

Self and Non-Self: The Persecution of the Imaginary Scapegoat

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“Know then thy-self, pressure not God to scan,
The proper study of mankind is man.”

Alexander Pope, 2016.

“The idea of man, if it ever acquires a positive meaning, will be only a conjecture intended to establish connections between the disparate materials and will derive its probability only from its success.”

J. P. Satre, 1939, p. 3.

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a world in which individual freedom and basic human rights are beset by the problems of prejudice and ideology and their overt manifestations, racism, fundamentalism, and nationalism. At another more subtle level even three areas in which progress has been made, homosexual rights, feminism and equal opportunity, and the rights of the child, are developing their own ideologies, replete with their own heroes and villains. It is what Western (2015) has called the New Authoritarians, the politically correct and the incorrect sharing enjoyment via aggression, idealised identities, and the search for a new authoritarian focus.

Hitler’s Nazi ideology proposed that the only law was that of the jungle, and rapaciousness its justified activity. A struggle for the riches of nature in which mercy has no place. Re-writing Genesis he saw the fall of mankind as the development of our capacity to think, and to therefore realise, that those who belong to other races could do the same, and were therefore recognisable as fellow humans (Snyder, 2015). The contrary position, which espoused the *value* of thought and ideas, was dismissed as weakness propagated by Jewish lies and Jewish swindle.

Such views, justifying the de-humanisation of “the other” and espousing the legitimacy of expulsion or of murderous elimination, is

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by no means confined to one political ideology. Economic rationalism, for example, leads to a market where only the strongest and putatively the best, survive and is replete with “fall guys” and “suckers” one of whom is apparently born every minute. These ideas are anathema for humanitarianism and morality, for equality before the law, and for the rule of law, on which minorities depend (Browning, 2015).

The concept and value of the denigrated “other” cannot be sustained *in vacuo*. Therefore, taking the phenomena linked to scapegoating as an example, my general hypothesis is that we will not be rid of the tendency to blame others, our sins identified in them, personal or organisational, nor to be rid of its manifestations, nationally or internationally, merely by wishing it to be so. Advocating a more humane and accepting attitude toward the “other” will be no more successful unless accompanied by an exploration and understanding of the psycho-social history of us all. I believe that evidence exists to suggest that this propensity may be manifest particularly in one personality grouping within society and that there are psychological explanations for this.

“I don’t have to know you to hate you”, might be a loose definition of racism. It would continue “But really knowing you doesn’t matter when I have my imagination”. The moral impotence of reason.

Voltaire, in 1768, wrote that, “If God did not exist we would have to invent him”. His point seems to have been, that the concept, the fantasy, the faith that God exists, is a necessary precursor to civilised existence. That it is necessary for civilised society to function. But, not content with this, we have had to invent Satan, a fallen angel, no doubt like mankind itself, who exists to contain all that is unacceptable in us. Although “real” to some, both of the concepts “God” and “Satan” exist only as matters of faith, that is, in our imaginations.

In the same way it is my contention that if the scapegoat did not exist as a constant in society, we would have to, and in fact continually do, invent him. We need such a figure, enthroned as he has been, in myth and culture over the centuries.

As I have written previously (Gold, 2015), the scapegoat has been with us as saviour, often literally, assuming responsibility, exile, and suffering for our sins, while we, nominally at least, free of guilt and responsibility, are able to continue our tolerable existence individually, organisationally, or nationally.

In this paper I wish to concentrate on the tragic destiny of the scapegoat, invested with qualities that are not his own, wearing his own crown of thorns, often unwittingly but certainly inevitably, identified as someone other. An invented imaginary person. I will use, as an example, the imaginary Jew and the role he has played through recorded history (Nirenberg, 2013). As in Satre’s existential view, “the

Jew as someone who is regarded and defined as a Jew by others" (Arendt, 1968, p. xv).

I will describe the inevitability and constancy of this concept and will offer some psycho-analytical thoughts regarding its possible origins.

