unconscious". The distinction is simplistic and the boundary is blurred by a twilight zone of semi-conscious material. The approximation is, however, adequate for our present purposes. The Venn diagram of psychic space presents the idea graphically.

The shaded portion represents the blind, or unconscious area, while the clear space corresponds to the open, or conscious zone. The black line separating the two sets represents the intrapersonal defences employed to sustain repression of unconscious content and prevent it from irrupting, disturbingly, into the conscious zone.

Two distinctly different orientations to the material can be distinguished, though in practice both are always present to a greater or lesser degree in any person. The first attitude may be described as "collusional". In this mode the person appears to act as if in full and conscious validation of the internal defences. Conscious and unconscious zones have come to a gentleman's agreement to respect each other's territory. Violations of the treaty are rare and immediately quashed. The person develops a life-style designed as far as possible to avoid disturbance of unconscious material.

The second orientation is antithetical to the first. It may be described as "maturational". From this position any collusional pact is perceived as a betrayal. Unconsciously held material and its associated defensive structures are perceived as detrimental to wholeness, maturity and health of the person, who therefore seeks opportunities to overcome the defences and to deal cathartically with the underlying unconscious content.
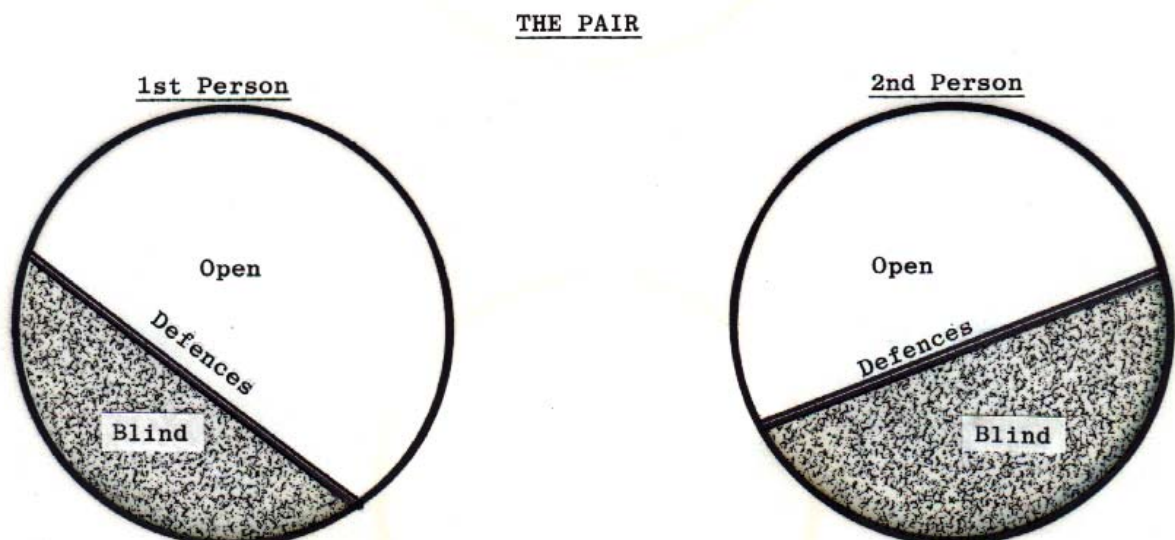
THE PAIR

The most primitive social system to which these concepts may be applied is the pair.
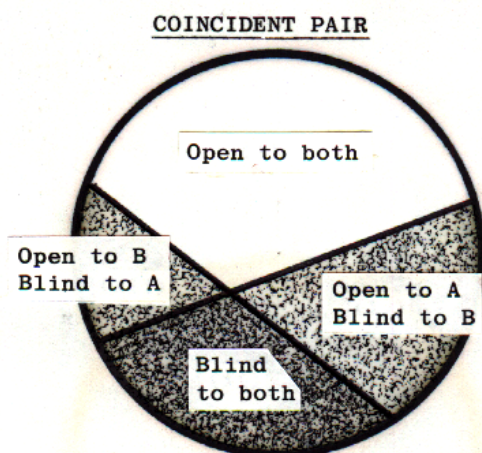
Each person has distinctive proportions of the psychic space, contained respectively in the conscious and unconscious zones, both in terms of quantity and specific content.

When the two people are in close relationship, represented by the coincidence of psychic space in this diagram, the Venn diagram is divided into four different zones.

