

Part Six

THE WAY OUT

*“The cultural era is past. The new civilization, which may take centuries or a few thousand years to usher in, will not be another civilization—it will be the open stretch of realization which all the past civilizations have pointed to. The city, which was the birth-place of civilization, such as we know it to be, will exist no more. There will be nuclei of course, but they will be mobile and fluid. The peoples of the earth will no longer be shut off from one another within states but will flow freely over the surface of the earth and intermingle. There will be no fixed constellations of human aggregates. Governments will give way to management, using the word in a broad sense. The politician will become as superannuated as the dodo bird. The machine will never be dominated, as some imagine; it will be scrapped, eventually, but not before men have understood the nature of the mystery which binds them to their creation. The worship, investigation and subjugation of the machine will give way to the lure of all that is truly occult. This problem is bound up with the larger one of power—and of possession. Man will be forced to realize that power must be kept open, fluid and free. His aim will be not to possess power but to radiate it.”**

Utopian speculations, such as these of Henry Miller, must come back into fashion. They are a way of affirming faith in the possibility of solving problems that seem at the moment insoluble. Today even the survival of humanity is a utopian hope.

*From Henry Miller, *Sunday After the War* (New York: New Directions), pp. 154–155. Copyright, 1944, by Henry Miller. Reprinted by permission.

The Resurrection of the Body

THE PATH of sublimation, which mankind has religiously followed at least since the foundation of the first cities, is no way out of the human neurosis, but, on the contrary, leads to its aggravation. Psychoanalytical theory and the bitter facts of contemporary history suggest that mankind is reaching the end of this road. Psychoanalytical theory declares that the end of the road is the dominion of death-in-life. History has brought mankind to that pinnacle on which the total obliteration of mankind is at last a practical possibility. At this moment of history the friends of the life instinct must warn that the victory of death is by no means impossible; the malignant death instinct can unleash those hydrogen bombs. For if we discard our fond illusion that the human race has a privileged or providential status in the life of the universe, it seems plain that the malignant death instinct is a built-in guarantee that the human experiment, if it fails to attain its possible perfection, will cancel itself out, as the dinosaur experiment canceled itself out. But jeremiads are useless unless we can point to a better way. Therefore the question confronting mankind is the abolition of repression—in traditional Christian language, the resurrection of the body.

We have already done what we could to extract from psychoanalytical theory a model of what the resurrected body would be like. The life instinct, or sexual instinct, demands activity of a kind that, in contrast to our current mode of activity, can only be called play. The life instinct also demands a union with others and with the world around us based not on anxiety and aggression but on narcissism and erotic exuberance.

But the death instinct also demands satisfaction; as Hegel says in the *Phenomenology*, “The life and knowledge of God may doubtless be described as love playing with itself; but this idea sinks into triviality, if the seriousness, the pain, the patience and the labor of the Negative are omitted.”¹ The death instinct is reconciled with the life instinct only in a life which is not repressed, which leaves no “unlived lines” in the human body, the death instinct then being affirmed in a body which is willing to die. And, because the body is satisfied, the death instinct no longer drives it to change itself and make history, and therefore, as Christian theology divined, its activity is in eternity.

At the same time—and here again Christian theology and psychoanalysis agree—the resurrected body is the transfigured body. The abolition of repression would abolish the unnatural concentrations of libido in certain particular bodily organs—concentrations engineered by the negativity of the morbid death instinct, and constituting the bodily base of the neurotic character disorders in the human ego. In the words of Thoreau: “We need pray for no higher heaven than the pure senses can furnish, a purely sensuous life. Our present senses are

but rudiments of what they are destined to become.”² The human body would become polymorphously perverse, delighting in that full life of all the body which it now fears. The consciousness strong enough to endure full life would be no longer Apollonian but Dionysian—consciousness which does not observe the limit, but overflows; consciousness which *does not negate any more*.

If the question facing mankind is the abolition of repression, psychoanalysis is not the only point of view from which the question can and should be raised. We have already indicated that the question is intrinsic to Christian theology. The time has come to ask Christian theologians, especially the neo-orthodox, what they mean by the resurrection of the body and by eternal life. Is this a promise of immortality after death? In other words, is the psychological premise of Christianity the impossibility of reconciling life and death either in “this” world or the “next,” so that flight from death—with all its morbid consequences—is our eternal fate in “this world” and in “the next”? For we have seen that the perfect body, promised by Christian theology, enjoying that perfect felicity promised by Christian theology, is a body reconciled with death.

In the last analysis Christian theology must either accept death as part of life or abandon the body. For two thousand years Christianity has kept alive the mystical hope of an ultimate victory of Life over Death, during a phase of human history when Life was at war with Death and hope could only be mystical. But if we are approaching the last days, Christian theology might ask itself whether it is only the religion of fallen humanity, or whether it might be asleep when the bridegroom comes. Certain it is that if Christianity wishes to help mankind toward that erasure of the traces of original sin which Baudelaire said was the true definition of progress,³ there are priceless insights in its tradition—insights which have to be transformed into a system of practical therapy, something like psychoanalysis, before they are useful or even meaningful.