THE OTHER

"The existence of the 'let's pretend' boundary does not prevent the continuance of the real traffic across it. Projection and introjection, the process whereby the self, as distinct from the other is constituted, is not past history . . . but a present process of continuous creation. . . . there is a continual 'unconscious' wandering of other personalities into ourselves."

Norman O. Brown, 1966, pp. 146–147.

There is a clear necessity to maintain, peripherally, yet always close at hand, an-other who represents that which we seek to deny in ourselves. I originally explored this concept via reference to the Gothic novels, *Frankenstein*, *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, and *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (Gold, 1985). The monstrous other who threatens everything we hold dear. Our personal Satan. I explored this further in surveying the concept of the scapegoat in history, myth, and culture, and of exploring the ubiquitous presence, personally, organisationally, and nationally of an appropriate "projecticle", that is a receptacle into which unwanted projections could be made (Gold, 2015). The perceptual reality of the "other" in this role is not a given. But where necessary, imagination will make up the shortfall.

Studies of prejudice, racism, and scapegoating can be approached from a socio-dynamic perspective, pitched at the level of inter-personal and inter-group activity and understanding (Brewer, 1991). Where our perspectives intersect is summed up in the comment "Personal identities are those derived from intimate dyadic relationships such as parent-child . . . but also include identities derived from membership in small face to face groups which are essentially networks of such dyadic relationships" (Brewer & Gardner, 1996, p. 83).

At another level, the relationship of self to "other" has been explored philosophically. Jean Paul Sartre (1943), is carefully intricate in respect of the relationship. "I am as the other sees me . . . [My] being was not in me potentially before the appearance of the other" (p. 302). He is the one "who sees me" (p. 310). "I am the one who constitutes the other" (p. 314). Especially, in the present context "the other is of interest to me only to the extent that he is another me, a me-Object for me" (p. 314). He describes in extended detail the reciprocity of projections, never static and always in movement. "We are by no

means dealing with an object-in-itself but with reciprocal and moving relations" (p. 475).

Later, Sartre talks of being possessed by the other who fashions the self to be born and produced. The other holds the secret of who we truly are. I would add, linking with Nirenberg's hypothesis, that what the other sculpts is an "imaginary me", which may be more related to *his/her* internal world than to mine, and may not match with my perception of myself. While this may be seen to have some links with Winnicott's true and false self (1960), his emphasis is on the protective function, while mine emphasises the destructive. Our point of agreement is in the belief that we are always living in both an external and internal world.

The philosopher Levinas, is particularly concerned about the impingement of one on the other, and the need of the subject to respect the status and identity of the other. His chief concern is that, in order to protect the other from the self "humans [should] not impose themselves and their schemes on others" (Alford, 2002, p. vi). Levinas defines the subject as the *persecuted hostage* to the other. He did not believe that humans seek their other halves in order to become whole, but rather to obtain *mastery over the other*. Alford makes it clear that he also is interested in "human relatedness and un-relatedness, *the way in which we need others*" (p. 3, my italics), both their reality and our fantasies about them. His emphasis is on how much others are a part of ourselves. I would add how much and when, how and why, *we are a part of others*. An alien and often mystifying presence echoing Bion's observation of the experience of "playing a role in someone else's phantasy" (Bion, 1961, p. 149). All of this indicating the centrality of the question of how to acknowledge the uniqueness of the other and of oneself together with the legitimacy of exploring relationships, particularly in groups.

While beliefs and practices may seem natural when shared with significant others, cultures alien to our own seem unnatural or even perverse. My understanding of this is that our view and opinion of others, and they of us, may change with circumstances. For example, proximity and sharing of the environment with different racial or cultural groups may alter one's perception of their character, reliability, and danger to us. But what is of greater interest are those instances involving an *unaltered* and negative view of the other.