There is the clear area (i), open to both A and B. The heavily shaded lower area (ii) blind to both A and B. To the

left lies the semi-shaded portion (iii) blind to A but open to B, while to the right is a similar zone (iv) closed to B but open to A.
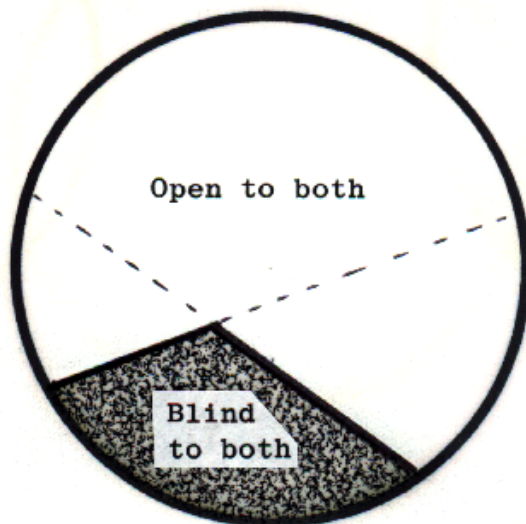
COLLUSIONAL PAIR

Open to both

Blind to both
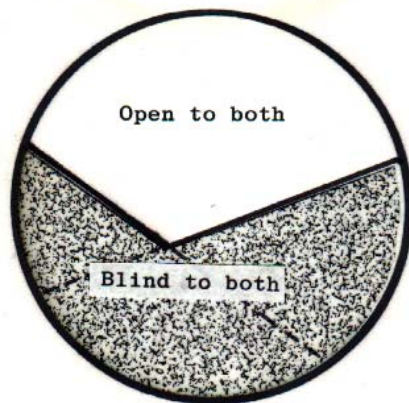
In so far as the relationship is collusional, zones (ii) (iii) and (iv) will all be included within the shared, or common, unconscious.

Unwritten agreements are reached such that neither partner disturbs the other's unconscious material. (The binding motif of so many marriages!).

MATURATIONAL PAIR

Open to both

Blind to both

If however, the pair is intentionally maturational, it will have different norms. Each will use the relationship in an attempt to overcome intrapersonal defences and to resolve the repressed unconscious material. A seeks B's insight to gain access to material otherwise blind to A and vice versa. The result is a steady claiming of all mutually open space, leaving a residue, or core, of common unconscious content and collusional defences.

At this point the co-counselling couple may feel that are in the clear and agree to collude in leaving unresolved common unconscious core undisturbed. Alternatively they may see this core itself as providing the outstanding agenda and co-operatively seek ways of working it through.
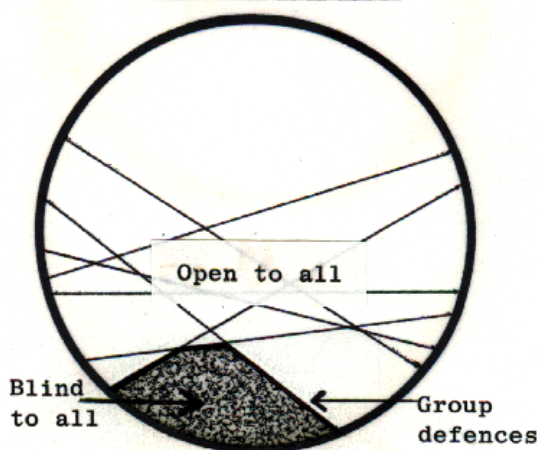
Moving up level from pair to group:

COLLUSIONAL GROUP

the collusional orientation will be seen to reduce accessible social space to a minimum, including within the common unconscious zone of the group or institution, material which belongs to the blind area of any member.

MATURATIONAL GROUP

Conversely the sustained maturational group uses its joint analytic resources to work through all unconscious material which is open to at least one member. The resistance to handling such material will tend to increase as those able to see through it find themselves in a smaller and smaller minority. Eventually, a residual core of common group unconscious content remains (see diagram), with the collusional defensive processes of the group dynamically engaged around it.

At this point the further distinction may be made between the residually collusional group, which seeks to preserve its core unconscious from resolution and the residually maturational group which corporately commits itself to resolving that central core around which its common collusional repressions are associated. The first pattern represents the therapeutic attempt to restore behaviour to the mean, the second represents the commitment to social development involving shifts in the mean or norm behaviour patterns themselves. Three fundamentally different patterns of social behaviour can now be distinguished.

i)   The majority of human social institutions are essentially <u>collusional</u> in process, working with the lowest common denominator of unconscious material and exhibiting extremely low levels of social awareness or maturational potential. New members commonly have to enlarge their zones of repression and unconscious collusion in order to match into the social system[13]. The collusional agenda is the avoidance of disturbance of unconscious material for any member of the institution.

ii}   The therapeutic society, on the other hand, uses its common resources to gain insight into social process and individual unconscious material in so far as these areas are open to some members. The maturational agenda involves the restoration of deviant behaviour to the norm. The collusional agenda commits itself to the non-disturbance of the norm, the maintenance of the common social defences against anxiety and the preservation of the common core of unconscious content.

iii)   In distinction from both previous forms, the developmental, or maturational society assigns highest significance to the as yet unresolved common core unconscious material and its associated defences. It recognises that the roots of dysfunctional social behaviour emanate from this central core and that improvement in the health of the social system as a whole requires cathartic integration of common unconscious content, together with co-operative dismantling of its associated social defences. It is to precisely this agenda that the discipline of psycho-social analysis seeks to make a contribution.

5. APPROACH TO ANXIETY

Behind the divergent stances of collusion and maturation lie fundamentally different ways of dealing with anxiety. These may be distinguished as "defensive" and "authentic". Anxiety itself is a basically functional system response to perceived threat. Whether at intrapersonal or social level it mobilises energy and alerts the system to counter the threat. It is part of the instinctive arousal response aimed at preserving the individual or system and maximising its chances of survival.   As such, anxiety is a healthy response indicating an agenda which requires attention.

