

EXISTENTIAL THOUGHTS AND APHORISMS

by

PAUL CIENIN



GRYF PUBLICATIONS LTD

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EXISTENTIAL AND ESSENTIAL

1

Forces striving to penetrate to the "unknown" are so powerful at times, and so occupy a man's entire personality that one may call them, in their totality, the transcendental instinct. It is this instinct which then sets in motion another powerful force serving it — the death instinct.

If the space before the "unknown" brightens up, the death instinct does the work of causing a more or less swift atrophy of inferior dynamisms. If the space does not brighten up, it kills a man's entire psychic being, and even leads to suicide.

2

Inner anxiety, inner conflicts, maladjustments, sorrows, and disruptions — everything that demeans our position in the scale of common values, work toward our passage to a world of higher values.

3

Inner conflict minimizes outer conflicts, building peace and compassion for others.

Who indeed are the existentialists, not in name but in substance? Who were Kierkegaard, Beckett, Jaspers, Camus? They were simply extreme psychoneurotics, who, moreover, apprehended most fully the pain and suffering of this world and expressed it with genius.

The existentialist cannot be mentally defective, cannot be mentally sick. The existentialist is the symbol of mental health, and hence of capacity for accelerated development. He is none other than highly developed psychoneurotic.

The brutal violence of death, the hideous decay, the fetid remains and the grave... and where is the spirit?

It is well to envision as fully as possible the rotting away of one's own body before it actually takes place.

Skill and versatility in identifying with other people makes our own death a more personal prospect, even an immediate reality in the presence of another's death. If we lack such skill in identifying with others, the death of others becomes remote to us and does not connect to our own. When faced with the death of others we just do not believe in our own death.

Creative transformations are possible only when the instinct of self-preservation or the life instinct collides consciously with the death instinct. Limned behind the gossamers veiling the inevitable destruction of the totality, there looms the possibility of saving a part in the struggle of the spiritual side with the fleshly, the human with the brutish, the conscious with the unconscious.

So-called normal man has a growing phobia against decomposition and nothingness, thence the alacrity of his prudence and self-preservation in dispelling the fateful images of death and disintegration. Witness his efforts to clothe death and funerals in graciousness, in a conventional smile and swift disposal of the remains, in the "efficiency" of the funeral ceremony; we clear away death as we do leftovers from the table and trash from the house. But, obviously, only facing the essence of death harbors some small hope of conquering it.

The greater the tension between the antinomies of objectivism and subjectivism, existence and essence, death and being — the nearer is the prospect of positive solutions, or of mental illness or of suicide.

Lacerating ourselves upon the very walls that seemed our support, we lose hope utterly and endure hopelessness, beyond which there is but a void or otherness — both desirable.

13

In cemeteries graves are indistinguishable, a smooth lawn, paved paths, everything taken care of by the municipality at a price, not individually by loving hands. And the graves themselves, the less fuss the better. Even flowers for the funeral are returnable to the flower shop. Much for outward show — but not too expensive, of course.

14

There are cemeteries imitating parks, full of “aesthetic arrangements”, lavish in decor, but void of accents on death, void of individualized graves. Such is “the triumph of life”.

15

Looking back and looking forward, sameness and change, death and life, the unique and the syntonetic, permanence of core qualities and their growth — all these are with man in his development.

16

One can endure sorrows, defeats, calamities and see their evolutionary significance. But one also needs at least a little success. Only — dare I ask — in respect to what?

17

Self-contradictory is the hierarchy of values that Thomism posits; the same holds true for monistic philosophies and their like, in these intellectual, abstract and universalistic functions are paramount. Such approaches exclude emotivo-aspirational functions and, by the same

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token, the *raison d'être* of all differentiated structures, unique, unrepeatable, genuinely human. Such doctrines, although they pay lip service to individual spiritual immortality, actually exclude it, for it is not compatible with the strict logic of their philosophical argument.

18

Men look alike and women look alike — one may choose among them. What matter individual physical or psychological differences, what matter exclusiveness and uniqueness, if the species drive is not differentiated and not inhibited.

19

Love, alas, does not pass beyond the grave; it chooses objects in this world. What is the meaning of eternal individual love? He whose comprehension of these matters is different, is always the loser in competition with the living.

20

Essence is more important than existence for the birth of a truly human being.

21

There is no true human existence without genuine essence. The condition of a truly human existence is awareness of and choice of what is quintessential, unique and enduring in a man, without which existence itself would be valueless.