I am speaking of ethical questions such as the right to at least be left to one's own beliefs and behaviour and not to be harmed or killed for them. Provided, of course, that one offers others the same guarantees. In that context, it is essential to see the "real" person, not the "imaginary". Levine (2013) describes the problem. "The obstacle to psychic

truth is the need to tell lies, especially lies about the self" (p. 2). He places great emphasis on the need and vicissitudes of taking responsibility for what we do and its consequences for others. But is it more difficult for this to include responsibility for the thoughts and phantasies that *underlie* our behaviour and provide seeming justification for our actions and beliefs?

In a more recent paper (Levine, 2015), he emphasises the "uncertain dividing line between fantasy and reality, between what is internal to the individual's mental life and what exists outside". With this goes the necessary impulse to transfer inner reality to the world outside with particular projection into those "cast in the role of agents of the devil" (p. 47). To understand this, he emphasises the need to understand the hellish inner world and in particular, echoing Winnicott (1974), the fear of losing a world that has already been lost. It is a world in which "reason is not welcome" (Levine, 2015, p. 54). It is a world in which a reliable and dependable object with which to identify does not exist.

Can a ruthless use of the "other" ever be justified? From another vertex, Winnicott (1989) draws our attention to the issue of a "legitimate" use, including the ruthless exploitation of the other. Although going beyond and beneath our discussion of the "other", Winnicott claims that seen from a developmental vertex, ruthlessness is the norm. What he has in mind is a ruthless plundering of the breast *in order to survive and develop*. This shows mainly in play, but necessitates a mother/other who can tolerate this experience. If not, the infant can only hide his ruthless self, fearing disintegration, abandonment, or being the subject of such attacks himself. In our present context it raises the question of how far we may allow or justify such ruthlessness in relation to the "other", if it is argued that it is developmentally necessary and genetically inevitable. The answer may lie in the unconscious rather than the conscious determinants. We may agree that an ethical position involves seeing the other justly, honestly, and compassionately. That is, to know, *in reality*, the unique other person. But this is subject to the child's and the child in us all, constant need to adapt outer reality to *inner need* or terror (Greenbaum, 1978). How much ruthlessness is actually necessary, and therefore legitimate, for survival?

We cannot remain steadfastly unaware of the power of narcissistic and megalomaniac defences that are a protection against a sense of inner destruction, or destruction of one's internal world. A kind of jouissance/enjoyment. "A pleasure in our displeasure which uproots us and disturbs our well being" (Western, 2015, p. 2).

Lene Auestad (2015) examines the "other" from multiple vertices. She defines prejudice as a negative attitude and judgement towards

individuals, because of the *assumed* negative characteristics of the category to which they are perceived to belong. An intolerance of those who speak differently. It is the transfer of a value-laden meaning to a socially formed category, and then on to individual members of that social category. The “impure” and alien is that which does not fit the conceptual scheme of a given society, tribe, or social group (Douglas, 1992).

Where asylum seekers fit into that category is problematic in that current geo-political and economic factors are also clearly influential. However, while the objects of prejudice change, the content of fantasies remain fairly fixed, suggesting that it is not the *real* qualities of the subject that are central to the prejudice. It is clearly difficult to accept evidence that challenges any firmly held beliefs. In this conflation, dehumanisation of the “other” certainly assists in maintaining phantasies and dismissing reality.

THE IMAGINARY OTHER AS SCAPEGOAT

One cannot enter the category of the “imaginary”, without reference to the conceptual work of Lacan (1973), principally in his concept of the mirror image and identification with the other. The ego is seen as an ultimately inauthentic agency concealing disunity within. “For him, the ego’s function is purely imaginary, and through its function the subject tends to become alienated” (Benvenuto & Kennedy, 1986, p. 60). Taking it further, Gallop (1885) comments that, “in the imaginary mode, one’s understanding of other people is shaped by one’s own imagos. The perceived other is actually, in part, a projection” (p. 61). This, inevitably, has an effect on relationships, particularly with an essentially unknown other.