The subject (individual, group or social system) may, however, respond with inappropriate levels of anxiety to a given situation, acting as if the present is more threatening than it really is. This paranoid reaction is the direct result of projection by the subject onto the situation of elements from the subject's own past or internal world, triggered by association with objects and events in the present. The subject then responds to the present as if confronted by its angst-generating past.

More seriously, in so far as the subject has encountered traumatic levels of impingement in the past, these will have generated intolerable levels of stress and anxiety, leading to the splitting off of certain areas of the psyche as a container for the unresolved material. The subject is, therefore, continuously exposed to the threat of the irruption from deep within the unconscious of the repressed material and its associated levels of psychotic anxiety. In this situation anything which tends to trigger such recall is treated as if it is itself the potential source of traumatic threat.   The same mechanisms of intra-subject defence against the irruption of psychotic anxiety are brought to bear to sustain repression of any information within the current context which carries the material by associative projection (transference). In this state of affairs, the experience of anxiety is no longer seen as an indicator of an agenda requiring functional engagement to foster system survival.   Instead, the anxiety itself is perceived as the threat and the enacted agenda involves the mobilising of mechanisms to

reduce anxiety and to defend the subject from a potentially overwhelming experience of psychotic angst.

It is the presence of unresolved traumata within the unconscious, with their associated levels of psychotic anxiety, requiring containment by intra-subject defences which energises the collusional behaviour described in the previous section. Conversely, authentic motivation welcomes an engagement with a real environment in order to foster subject survival without disturbance by the neurotic and psychotic phenomena associated with unresolved, unconscious content. The maturational stance represents a commitment to move away from collusional, defensive behaviour towards the authentic, reality-oriented position.

Defensive behaviour in the present represents the effects of unconsciously preserved past experience in which the subject encountered a situation threatening beyond the limits of toleration, generating uncontrollable levels of anxiety. At this point the subject split off from the angst-generating experience, effectively reversing in time and employing mechanisms which prevented it from consciously re-calling the anxiety levels associated with the precipitating trauma. It is as if a part of the subject failed to pass through the event with a continuous time-trace, but with respect to that particular event, the subject lives fixatedly in time just prior to the point at which the experience became intolerable. Any present situation or event which triggers recall of the unconscious material receives a similar response. Defences are called into play in such a way that the subject backs off the phantasy threat as if in reversed time regressing in behaviour to a point just prior to the precipitating trauma. The contrast between defensive and authentic behaviour is represented figuratively:
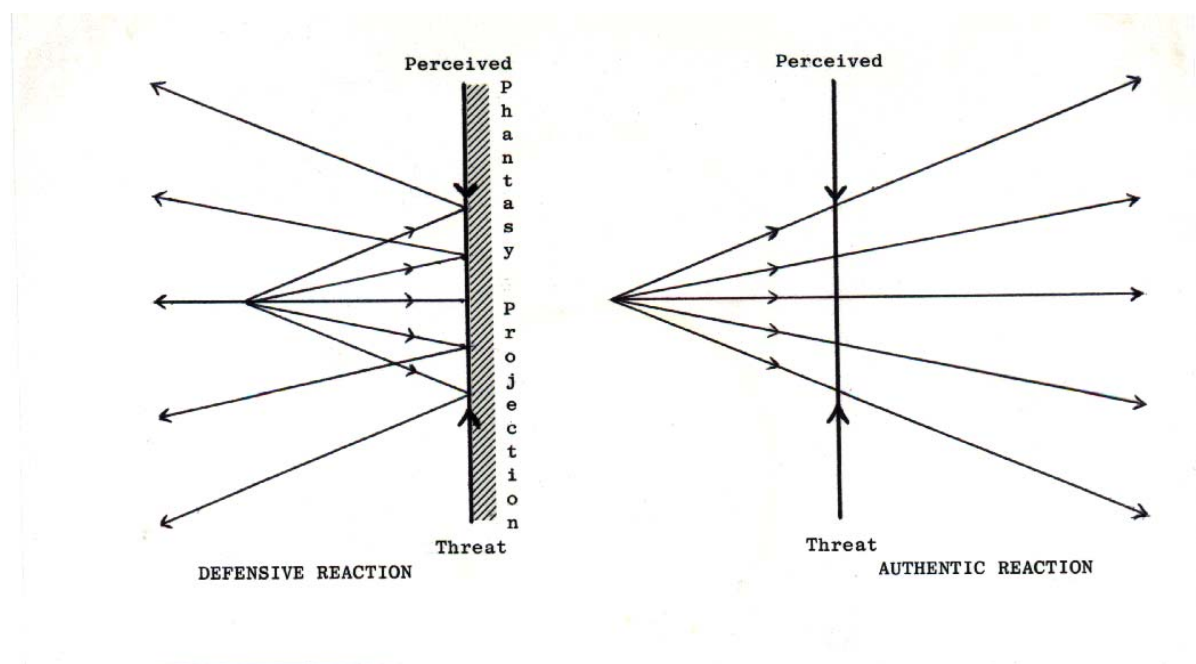
We are now in a position to identify and distinguish the different levels of being in a social system, together with the underlying dynamics which generate them in both defensive and authentic directions.