22

Death must be deceived even at a funeral; life has to remain triumphant. That is why “keep smiling” is in

11

good standing at funerals, what comforting eulogies are for, and above all, the cosmetic make-up of the corpse, the comfortable coffinbed so that the deceased may look as if only asleep and create no consternation, so that one may identify with a sleeping person, not a repulsive cadaver. And then cover it up, shove it aside, forget it.

23

Swiftly whisk the body from the family home to the funeral parlor. And even before that — to the hospital, hopeless as the case may be. Let the most repulsive event occur there in the hospital, away from home. Then — the funeral parlor, the “artistic job on the body”, and hurry, hurry up back to life.

24

The mentally ill — rush them to the asylum in order to avoid anxieties over them, and continual reminders, painful experience. Pay generously for their care so long as it be away from the family, away from direct affliction. Put them “behind the wall” at a distance — anything to avoid sadness.

25

Much is written about people like Edgar Allan Poe, like Cyprian Kamil Norwid, like Marilyn Monroe, and how they died in poverty, humiliation or suicide. But for others who follow after, the same things lie in wait: to suffer callous misunderstanding, humiliation, no helping hand.

26

Is there anyone who does not leave a coffin with the remains of a dear one locked in it?

12

ON THE IDEOLOGY OF TRUTH

27

Visions of perfect government and of perfect state, if they exhibit a lofty standard and a program for realization, and especially if these have already been attained in some initial phase — will last for generations and resist all false systems, ideologies and their defective and pathological implementations.

28

Pursuit of an ideal world is the highest criterion and guarantee of meaning in societal existence. Socio-political realism, if it is to be genuine realism, must always have in it basic elements of idealism, but elements which are universal, implementable proportionately to the forces at their disposal and rooted in concrete multilevel conditions.

29

Whenever dictators suffer defeat, we will always turn to the leadership of such personalities as Christ, Socrates, Gandhi, Lincoln.

13

Genuine family love, genuine identity with one's own school, with the customs and manners and folk art of one's own country, the highest level of national consciousness — all these make for respect, acknowledgement and admiration for other hierarchies of value, for other cultures and other nations and peoples, all the way to a sense of full kinship with human culture and full empathy toward man in general.

TRUTHS "AS IF" AND NEGATIVE ADJUSTMENT

31

That which is good for us and bad for our neighbours, we used to call Providence; that which is unfavorable for us and favorable for others — accident or luck.

32

We see many things in a "spastic" way. We create a premature synthesis which is dominated by not very important matters which require a hasty generalization because of emotional tension of mediocre quality. We think, then, "while acting" or "after acting", in consequence with outcomes often harmful for us and others.

33

How particular and childish we are. We often make ourselves the center of attention and desire to interest others by a new hairdo, bracelets, earrings and other trinkets. The direction of our interests and our view expresses the level of our "essential values".

34

Our ideal nations, our great ideals, fade through life's experiences. We can seldom stop this weakening tendency of life and seldom do others help us stop this weakening tendency.

We often guess superficially the negative qualities of our character but when we are forced to correct our obvious mistakes we do not make these corrections permanent. We prefer guesses to arduous search.

35

Your flashy speech
May be disguise
Is your heart true
Is your mind wise?

36

Content and unchanging, without a care,
He preaches as only a fool would dare.

37

The best, easiest and most economical. Children are sent to good boarding schools, aged parents to well-run old-folk's homes. Easy solutions, allowing few constraints, few obligations and even... little remorse.

38

Two strangers talking about a third stranger... a swift acquaintance arose out of criticizing the third one.

16

Surface opinions, natural disinclinations, sometimes confidential secrets, and then the roles change. The one who was criticized gossips with a new stranger about his erstwhile critic. Wrong, averse, degrading talk about others, as long as it does not touch ourselves.

39

In public transportation few young people offer their seats to an older person. More often an old person offers his seat to a still older or sick person. Some of them do it because of their real sensitivity and empathy but most of them want to show others that they are younger and more physically able.

40

If you want to develop yourself truly, you should be able to adjust and also maladjust, to different kind and levels of reality.

17

AUTONOMY AND AUTHENTICITY

41

Adults are never as sincere as children in mutual criticisms unless they are saints or — contrarily — mentally deficient or psychopathic. Sincerity in a child often creates a school of education in mutual relations between children through not holding back honest criticisms of each other.

42

A truly authentic attitude has three methods of resolving intellectual and emotional tensions: mental illness, suicide, or struggling toward the absolute despite great difficulties and few results.