The term imaginary Jew comes from Walzer’s review (2014) of Nirenberg’s book *Anti-Judiasm* (2013). I am using the example to stand for the perennially available but peripheral person, dispersed for centuries yet tolerated, even protected in part, and representing unacceptable behaviour or characteristics and, like a container for rubbish, seemingly necessary for society to function. In short, a typical scapegoat, fulfilling a necessary role for the societies in which they live.

Nirenberg attempts to put anti-Semitism aside, and takes the position that it is a Judaising principle into which projections flow. A principle, which is separate and distinct from the “real” Jew. A concept as old as Egypt, but one that had its real impetus in the early days of warring Christian groups and writers and that reached its murderous apotheosis in Roman and Greek times, or in contemporary history, the Nazi’s demonisation and obsession with the imaginary Jew. The book

is not about Jews or anti-Semitism, but deals with imaginary Jews, manifest in the concept of Judaism and all it has come to represent.

In essence, Nirenberg offers historical evidence beginning with the Egyptians, and moves from this point via Greek and early Christian complicity, toward a concept of "Judaism", not only the religion "of a specific people with specific beliefs, but also a category, a set of attributes with which non-Jews can make sense of and criticize their world" (Nirenberg, 2013, p. 3). Judaism, or those traits attributed to it, including misanthropy, impiety, lawlessness, and universal enmity, acting as a foil for the consolidation of religious and political groups, so that it has become a constituent element of Western culture and one of its critical tools. History, he maintains is replete with examples of largely imaginary attributes divorced, at the most basic level from reality, but that has allowed a peoples' sense of their past and present place in the world to be articulated through a fundamental opposition to Judaism. A belief system that, over the ages, has helped to explain, "Christian heresies, political tyrannies, medieval plagues, capitalist crises and revolutionary movements" (Walzer, 2014, p. 33).

Nirenberg covers the centuries from Vespasian to Kant with examples of hostility and murderousness directed toward a concept. Martin Luther aligned his Papist opponents with "legalism", "Pharisaism", and "Judaism" and continued the description of the latter role and function in suggesting that "*They are given to all people . . . to tread down, just like scum in an alley, which is thrown out because it is of absolutely no use to anyone, except to soil one's feet*" (Nirenberg, 2013, p. 246, my italics). He went further in advocating an utter mercilessness in the burning of their synagogues and houses. The secular Jew is not exempt. Spinoza suggested that it was "a Jewish hatred of others that condemned them to a perpetual separation from all other peoples of the earth" (Nirenberg, 2013, p. 335).

Hegel insisted on the poisonous harvest of Judaism. Schopenhauer described a Europe infested with Jewish realism, and Marx advocated the emancipation of Mankind from Judaism, that is, money and property. Capitalism as he saw it, was a result of "colonisation of the world by Jews" (Nirenberg, 2013, p. 441). One can see links to the earliest Christian critics who linked Judaism with the material rather than the spiritual world.

It is an irony that in Hitler's exposition, the dangers and destructiveness of the Jew is linked to what are regarded as virtuous in most Western socio-cultural societies. Ethics, conscience, and common humanity. The traits that were inimical to the fascist ideology, could not be contained within it, and as such, had to be derided and projected elsewhere.

I have dwelt on these examples because they contain all the classical hallmarks of the scapegoat. They are always peripheral to the central community, continually banished and yet available for the absolution from blame or guilt. Time has not dispersed the description of simultaneous protection and destruction. The perfect scapegoat, dehumanised and imaginary, always available to carry our unwanted selves with them into the wilderness, provided that they manage to escape the role of sacrificial goat.

THE PSYCHO-ANALYTICAL OTHER

“My mother groan’d my father wept,
 Into the dangerous world I leapt:
 Helpless, naked, piping loud:
 Like fiend hid in a cloud.”

William Blake, 2002, p. 78.

“We are all lived by unknown and uncontrollable forces.”

S. Freud, 1923b, p. 23.

So, what are these uncontrollable forces? From whence do they originate and why? A psychoanalytic contribution rests on the concepts of an internal world peopled by internal objects and under the control of unconscious phantasy. The self as Riviere describes, is a composite structure, which has been formed and built up since the day of our birth. “We are members one of another” (1955, p. 359).