6. DIFFERENTIAL LEVELS

Every inside has an outside. Every human system, no matter how simple or complex, exists in an environment that is social, ecological and historical. At whatever level of aggregation of the social system we choose to place the boundary, the inside is always a subset of the whole, affected by its environment and, in turn, interacting with the environment in dynamic equilibrium.

DIFFERENTIAL LEVELS

Environment
System boundary
Inside:-
Presence
Performance
Dynamics
Controls
Drives
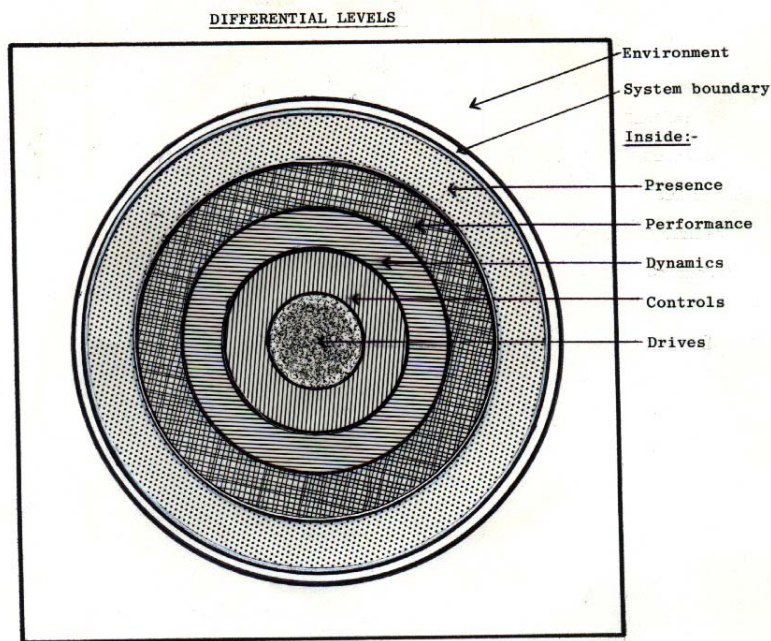
The definition of the boundary, determining the difference between what is "in" and what is "out" is an arbitrary convention, adopted f or ease of communication. For the rest of the paper "environment" will be used for that which is outside the boundary and "the system" will be used for that which is inside, whether this refers to an individual, a pair, small group, institution, community or higher level of social aggregation (see diagram).

At any given point in time, the system will exhibit a particular form of presence, a kind of still picture, freezing an essentially dynamic interactive process. The presence can be described or quantified in many ways, depending on the particular variables chosen for examination. At its simplist it could be in terms of the body weight of an individual, or the number of persons in a given institution. At the other end of the scale the presence may be described with a multitude of independent parameters, statistical, physical, economic, sociological, or psychological, which together constitute a complex multi-variable function, representing the state or level of the system at any particular moment.

Releasing the "pause" button on the video, or unfreezing the frame, introduces the next level, that of performance. As the system changes over time, so each parameter reveals a particular trend pattern. The trend may be very stable and static over long periods of time, or moving quite violently within even comparatively short time intervals. Performance may be subject to daily, weekly, monthly, annual or longer cyclic variations, superimposed on underlying trends.

System performance is an outworking of system dynamics - the way a particular characteristic of the system changes over time depends upon the various factors and forces at work. Some positively tend to increase the parameter concerned, others act negatively and tend to decrease the measure. System performance reflects the balance of the force-field in play, and change in performance is the result of shifts within this force-field.

The world of sociology tends to be limited to descriptions within the first two levels, namely presence and performance, while the third level takes us into the realm of force-field analysis, introduced by Kurt Lewin[14], and more recently applied to the modelling of complex social systems by Jay Forrester[15], whose work also opens up the next level.

System dynamics are in turn controlled by a network of complex feedback loops and modifiers. Some of these are heavily collusional and conservative, with the effect of damping down any changes in the force-field and resisting intervention and innovation within the system. Others may be more proactive, responding to changes in the environment and seeking to modify system presence and performance accordingly. This is the level of system controls.

Deeper still, the controls themselves are powered by system drives, representing energy committed to particular motivation, purpose or objective. The system drive will be more or less defensive, more or less authentic, depending on the fundamental approach to anxiety which dominates the system norms. The characteristics of the system at all levels therefore depend fundamentally upon how far the system drives represent a defensive flight from psychotic anxiety held within the system unconscious, and how far they represent an authentic engagement with a real environment[16]. It is to the distinguishing description of these two antithetical forms of social system that attention must next be given.