43

Faltering success — what a big word and a great period in development. Until now there were ambitions, financial needs, desire to possess desire for power and importance. Need to be higher, unaware of the problems of other people, hurting them or even destroying them. And now... forgetting about oneself, helping others,

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activities grasping at the banal word "sacrifice", compassion, empathy, identification with others and many previously unknown attitudes. But how much we still desire partial success, even small results in spiritual things, in so-called higher matters. Only after the majority of our aims and goals are reduced to ashes, do some remain to light the way toward love without self-satisfaction.

44

Who accepts misfortunes with heroism and love, who accepts life's defeats with a smile, who desires destruction of fortunes in this dimension, who...? But only by meeting sadness and despair, only by meeting the destruction in this world is there a spark of hope for gaining something that transcends it, something — my God, You know if You exist, though I know so little about You.

45

The need for authority is directly proportional to professional knowledge and one-sided expert knowledge. Conversely, the growth of a multilevel, multidimensional knowledge, the growth of sensitivity in more important domains of reality, is connected with a dislike for authority, and moreover, with a desire and attitude of humility.

46

If we do not have a ready basis for the development of an inferiority feeling toward oneself and others, we have to acquire it sooner or later to really develop ourselves positively.

19

In a humanist's world authenticity appears when there is something known by one's own inner experience, and not merely when one just knows about something, even globally. The second attitude calls for many "additions", "supplements", and complementations. That is why the authentic painter has to experience his own work and even have conflicts with his own work. The authentic dramatist has to experience crimes, heroism, loftiness, inner conflict; the candidate for authentic psychiatrist has to himself experience psychic disturbances.

How good it is to be a hero in everyday life, always "myself" different from others, always better, more intelligent and more handsome, always criticizing others, always negative observations concealed by good introductions, always searching for a background, searching for roles for others in order to prove oneself better, searching for borders in order to find one's place in the center. Psychology of background for oneself, for one's own role. He is 'such' and — see for yourself — "I am different" in different kinds of cults of being higher. Thank God that I am not as other people or as that Publican.

How fascinating it is to occupy oneself with spiritual, new, unknown, unusual, unreachable matters! Transformations, self-denial, sacrifice, suicides — how unusual they are! But if one wants to experience all these matters — from narcissism to authenticity — one must not only occupy oneself with them but truly deny oneself, truly leave illusion, and truly go on committing partial suicides.

Autonomy — but in relation to what? Not only in the name of one's own freedom — because what is freedom, and in relation to what? Maybe in relation to others' opinions enlightened by one's own detached intuition; perhaps — and maybe above all, in relation to suggestions driving from lower levels of one's own temperament and character.

What a great mystery in creating an inner autonomy! They ask me its origin because it is different and even opposed to hereditary tendencies and influences of the environment. I answer I don't know. I am wickedly delighted that I can't give a scientific answer, only an intuitive one. It is simply a problem so deeply human that science cannot give an answer. We can only say that it comes from development, from conscious transformation, from one's own experiences, from the independent and unrepeatable "I" and perhaps... perhaps from slight contact with the transcendental level.

One's "own forces" known from modern neuropsychology, one's own developmental forces, the appearance of the "third factor"¹ in a stimulus-response paradigm, the transforming forces in relation to stimuli, containing in themselves full rich answers — are all dynamisms that are more and more autodeterministic, more and more autonomous, more and more authentic.

¹ The "third factor" is a mental dynamism of conscious choice in development of that which is "more myself" and rejection of that which is "less myself".

Great personalities are honored by monuments, publications, celebrations and usually... they do not have imitators. Relations with them are generalized, abstract and rigid. People don't experience the fullness of their personalities, their concreteness and uniqueness. They become institutionalized, walled-off, nonliving.

One cannot acquire authentism as a gift, one only wins it by division in oneself, by inner conflicts and autonomy.

Nothing which is authentically idealized is conquered easily. High values are hard to reach or are beyond reach. But this is the idealists' problem. The others, the realists who know the "real" side of ideal, are different. They care not about authenticity of realization. According to them, they know ideals and realize them very easily.

People chewing gum in public transportation cannot imagine how their jaws look and how similar it is to the same movements in the animal world. They can't easily recall the common pictures of meadows and grazing and masticating quadripeds.

To be authentic does not mean to be natural, to be as you are, but as you ought to be.

When others observe us, come into contact with us or think about us, and when we do the same to them and even to ourselves, there is always something present like a double, a shadow, a complement and perhaps even a central element. This is a figure entangling us with "secret knowledge", or gossiping; it is what others say about us "never completely expressed" but presented in "subtle" gestures, tone of voice, and a very "knowing" expression. This most frequently false figure obsessively follows after our "authenticity". It is cut off and destroyed only by very wise men with deep authentism.