I would add, that there may be much more continuity between intrauterine life and earliest infancy than the impressive caesura of the act of birth allows us to believe (Gaddini, 1992). The unity of the self is as unreal as the unity of an organisation.

Freud, in his paper “The uncanny” (1919h) made it clear that repressed phantasies and the terrors that accompanied them, archaic beliefs, when projected, *become alien and frightening when assigned to external figures*, but are recognisable to the unconscious that spawned them. The concept that something pre-social exists in personality was referred to earlier by Freud (1911b) “The residues of a phase of development in which they were the only kind of mental process” (p. 219). Elkin (1972) referring to the work of Spitz indicates a primordial stage of development in which communion is possible even before recognition of the separate other. A relationship that precedes any recognisable relationship with oneself.

In a previous publication (Gold, 2006), I emphasised that the major underlying anxieties for mankind were those inherent in the preverbal and primitive roots of behaviour linked to the need to survive and to

evolve. Drawing on the metaphor of biological vestiges in evolved function (Bion, 1977), I wondered if there might not be vestiges in us that suggest survival, in the human mind, of experience that is evidence of an embryological or even intrauterine memory. The question is, memory of what?

The proto-mental

Thinking arises from a core, beginning *in utero*, as a primitive thought, called by Bion a “preconception” (1967). It is an expectation that she will meet a nourishing breast that will maintain her life, and, in time, create the ability to create thought. This container is then, by availability and attitude, essential for the development of the capacity for thinking.

In this, we are aided by the concept of the proto-mental experience, that is, the translation of raw emotional experience into thinking and meaning and the question of how proto-mental phenomena may, if unresolved, give rise, throughout the life span, of primitive styles of interpersonal functioning. The term and concepts derive from the work of Bion (1970, p. 11), and centres on the earliest experience with an object of desire always beyond reach and control, or worse, that *the object is simultaneously desired as essential to survival, but also feared*. Proto-mentality is a “matrix where the biological, social, mental and emotional aspects of human behaviour are indistinguishable” (Morgan-Jones, 2010, p. 53).

The psychological birth of the infant is predicated on the possibility of relating and attachment to a maternal figure who can provide an internalised feeling of safety to counter the alternative, catastrophic primitive anxiety. It necessitates “reverie” (Bion, 1967, p. 116), and the concept of “container–contained” Bion (1970), and “holding” on the part of the mother, the latter encouraging the beginning of mind as something distinct from the psyche (Winnicott, 1965). It allows the emergence of “basic trust” in the infant (Erikson, 1950, p. 45). The proto-mental system describes a stage of development where mind and body are indistinguishable, where thoughts are not yet there for thinking, and where the capacity for thoughtfulness and the capacity to dream is in the future. A developed capacity for thought does not arise *de novo* (Rao, 2013). Any unresolved, un-held traumatic experience remains encapsulated and un-symbolised (Segal, 1981a), and dominated by the desire to please or placate the maternal figure. The link to a later development of an authoritarian personality structure is compelling. The primitive in the present. Nothing is ever forgotten.

The essential point here is that, should the progression from basic and primitive beta elements to alpha function, a sophisticated and lengthy process, not proceed, and in the absence of symbol formation, then evacuation of intolerable affect, frustration, doubt, uncertainty, and fear, may and does use the route of projective process. In a group or organisational setting, containment is even less likely and is replaced by denial and what Morgon-Jones calls “acted out riddance and violent projective identification” (2010, p. 81). “Beta-elements are not amenable to use in dream thoughts but *are suited for use in projective identification*” (Bion, 1962, p. 6, my italics).

Projective thinking

It is thinking that depends on the substitution of manipulation for words or ideas. It is the bedrock of, and necessity for, projective processes. An emptying out of unwanted, terrifying, frustrated hatred, housed in a persecutory and/or bad and denigrated object, in an attempt to deal with, for example “nameless dread” (Bion, 1967), precipitated by the experience of an absent, anxious, or unfeeling maternal figure. Perhaps feeling fed, but unloved.