7. DEFENSIVE AND AUTHENTIC SYSTEMS
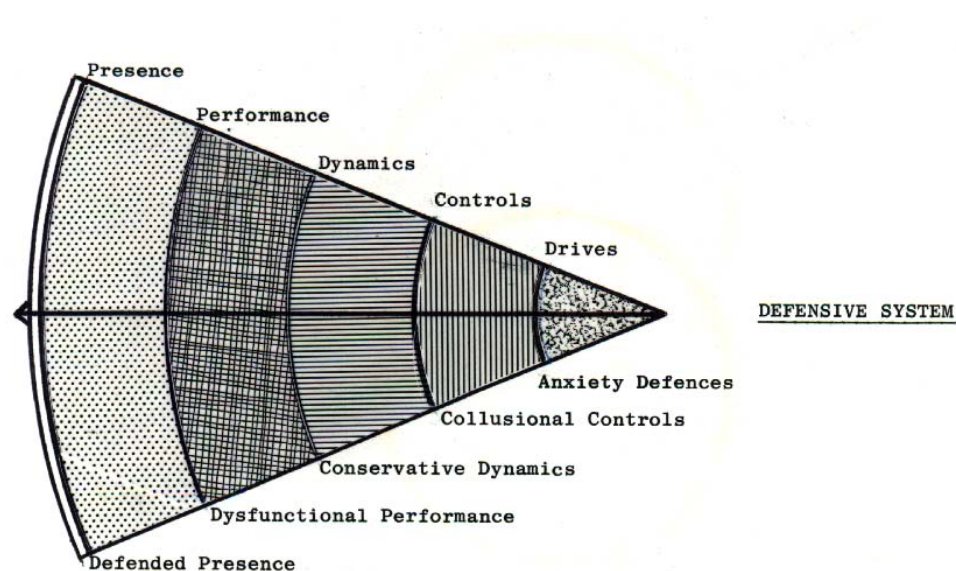
The concentric circles of the last diagram may also be thought of in three dimensions as concentric spheres or shells, the layers peeled off one by one, like onion skins, to lay bare successive levels of the social system. Alternatively, the diagram may be seen as the mouth of a tunnel, the entrance to the social unconscious. Successive levels are represented by tunnel sectors, stretching deeper into the interior. In perspective this latter viewpoint becomes a conic section. The front surface representing the presence of the institution, shading back layer by layer until the apex represents the drive (see diagram).

The defensive system derives its energy, motivation and drive from its attempts to control, restrain and suppress inherent levels of psychotic anxiety, held fixatedly in the unconscious in response to previously experienced traumata. The various mechanisms of defence used to contain the psychotic anxiety act at the control level of the system, setting up protective collusional links which keep the defences intact, so preventing the psychotic anxiety from overwhelming the system as a whole.

The collusional controls in turn operate on the system dynamics in such a way as to ensure that the presence and performance can only be affected by such environmental information or systemic changes as do not disturb the fundamental defences in place. Any dynamic intervention or change within the system which does threaten the defence structure is resisted, damped and aborted. Similarly any elements within the environment which might require changes, which in turn threaten the defences, are filtered out of the information allowed across the system boundary. The system's perception of environmental reality is therefore distorted in order to preserve a non-threatening world view. The dynamics become rigidly conservative and in so far as the real world within which the system exists differs fundamentally from the perceived world required to sedate system angst, just so far does system performance become dysfunctional and inappropriate. The system tends to become self perpetuating and rigidly non-adaptive to environmental change. The boundaries which such a system present to its environment are typically defended and closed. Transactions between inside and outside are carefully regulated and subject to paranoid distortion. At an individual level the body boundary is characterised by muscular armature (to use Reich's terminology[17]), while at a social level a large proportion of energy may be invested in controls of law and order, boundary management and more or less expensive systems of armament[18].

In summary, the defensive system exists in flight from psychotic anxiety and evolves its institutional processes by the criteria of effective angst-suppression, however damaging those processes may be to the effective functional performance of the system within its given environment.

In so far as the individual or social system is free from the presence of repressed psychotic anxiety and its associated defences, just so far is its energy available to engage adaptively with its environment in order to foster system survival and effect system goals (see next diagram). The fundamental drive of the system is oriented toward reality rather than reversed defensively in flight from anxiety. The open, unthreatened stance leads to system controls which are continuously testing and checking out the environment, the internal system parameters, and the boundary transactions between the system and its environment. This information is in turn passed through to the level of dynamics which are continuously being modified and adapted in the light of the information received.