The authentic in a man is not the animal, but the man.

FORCES OF DEFENSE AND DEVELOPMENT

60

In psychiatry and also in education one often talks about defensive forces but one doesn't tell what they defend. In development, which clearly shows higher and lower dynamisms, defensive forces can protect every one of these dynamisms, but always those which are stronger or becoming stronger.

61

The instinct of biological self-preservation and the instinct of self-perfection possess protective devices, something like safety valves. These devices act in the service of the instinct of self-preservation and cover up before the imagination and consciousness the lowest interests, instinctive biological drives and the phenomena of mutual "devouring". But the devices of the instinct of self-perfection open the valves of imagination to an attractive though unclear future, emphasize the positive sides of this future, increase prospecting and retrospection connected with development and help overcome animal instincts, and the lowest interests.

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THE CONCRETE ASPECTS OF THE ABSOLUTE

62

We will know nothing about God, especially about His goodness and justice as long as there exist monologues about Him and not dialogues with Him. Indeed, there exist saints, but not many of them, who demonstrate comprehensible reasonable dialogue. There exists the Holy Scripture — and above all, there is the miracle of Christ's existence. But at the present time all this must be confirmed by a new and for us more authentic call from God, to make silent the voices of concentration camps, the everyday triumph of material things, the everyday increase of evil, the everyday victory of lies, and the power of death.

63

Discovery of the object in oneself is at the same time the discovery of subject in others. The ability to treat oneself as object allows us to treat others as subjects, as human beings one can understand and feel for. Both attitudes allow the coexistence and cooperation of the deepest empathy for others, and at the same time the deepest feeling of one's own individuality and uniqueness that is related to humility and respect for others.

25

Not grasping time in the basic phenomena of everyday life precedes the phase of feverish sensitivity to time, sensitivity of the individual to the passing of all values, sensitivity to the shattering action of time for many years to come. And later, maybe comes the need of timeless experience whereby the experienced values are retained.

How I dislike maturing through losing my present qualities. How great and human it is not to lose close, clear, conscious and already chosen qualities but rather to increase their power and complexity. Let's not lose but rather ennoble magical and animistic thinking, freshness of enthusiasm, sincerity, imagination and intuition. Let's not change true friends if we have them. Let's not change the objects of our love but let them grow in the mutual school of life. Let's not rejoice at narrow, tight rationalization, at maturity and rigid instincts, at adjustment to the opinion of the majority and maladjustment to the ideal.

To destroy all the sensually concrete which is connected with the lower instincts and to keep all the spiritual concreteness and unchangeableness of chosen qualities. In this spirit, Kierkegaard fought for Regina Olsen, for love in the absolute and... lost. And perhaps not, perhaps the same Regina will come in transcendence; the same, yet richer and understanding the unrepeatability of their relationship.

Toward the concrete in transcendence, toward exclusiveness and unrepeatability in transcendence, toward the subjective absolute in transcendence! Adjustment to that which ought to be, and maladjustment to so-called everyday reality. How strongly and with what determination one has to follow the path of positive maladjustment.

Secondary integration — this is where the greatest harmony appears on the way to personality and its ideal — and then perhaps new disruptions and perhaps new sensitivity, but not anymore to voices and whispers of transcendence but to its distinct reality.

We have anxiety of different levels, we have calmness of different levels, and we have the reality of different levels. Restless and intensifying development. But something is present which soothes the anxiety of conflict, the anxiety of calm and the anxiety of multilevel reality. Because what comes is otherness in sameness.

Understanding the division or "disruption" between that which is subjective and that which is objective is possible through inquiry into developmental correlations of both attitudes. Here the "subject" develops an objective attitude toward himself, and becomes an "object", and this allows the treatment of others as "subjects" in their full richness, unity and unrepeatability.

"Thus, the "disruption" becomes cooperation, an antinomy — a syntony, a division — an enriching union. Maybe it is a way to shed the rigidity of monistic unity and inflexible "perfection", through the introduction of distinctions which transcend the "perfect immobility" and unchangeability, by perfecting dynamisms with the unchangeability of only certain qualities.

71

The developmental intersubjective and intrasubjective dynamisms provide for union into a strong, harmonious complex reaching toward transcendental reality.

72

One should remember a close and deceased person as a fresh flower and living wound, but not only this... one should live with him as with a person, at least in thought, imagination and longing; one should create his transcendental form, and if it's possible — never again have such a close relationship.