It is a force that threatens to destroy us from within. Terror, at first attached to no object but existing as a self-producing, silent, deathly force (Hoggett, 1998). Quoting Meltzer, he describes a picture of “primitive, perhaps tribal life in the depths of the mind” (Hoggett, 1998, p. 14), in which the physical, psychological, emotional, and thought, are undifferentiated. “Expressions of, or reactions against, some state more worthy of being regarded as primary” (Bion, 1961, p. 163).

A version of this primitive, almost tribal life has been the focus of the work of Frances Tustin in her pioneering work with autistic children (1981). She uses the term to designate a body-centred sensation-dominated state that constitutes the core of the self. Mother, experienced as a “sensation-object”, prepares the infant for relationships with future non-self objects. If successfully traversed we can speak of normal primary autism. If, for a variety of reasons, such as absence, neglect, cruelty (physical or verbal), a successful developmental progression is impossible, then the hypersensitivity of early infancy remains unmodified. Perhaps Western’s “wounded self” (2012).

The “not-self”, now linked to a “bad object” mother, is a source of disillusionment and frustration that the infant moves to annihilate. A psychological catastrophe, the result of a premature or mismanaged “psychological birth”. The “womb” of the mother’s mind unavailable. It is a cumulative trauma, the disastrous situation repeated over and

over in an attempt at toleration or mastery. If unsuccessful there is a “flowing over”, a precursor to projection. Bodily sensations, now converted into psychological experiences are ripe for concept formation. The residues of un-integration available, not for thinking or reflection, complicated by a rejection of and yet identification with the “bad object”. Now available only for evacuation into a now hated and despised object. The not-self mother or yet, the not-self self.

The struggle for survival

It is a struggle of the infant towards his own survival. The infant constantly in danger of spilling-out in a state of un-integration and searching for some containing object that will hold his attention and hold him together. An ideology perhaps? “His catastrophic fear is of a state of un-integration ‘flowing over’, into space and of never being found and held again” (Symington, 1985, p. 481).

Alternatively, there is the safety of compliance with its derivative, the authoritarian personality (Adorno et al., 1950; Altermeyer, 2006; Hibbing et al., 2014), which may offer some safety in an environment in which the maternal object does not share nor yet understand the world of the infant. “Fear of an external authority can make us afraid to speak. The fear of an internal authority can make us unable to think” (Segal, 1981b, p. 219). The only answer is the construction of a parallel world in which the unacceptable aspects are split off and projected into a representative of the vulnerable, despised, and rejected self or self-object.

The question remains again whether, at that level, we perceive the other as they are, or are they imbued with aspects that are beyond real, yet really inhabit the infantile unconscious?

Tustin (1986) makes it clear that, while the original trauma of birth and separation may be the origin of severe disturbance in the mental state of autistic children, the “encapsulated, well-nigh impenetrable, autistic part of the personality” (p. 13), has a much wider distribution in society. The desperate avoidance of the traumatic awareness both of the caesura of birth and of separation from the mother occurs well before the psychic apparatus has the capacity to deal with it. Before the possibility of “going on being” develops. Before existence is guaranteed. “These terrors were experienced in a state which was preverbal, pre-image and pre-conceptual” (p. 23). In the present context the autistic barriers laid down are thought to become *barriers to later cognitive and affective functioning*, such as have been noted by Hibbing in conservative personality profiles (see above). It is, a black and white world where opposites are not tolerated and fears of the

other lead to “*narrow-mindedness, to bigotry and fanaticism*” (Tustin, 1986, p. 26, my italics). Tustin elaborates her concern that, the autistic child in all of us, seeking safety, sees and reinforces the world only in rigid terms, which “can also bring tragedy to the societies in which we live” (p. 115).