The criteria for change within the defensive system depended on the levels of psychotic angst triggered by the proposed change. Within the authentic system, however, change is a functional response to environmental development in the light of system needs and goals. The flexibly adaptive dynamics generate functionally appropriate performance levels, which lead at any given time to an authentic presence of the system within its environment.
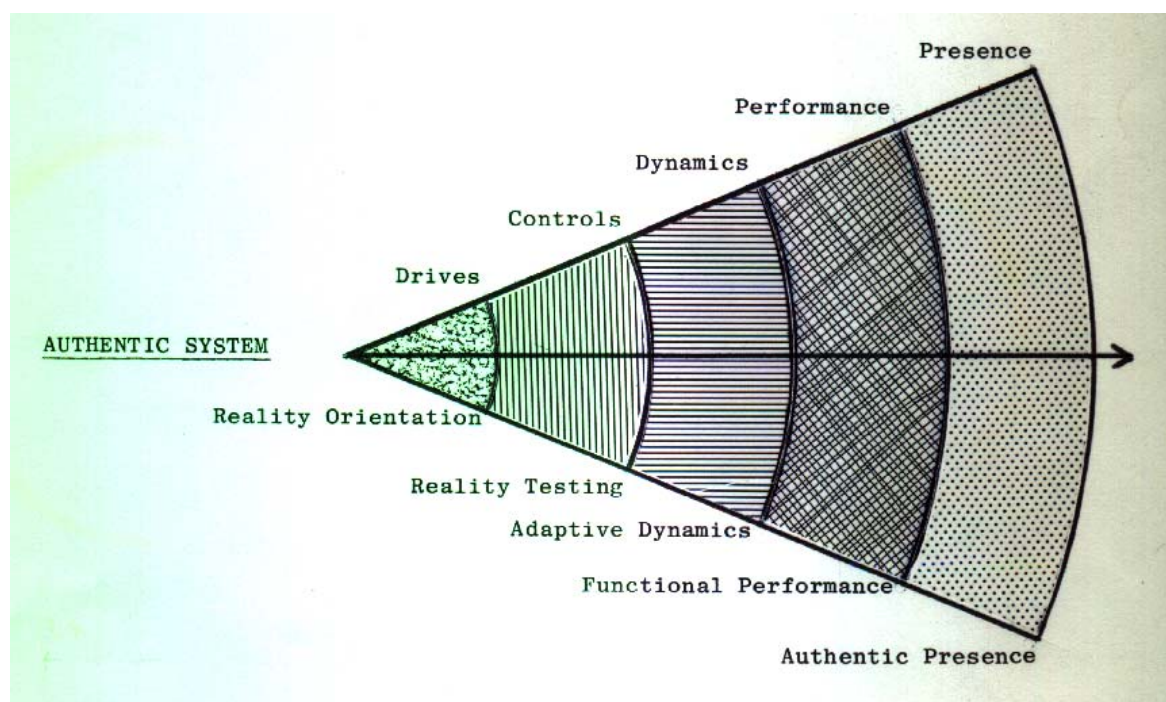
The boundaries of such a system are sensitively in touch with the environment and undefendedly open to information flow, no matter how threatening the information may, in fact, be to the system as a whole.

8. CONNECTIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS

Within any given human system, both the defensive and authentic patterns of behaviour co-exist (see next diagram). A purely defensive system would be so psychotically disturbed, so totally cut off from its environment that it would be in a continuous state of total psychotic breakdown, utterly dependent on its environment for the most basic nurture and nursing. On the other hand, a purely authentic system would have to be made up of members totally clear of all psychotic anxiety and repressed unconscious content, living in an environment populated by similar beings. While conforming closely to certain religious ideals, the practical reality does not exist.

The system itself, holding together its defensive and authentic strands, may be either collusional or maturational in its orientation. The collusional system develops structures and institutions dedicated to the maintenance of defences. It generates system norms which outlaw the analysis of, and intervention in, the neurotic and psychotic elements of the system's behaviour. In contrast, the maturational social system is aware of the dysfunctional character of its defensive structures. It develops institutions and norms dedicated to the systematic improvement of the health of the social system and its members. It fosters the analysis and controlled cathartic release of the unconsciously repressed traumata, whose fixated presence gives rise to the psychotic anxiety and its associated defences.

UNIFIED FIELD

Defensive sub-system

Authentic sub-system

Energy flow

Regressive

Maturational
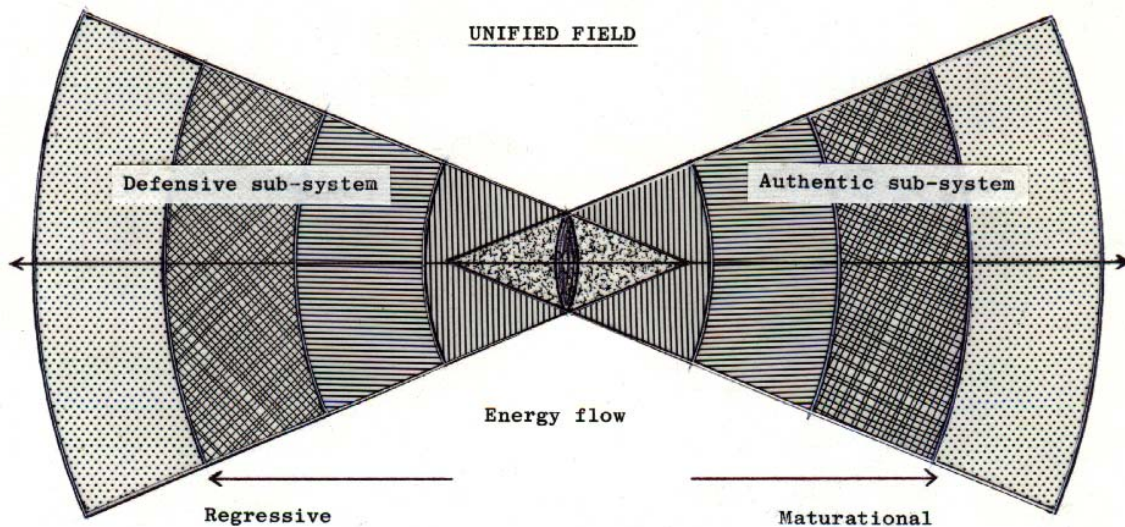
At any given point in time total system energy will be balanced in different proportions between the defensive and authentic subsystems.