INNER PSYCHIC MILIEU

73

Authoritativeness and aggressiveness are inversely proportional to the development of the inner psychic milieu, in particular to its dynamisms as: dissatisfaction with oneself, "third factor", inner psychic transformation and empathy.

74

We live outside, we develop sensitivity to the external world, its heterogeneity and the richness of external experiences and external milieu. But we will never become true people, authentic people, if we do not have in our inner world the same heterogeneity, the same richness, the same interests and vitality, and more... if we do not discover the richness flowing from the inner hierarchy and from approaching the ideal.

75

The importance of internal and external conflicts in the psychic development of man has not been sufficiently recognized. The former immunize us from external conflicts and play a fundamental role in the positive development of man; the latter, if they are not conjoined with the former, are the basis of aggression, destruction of others, wars, and are thus involuntal.

76

Humility is a feeling of inferiority — not only in relation to others and to one's own weaknesses and faults but also in relation to the all — encompassing human ignorance, powerlessness, suffering and defenselessness.

77

It is important to develop a correct relation with the external milieu, yet how much more important to develop the inner psychic milieu.

78

External stimuli and external conditions do not reveal the most important of human characteristics. These are revealed by transformation of inner stimuli and of the material provided by external stimuli.

79

Psychic richness is characterized by behavior resulting from inner experience.

80

Values are the talents and the processes of development. One should search for their genesis in one's own biologically determined forces; not contained in the stimulus, they appear in the response transforming the stimulus. They are the basis for creation of a physiological milieu and then of the inner psychic milieu which is autonomous, grows in autonomy from external stimuli and from the negative stimuli of one's own structure. Values are developmental and multilevel phenomena — bio-psychological and moral-normative — but always empirically and logically verifiable.

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ON CREATIVE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH

81

How often mental immaturity is a blessing because of the possibilities of unceasing maturing. Woe to those who are effortlessly and finally mature!

82

Be greeted psychoneurotics! For you see sensitivity in the insensitivity of the world, uncertainty among the world's certainties. For you often feel others as you feel yourselves. For you feel the anxiety of the world, and its bottomless narrowness and self-assurance. For your phobia of washing your hands from the dirt of the world, for your fear of the absurdity of existence, for your fear of being locked in the world's limitations. For your subtlety in not telling others what you see in them. For your awkwardness in dealing with practical things and practicalness in dealing with unknown things, for your transcendental realism and lack of everyday realism, for your exclusiveness and fear of losing close friends, for your creativity and ecstasy, for your maladjustment to that "which is" and adjustment to that "which ought to be", for your great but unutilized abilities. For the belated appreciation of the real value

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of your greatness which never allows the appreciation of the greatness of those who will come after you. For your being treated instead of treating others, for your heavenly power being forever pushed down by brutal force; for that which is prescient, unsaid, infinite in you. For the loneliness and strangeness of your ways. Be greeted!

83

Irritability is the enemy of sensitivity — it reduces it and leads to disease.

84

Oversensitivity without inner psychic transformation brings many unnecessary conflicts with others — magnifies the differences, and lessens and obscures the most important things.

85

First the mentally ill were unchained from irons and later humane conditions of care and treatment were created for them. They began to be treated as were other sick people. But this isn't enough, no it is still less than enough.

We have a vision of a hospital of the future for the so-called mentally ill. It would be a center of great universal human knowledge, above all, psychological and moral, and of wise love. The candidates "to be treated" would be those, who, because of needs and aims of development, "can't go through life", can't cope with themselves and their environment. They would be those who are filled with overexcitability, sensitivity, phobias, sadness, breakdowns, dissatisfaction with themselves. Those who have lost faith in themselves and in the meaning of life. Those for whom love is a basic need,

32

and who cannot find, their ideal object of love and those who are distracted and maladjusted because they see a higher level of reality — "things not of this world"; those who experience incomplete visions, who are emotionally immature, and full of fear and trembling for others.

What about those who will administer the treatment? They will have three foci of vision — inward, beyond, and toward others. They will have knowledge completed by wisdom, they will be protective because of their own experiences of abandonment and loneliness, they will be immunized against despair by having conquered their own despair; they will be open-hearted because of love felt in their "nights of the soul"; they will have visions of others' evolution through experiencing their own.

In such a place will be treated those who are searching for greater strength than they now possess, for visions more concrete than their own, prospectings of that which they should be, stronger and clearer than their own prospecting. There will be those searching for affirmation of some of their ways, for the injection of goodness which can do much more than any other injections. And one more thing: such a hospital will be an honor for those who come. It will be a testimony that those coming to it in need are on the proper, "royal" way of development.