So we are left with psychological survival producing a need to exert absolute control over the persecuted imaginary “other”. The “other”, both needed for survival and hated for its absence, neglect, or worse. Alternatively, the container for a despised helpless and rejected self. Both lead to the dilemma of how to protect oneself from the other and the other, the imaginary other, from the self.

CONCLUSION

“O wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us.”

Robert Burns, 1826.

“The emergence of thought is related to the loss of omnipotence.”

Hanna Segal, 1981b, p. 220

Making the (imaginary) enemy

Although we have enemies both to our person and to the way we think, our perception is almost always contaminated by a need to create an enemy, the stranger. In a political, social, and individual sense, the role of the enemy is universal. If we are able to distance ourselves from the enemy this consoles us and group cohesion is enhanced. The gap keeps the “other” at a distance at the conscious level, while connecting us unconsciously. If distance is maintained the situation often stabilises, but when this is less possible, when some similarity is recognised, more primitive defences are inevitable. A threatened individual or group makes its enemy non-human, thus avoiding guilt for destroying them and to protect its sense of morality. Overt vilification or contempt for those who practice a different paradigm to satisfy different needs or who see different meanings become first order responses. The need for mutual respect between groups becomes secondary. When love and hate clash, we either feel guilt and make reparation or remain persecuted by our guilt. To avoid either consequence, truth can be perverted and cruelty practised in the name of justice (Brenman, 1985).

We are faced with the inertia and safety of not knowing that prejudice and its bed-fellows racism and scapegoating may be with us

forever. The power of destructiveness and the delusion of ideology, which cannot be thought about. It just is. It is what Meltzer (cited in Hoggett, 1998) emphasises as the cruelty and tyranny of pathological states of mind, offering protection from psychic pain, but that necessitates a vigorous adherence to falsehood. A theory of un-thinking, maintaining ignorance through fear, the mind as establishment, exerting power of life and death through control of the proto-mental and somato-psychotic levels of development.

Origins

Certainly there seems to be credible evidence that the need to scapegoat and to justify that projection, indicates more than preference, and more than can be understood purely on the basis of environment. Is it in our genes or in our stars gives way to the possibility that the persecuted imaginary object is not imaginary after all, but a repository, a "projectile" (an object into which projections are deposited), which reflects *actual early experience*.

Whatever the origin, there is a need in mankind and in nations to avoid responsibility for what we do. Of course socio-cultural groups and geopolitical factors are relevant but, as I see it, they exist as factors that exploit underlying individual and group vulnerability, by exaggerating external danger and pinpointing those who are allegedly culpable. I believe that there is no doubt that we endow innocent and frequently unsuspecting but peripheral others, with imaginary attributes that are painfully unacceptable in us, both individually and as groups. It is with a sense of relief and justified punishment that we then pursue these others irrespective of their guilt and with the fantasy that in doing so we, and our society, will be cleansed and remain relieved and healthy.

What remains, and is at issue, is whether we are all equally culpable in this projective process, or whether there are individual personality types where such behaviour is predominant. I believe that there is sufficient evidence to support this and I have put the proposition that this is initiated by primary infantile experience.

If I am correct, apart from an understanding of the processes, can this alter any of the resultant behaviour described? To know and understand that certain sectors of every society actually and literally "see" things differently, while discouraging (Hibbing et al., 2014), could be an advantage. This does not even take into account the possibility of actual changes in brain configuration as a result of early deprivation. A change in those initiating circumstances involving, as it does a recognition of our own infantile vulnerabilities may, for now,

be a bridge too far. As Bion has pointed out, human beings have difficulty learning from experience when it means changing existing beliefs (1967).

However, no matter how convincing and powerful are the forces victimising selected components of mankind, she/he can retain the capacity to *know* of that victimisation and thus, to influence its outcome.

I finish with the anti-hero of Orwell's novel *1984*, who, with his lover Julia, has been betrayed to the secret thought Police. Faced with his terrifying punishment and the need to escape his own terror, he screams, "Do it to Julia. Do it to Julia".

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