The proportion of system energy invested in the defensive structures represents the degree of neurotic/psychotic behaviour within the system as a whole (see Appendix). The energy balance typical of macro social systems and high level human institutions approximates to the norm balance of society. Individuals, or subsystems, with much higher levels of energy invested in defensive behaviour, stemming from higher levels of psychotic angst, are deemed 'deviant' and 'abnormal'. The social system reacts to them by applying therapy, institutionalising them, or in severe cases, attempting to eradicate the disturbing element altogether. On the other hand, individuals and sub-sectors with higher than normal energy levels invested in the authentic structures challenge the defences of the norm system. They raise to consciousness the levels of psychotic anxiety which those defences serve to inhibit. In dysfunctional defence against the psychotic anxiety, the norm system turns in talion persecution upon such deviants, attempting to match their behaviour back into norm characteristics or failing that, to eliminate them also as disturbers of the peace.

Provided the norm system can sustain control of the deviant subsystems (both defensive and authentic), while maintaining a viable equilibrium in relationship to its environment, it views itself as an ideal society, defining normal as normative. The violence with which such a system rejects any insight into the neurotic nature of its normative position is an indication of the level of psychotic angst held at bay by the normal defences in place.

When such a system is exposed to environmental stress on its boundary, which disturbs the underlying defences and releases psychotic angst, the system tends to respond by investing more energy in the defence maintenance tasks in order to reduce the levels of anxiety experienced within the system. This shift effectively reduces energy available for functional problem solving in relationship to the changes in the environment. The system as a whole is therefore exposed to even greater threat, with consequent increase in the level of psychotic anxiety released and a steadily greater and greater proportion of its energy taken up in the control of acted out neurotic and psychotic patterns of behaviour within the system. A vicious circle develops in so far as the environmental stress arises precisely because of the

lack of systemic adaptation to environmental conditions. At an individual level the process leads toward neurotic and eventually psychotic breakdown. At higher levels of social aggregation, subsets of the community may collapse in dependence on to other sets, system boundaries break down and the psychotic behaviour is acted out in inter-group conflict. This in turn destroys even further those resources required for systemic health and leads to escalating conflict, which eventually reduces system energy to the point at which it collapses in exhaustion, heavily impoverished, and re-stabilises in a more heavily defended state with lower qualitative standards of living.

It must be noted in passing that certain political systems tend to gain power by adopting policies which tend to sedate social angst and allow the social system as a whole to regress further into a more defended mode. In so far as the political system represents a collusional activity, it can sustain its majority and may even gain the adulation of the masses, but it is at the expense of long-term degrade in the psycho-social health of the total system. Over the years, political policies espoused in the pursuit of power lead to increasingly dysfunctional system performance. Higher and higher levels of energy have to be vested in social control at both intra- and inter-national boundaries, leading to further degrade in the qualitative standards of living.

Currently all subsystems of the world community are experiencing increasingly stressful shifts within the environment. These stem partly from accelerating technological innovation, partly from the population explosion and its associated attenuation of available food supply, partly from rapid industrialisation with its over-consumption of irreplaceable reserves of energy and raw materials and partly from the inability of the world's ecosystem to absorb the rapidly rising levels of pollution emitted by the human swarm[19]. These angst-generating environmental shifts, coupled with dysfunctional political processes in social systems which are normally defensive, can be expected to trigger unstable feedback loops, and vicious circle instability within the global psycho-system during the coming decades.

If norm behaviour is treated as normative, then no systemic improvement in handling such conditions is possible and humanity would appear to be condemned to a trajectory of racial catastrophe before regaining some attenuated form of social existence in the post-breakdown world.

The thesis of this paper is, however, that the norm is precisely not normative. It denies the assumptions of classical psychoanalysis that norm defences against anxiety (particularly those designated by Melanie Klein as the paranoid-schizoid defences[20]) are instinctive, part of the unalterable datum of human being, incapable of intervention, analysis or modification. It affirms that major shifts of energy from defensive to authentic system behaviour are not only possible, but essential for the maintenance of social stability during the next 2 centuries as world population and industrialism encounter the limits of the holding capacity of the global ecosystem.

In so far as such shifts in norm behaviour are possible, they hold out the realistic hope of major improvement in the change-handling capacity of human systems and in the levels of potential achievement and maturation of the individuals which constitute them. On these foundations and in pursuit of such goals, psycho-social analysis faces a clearly defined task.

INTERLOGUE - THE ANALYTIC AGENDA

Major maturational shifts within the individual and social process require a transfer of energy from defensive to authentic drives. This is only possible in so far as the norm levels of psychotic angst within the system are reduced and the associated defensive structures dismantled. The process requires accurate analysis of the origin of those deep common traumata which energise the norm social defences and represent the core of as yet unresolved intrapersonal unconsciousness.