86

In the world ruled as it is now there must arise very many psychoneuroses. In this world nervous persons must be nervous because the lower level controls the higher one. What a great gulf between these levels — the masters of this world do not know that the reality of psychoneurotics which they suppress and subordinate is such a high reality.

33

87

Sensitivity without a developmental outlet turns into irritability.

88

A great number of psychiatrists have symptoms of unilevel disintegration.¹ This is the basis of their imbalance, their lack of responsibility, weak educational abilities, conjugal infidelity, separations and divorces which — it seems — are more numerous here than in other social groups. They manifest psychic overexcitability and disharmony, while their inner psychic transformation and self-control are insufficient. This is clearly related to the absence of a distinct hierarchy of values.

89

It is good that in society there are psychoneurotics and suicides. It speaks well for them — but not for the society.

90

We dwell on likenesses and we forget about differences. We are attracted by generalities and overlook the specifics. Such is the case of psychoneuroses. The brilliance of the idea of a link between psychoneuroses and psychoses blinds us to their main dynamisms, their origin, course, and their developmental richness and creativity.

¹ Unilevel disintegration is a stage of mental development where there is no sense of direction, no hierarchy of values, where external conflict is more frequent than inner conflict where one's own forces of self-determination have not yet come into play.

91

A high degree of mental deficiency precludes the co-existence of psychoneurosis.

92

The transition of psychoneurotic dynamisms to a higher level immunizes the individual against mental illness.

93

One has to be immunized by the "psychic injections" of nervousness and light psychoneuroses to be protected from serious psychoneuroses or psychoses.

94

How often it is said that mentally ill people are lost, mixed up, entangled in absurdity, limited, and condemned to deterioration. But perhaps under the cloak or illusion of failure and deterioration they can see and feel the things that are covered for the "normal" lords of this world?

95

One can never return to the so-called norm by removing psychopathological dynamisms. Nevertheless, by placing them under higher dynamisms, one can reach authentic, higher development. But then it is difficult to speak of the incorporated ones as "pathological".

96

Psychoneuroses are not unilevel phenomena. Each contains different levels of psychic functions.

Accord on important matters is always dangerous. Take, for instance, so-called perversion. Certainly not all forms of necrophilia — especially those lived in imagination — are pathological. Sometimes they are the result of excessive idealization, shyness, imaginal excitability and strong existential experiences.

There are some forms of fetishism that express strong, exclusive, emotional relations, as well as emotional, sensual and imaginal overexcitability, in other words they are the result of an excessive irradiation of experiences. If there are no other related pathological symptoms — this dynamism is not pathological.

Also, some forms of masturbation which result from exclusive emotional relations and emotional and imaginal overexcitability — at prolonged separation from a loved one — make masturbation a morally and emotionally easier to accept form of release than intercourse with someone other than the loved one.

In the task of growth we do not graft so-called “positive pathological” qualities onto the healthy ones in order to give them the proper direction of transformation; rather we graft them onto the qualities more universally developed and which are on a higher level, that is to say, are less pathological or are meta-pathological.

There are many different levels of psychoneuroses as well as different levels within the same psychoneurosis. It seems that psychasthenia or infantile psychoneurosis

represents a higher level of the hierarchy of functions than neurasthenia, hypochondria, or somatic neurosis. Also, for example, hysteria can be differentiated into levels — its lowest form is hysterical characteropathy with symptoms of artificiality and pathological lying and so on. A higher form is conversion hysteria, and the highest form is that which presents increased emotional overexcitability, dramatization of life's attitudes, susceptibility to stimuli of higher levels, contemplation and ecstasy.

When you have a neurosis — you not only have distress and inner conflicts but also psychic richness.

Don't seek mental health! Seek development and you will find both.

Treat yourself through your own development and creativity!

Develop your child adequately and you will not have to treat him.

Don't be afraid of sorrow, depression, fear, obsessions, inner conflicts and sometimes external ones. If they are adequately recognized and guided — they will serve you.

Self-perfection is always a partial suicide. A developing instinct of life must cooperate with the instinct of death because it is the death instinct, which eradicates brutish impulses and the remainder of disintegrating negative structures.

TOWARDS THE HIGHER

105

Conscious mental disruption augments prospection and hierarchization; it seeks higher forms to replace those destroyed. It builds a new and more valuable structure.

106

No experiences, no shocks, no breakdowns will trigger growth if the embryo of what is to develop is not there.

107

A house having a distinctive style cannot be made by attaching additions. If we do not like the house we have but crave one of a superior design, we must demolish the old one at once or by degrees — always remembering the strengths and weaknesses of the condemned structure in order to build the new one better.

108

Mental division and disruption takes place when that which is injured and divided is close — in strength — to that which injures and divides. Without this equality there is no disruption.

110

The process through which a child gains developmental experience and progress is laborious.

Here is a child who receives an unjust mark for his class-work or behavior. If the child wants to convince the teacher of the error and he does it by trying harder — the child is going about it in the best possible way. Then if the child gets a just mark from the same teacher — the child acquires knowledge about the teacher's positive and negative qualities and also acquires significant knowledge, though a child's knowledge, about himself. Something in his attitude is broken down and something is built up. And then onward to greater understanding, greater feeling, greater objective judgement of himself, greater dissatisfaction with himself, deeper understanding and compassion for others.

111

Divisions and ruptures, numerous divisions and ruptures in one's inner milieu are made whole by empathy for others, because only the 'ruptured' has room for identification, empathy and love. Only the "ruptured" awaits fulfillment, only the "ruptured" is not rigid, tight, and "rejecting".

112

Suicide is not always a bad solution. But there may be something better and this would perhaps be an immense thrust of developmental and creative power arising in part from the disintegration of the lower drives.

113

Exclusive feeling of love, with enhanced emotional excitability and naturally strong sexual drive, inhibit undifferentiated heterosexual and inclusive drives. This testifies that the sexual instinct has here transcended the "law of the species".

114

Conscious inhibition of lower functions is always related to the awakening of higher functions and, vice versa, conscious development of higher functions is always related to an inhibition of lower functions.

115

Do not run from yourself but conquer yourself!

116

There often exist actions which inhibit inhibitions; this means that a lower form of inhibition such as freezing on the spot in fear can be inhibited by higher forms such as shame, ambition, and courage. These second order inhibitions result from the activation of higher functions.

40

REALITY OF THE IDEAL

117

That which is uncommon, individual, differentiated, and multilevel may serve as a model for that which is common, undifferentiated, unilevel provided the unilevel has the nuclei to become multilevel.

118

When we see that which is "mature", already developed and ended, with what yearning we think about that which is not yet mature, which is creative, sincere, direct, naive, and still full of possibilities.

119

To make real, within the limits of possibility, dreams and related states and to make unreal everyday reality — this is perhaps the task of men of the future.

120

Kafka preferred dreams to reality. He elaborated, systematized, cultivated and controlled them. He trans-

41

ferred his "headquarters" to dreams. Their strength and penetration transcended reality. Yes... perhaps it is the problem of the future to develop dreams and similar states and to create from them the main dimensions of reality.

DETERMINISM AND INDETERMINISM

121

Determinism of a lower level must give way to self-determination. Creating must give way to self-creating, and education to education of oneself. And it is here that determinism changes into indeterminism and ultimately into self-determination.

ON CREATIVITY

122

Sometimes there are positive emotional regressions. If not, how else can we define such emotional experiences of men of different age who, though undefeated, retire from the field of battle for a while to psychologically mature in the world of imagination and solitude, who retreat to the "land of their childhood" — or, if they can — who return to the milieu of their childhood, to draw from there the air of freshness, open-heartedness, understanding, truth, to be filled with openness, spontaneity, creativity, and then return to life's struggles "hardened" by love, concern, and care for their closest ones.

123

They talk about the necessity of satisfying our basic needs before realizing our higher ones. Yet, if we do not develop our higher needs together with basic ones, the latter will grow, swell and settle in, and then... there will be no room for the higher ones.

INSTINCTS AND SUPERINSTINCTS

124

How did the extermination of cultures by primitive powers come about? Among the reasons we see first taking pleasure in civilization and its comforts and the growth of hedonism, secondly, lack of fortitude, and lack of deeper sense of death, and finally the growth of consciousness and intelligence without a concurrent growth of superconsciousness and authentic needs of transcendence. The barbarian impulsively despised death because he did not understand it. He was a man of action and had not yet tasted of hedonism. Thus on one side there were impulsive goals, courage, and contempt for unknown death — while on the other there was life without a hierarchy of values and aims, a fear of death not transcended existentially, and overgrowth of materialism and pleasure in sensual life.

MULTILEVELNESS OF EMOTIONAL
FUNCTIONS

125

We have very clear differences in levels of human functions. So it is with intelligence and moral, social, religious and aesthetic feelings. So it is with such functions as love, empathy, courage, consciousness, suggestibility, contemplation and ecstasy.