FOUNDATIONS OF PSYCHO-SOCIAL ANALYSIS
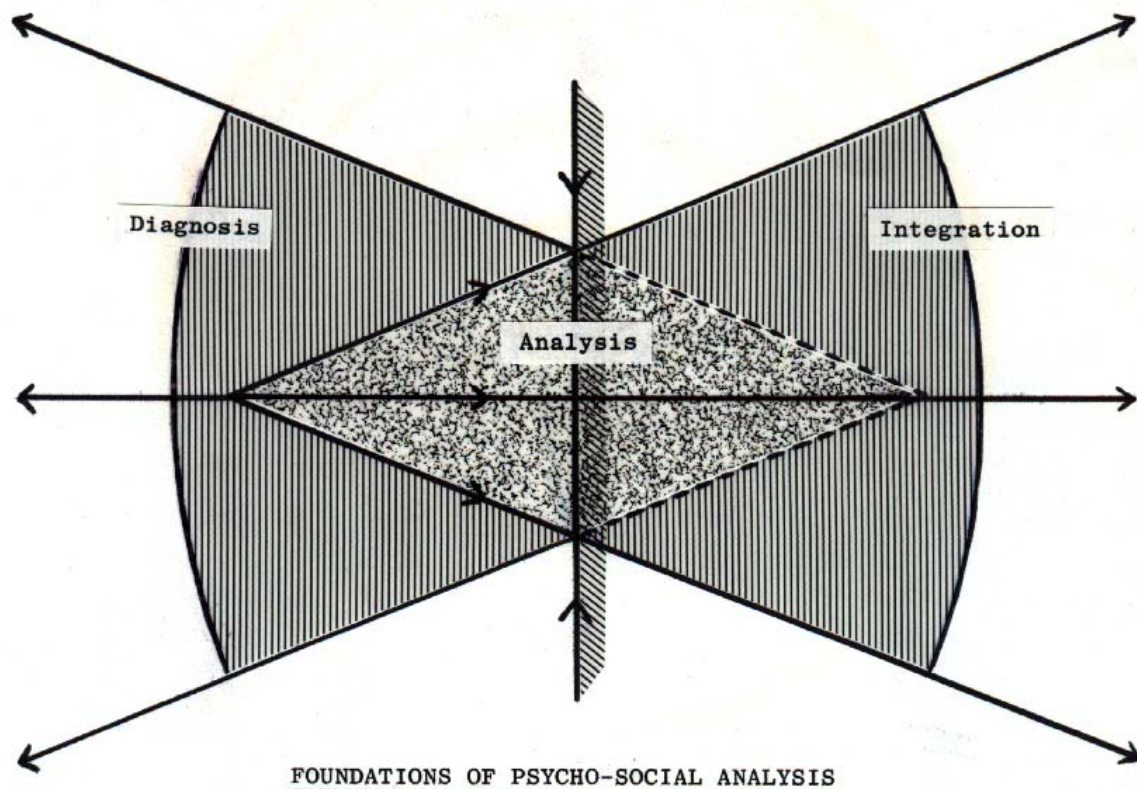
Such analysis must then be followed by examination of the effects and functions of the associated defences, both for individuals and for every level of aggregation of the social system. The process of analysis must be followed closely by the practical application of the material to processes of social maturation, integration and synthesis, leading to the annealing of hitherto unresolved psychotic angst, the reduction of energy vested in defensive behaviour and the release and reinforcement of authentic patterns of human being. It is to this agenda that further sections of this paper will be addressed.

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APPENDIX

For those interested in pursuing the mathematical foundations, diagram 18 is a symbolic representation of a multi-variable differential function:

If F_t is the function of the presenting surface of the system of n variables $(V_1 .... V_n)$ at time t

Then Presence (level 1) can be expressed as $F_t (V_1 .... V_n)$

Performance (level 2) can be expressed as $(d/dt) [F_t (V_1 .... V_n)]$

Dynamics (level 3) can be expressed as $(d^2/dt^2) [F_t (V_1 .... V_n)]$

Controls (level 4) can be expressed as $(d^3/dt^3) [F_t (V_1 .... V_n)]$

Drive (level 5) can be expressed as $(d^4/dt^4) [F_t (V_1 .... V_n)]$

Where t (defensive system) = -t (authentic system)

Note that at t=0 the space variables are not necessarily zero. As in black-hole physics time tends to zero at the event horizon of a sphere of finite spatial dimensions. t=0 is the point of onset of trauma generating time reversal for the defensive system. Thereafter events in the (imploded) defence cone are unconscious (i.e. not in time because existing beyond an event horizon) from the perspective of the authentic cone.

The available energy of the system, E_s, is split between its defensive and authentic components such that $E^s = E_d + E_a$

$(E_d/E_d+E_a)t$ represents the proportion of energy vested in the dysfunctional defensive
                 structure at time t.

Therapeutic society treats the mean value of this factor as normative. Developmental society aims to reduce it as close to zero as possible.

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