126

The ease, strength, and long duration of emotional reactions provided the basis for a false conception of the so-called "threshold of resistance" to frustration. People give positive opinions about being able to adjust easily and they speak well about a "high" threshold of resistance to frustration. It is as if they praised those who are insensitive, those who in a "well-balanced" way accept joys and sufferings (mainly the latter), and who easily "cope well with them". How bad and one-sided is such an understanding of "adjustment" and inner psychic transformation! How unchristian it is, how inhuman and unspiritual and how very physiological!

127

As in all psychic activities, laughter and smiling have their different levels. From a brutal and unsubtle discharge of laughter, from a malicious and cynical smile — to the sincere, loud laughter of a child and to a smile full of empathy, subtlety and discrimination.

128

Don't yearn for simple balance! How much better to be imbalanced until by your conscious effort you will acquire balance on a higher level!

129

Remember that reality is not only varied but also has different levels — it is multilevel. Love, ambition, empathy, joy, smiling, inhibition or excitation — all have their own different levels.

130

Develop your feeling to a higher level, because only their development, wedded to the development of reason, will make you a true man.

131

Values can be understood objectively in their development and in their levels. One can differentiate and describe them on many levels, thus one can apply to values a multilevel and differential diagnosis.

The multilevel understanding of values allows one to discern their direction in further development. It gives the ground for an empirically justifiable system of hypotheses concerning the shaping of their structure in further development, "in prospection", i. e. that which they will be and even that which they "ought to be". The conception of that which "ought to be" is then empirically verifiable and allows an entry into the moral, normative, and teleological territories.

Values so conceived contain the possibility of verification through the developmental assumption of that which "is", that "which will be" (empirical prognosis), and that "which ought to be" (moral and teleological prognosis).

The empirically verifiable development of values progresses from that which is primitive, to that which is unilevel disintegration, and further to that which is multilevel but spontaneous disintegration, still higher to that which reached organized multilevel organization, and even — secondary integration.

There are different levels of processes of positive disintegration and secondary integration. Sometimes the size and tension of positive disintegration is so high that life is too short to acquire after such a creative

disintegration a proportionately all-encompassing secondary integration. Michelangelo's eighty-ninth and last year of his life came too soon to crown his immense and intense positive disintegration with the calm fulfillment of secondary integration.

ON PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGISTS

136

Some "psychologists", founding their opinions and attitudes on sensing, perception, computers and logic, considered themselves to be followers of so-called reductionism. They reduce, of course, that which they do not possess.

137

It used to be said that a psychologist was an expert on souls, but when the soul was liquidated from science — in a scientific manner — psychologists began to occupy themselves with "sub-spiritual" matters, especially with those on the lowest level defined most rigorously, because only here scientific methods can be applied. In this way the "psychic man" and his integrated personality ceased to exist for psychology; he was lost on the way and drowned by the enthusiasm for measurable parameters. How blessed is the fact that they left this field free to artists, writers and philosophers.

138

There are philosophers, psychologists and other scientists who do not concede the objectivity of levels of

psychic functions of man because they can't touch or perceive these levels or measure them by standard methods. That is why insight, helpfulness, justice, empathy, thoughtfulness, aesthetic and moral sensitivity are to them "subjective" phenomena.

On the other hand they search for the most "objective" methods to evaluate a good level of teachers and educators for their children; they even demand that they themselves should be evaluated objectively; they pay scrupulous attention to being well "measured" with regard to their abilities, efficiency, morality, and so on.

139

It can be objectively stated that one concrete quantity is bigger or smaller than another concrete quantity of the same material. One can say that one board is longer than another. That the temperature of one thing is higher than another, that there exist differences of intensity of a given color — but they say that empathy, love, and tragedy cannot have different grades, that works of art can't have different levels because to say so is unscientific, unclear and subjective. Many psychologists of the behavioristic schools affirm the above opinion — how fortunate that there also exist those who think otherwise.

140

Let us look at our "psychic self" as we look at our physical self. But more penetratingly, more sensibly, more universally. Let us observe even in great changeability the fixations and movements of our psychic dynamisms, their strengths and correlations, their maturation and freshness, their hierarchization and

dehierarchization. Let's look and rejoice that some of them are unchangeable. Let us observe an increasingly clearer and forever vivid and changing image in our "psychic mirror".

141

Despite many psychologists it is in some sense possible to experience negative and positive feelings simultaneously. For example, tragic heroes in their existential struggles, in their inner conflicts and opposition to the forces which try to defeat them, contain elements of pain and the sublime, heroism and despair, sadness and joy, negation and affirmation. It would be artificial to dissect such experiences into segments of time — separating the sad from the joyous.

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