The specialty of Christian eschatology lies precisely in its rejection of the Platonic hostility to the human body and to “matter,” its refusal to identify the Platonic path of sublimation with ultimate salvation, and its affirmation that eternal life can only be life in a body. Christian asceticism can carry punishment of the fallen body to heights inconceivable to Plato; but Christian hope is for the redemption of that fallen body. Hence the affirmation of Tertullian: *Resurget igitur caro, et quidem omnis, et quidem ipsa, et quidem integra*—The body will rise again, all of the body, the identical body, the entire body.⁴ The medieval Catholic synthesis between Christianity and Greek philosophy, with its notion of an immortal soul, compromised and confused the issue; only Protestantism carries the full burden of the peculiar Christian faith. Luther’s break with the doctrine of sublimation (good works) is decisive; but the theologian of the resurrected body is the cobbler of Görlitz, Jacob Boehme. When Tillich and Barth finally get round to the substance of things hoped for, their eschatology, they will have to reckon with Boehme. Meanwhile, as neo-orthodox theology plunges deeper into the nature of sin and death, Boehme’s *theologia ex idea vitae deducta* is neglected except by the lonely mystic and revolutionary Berdyaev.⁵

Whatever the Christian churches do with him, Boehme’s position in the Western tradition of

mystic hope of better things is central and assured. Backward he is linked, through Paracelsus and alchemy, to the tradition of Christian gnosticism and Jewish cabalism; forward he is linked, through his influence on the romantics Blake, Novalis, and Hegel, with Freud. We have argued that psychoanalysis has not psychoanalyzed itself until it places itself inside the history of Western thought—inside the general neurosis of mankind. So seen, psychoanalysis is the heir to a mystical tradition which it must affirm.

Mysticism, in the mind of the general public, is identified with that flight from the material world and from life preached by such popularizers as Evelyn Underhill and Aldous Huxley⁶—which, from the psychoanalytical point of view, may be termed Apollonian or sublimation mysticism. But there is in the Western tradition another kind of mysticism, which can be called Dionysian or body mysticism, which stays with life, which is the body, and seeks to transform and perfect it. Western body mysticism—a tradition which urgently needs re-examination—contains three main strands: the Christian (Pauline) notion of the “spiritual” body, the Jewish (cabalistic) notion of Adam’s perfect body before the Fall, and the alchemical notion of the subtle body.⁷ All of these strands unite in Boehme, and even a little knowledge of the real Boehme—for example Ernst Benz’ first-rate book, not available in English⁸—makes it plain that Boehme and Freud have too much in common to be able to dispense with each other.

Boehme, like Freud, understands death not as a mere nothing but as a positive force either in dialectical conflict with life (in fallen man), or dialectically unified with life (in God’s perfection). Thus, says Benz, “Our life remains a struggle between life and death, and as long as this conflict lasts, anxiety lasts also.”⁹ In Boehme’s concept of life, the concept of play, or love-play, is as central as it is in Freud’s; and his concept of the spiritual or paradisaical body of Adam before the Fall recognizes the potent demand in our unconscious both for an androgynous mode of being and for a narcissistic mode of self-expression, as well as the corruption in our current use of the oral, anal, and genital functions. It is true that Boehme does not yet accept the brutal death of the individual physical body, and therefore makes his paradisaical body ambiguously immaterial, without oral, anal, and genital organs; and yet he clings obstinately to the body and to bodily pleasure, and therefore says that Adam was “magically” able to eat and enjoy the “essence” of things, and “magically” able to reproduce and to have sexual pleasure in the act of reproduction. Boehme is caught in these dilemmas because of his insight into the corruption of the human body, his insight that all life is life in the body, and, on the other hand, his inability to accept a body which dies. No Protestant theologian has gone further; or rather, later Protestantism has preferred to repress the problem and to repress Boehme.

Oriental mysticism also, to judge from Needham’s survey of Taoism or Eliade’s study of Yoga,¹⁰ has reached the same point. Needham (quoting Maspéro) is right in stressing that the Taoist quest for a more perfect body transcends the Platonic dualism of soul and matter. But Needham’s enthusiasm for Taoism as a human and organismic response to life in the world must be qualified by recognizing that the Taoist perfect body is immortal: Taoism does not accept death as part of life. (In an earlier chapter we argued that there is the same defect in Needham’s other enthusiasm, Whitehead’s philosophy of nature.)

Psychoanalysis accepts the death of the body; but psychoanalysis has something to learn from body mysticism, occidental and oriental, over and above the wealth of psychoanalytical insights contained in it. For these mystics take seriously, and traditional psychoanalysis does not, the possibility of human perfectibility and the hope of finding a way out of the human neurosis into that simple health that animals enjoy, but not man.

As Protestantism degenerated from Luther and Boehme, it abandoned its religious function of criticizing the existing order and keeping alive the mystical hope of better things; in psychoanalytical terminology, it lost contact with the unconscious and with the immortal repressed desires of the unconscious. The torch passed to the poets and philosophers of the romantic movement. The heirs of Boehme are Blake, Novalis, Hegel, and, as Professor Gray has recently shown, Goethe.¹¹ These are the poets whom Freud credited with being the real discoverers of the unconscious.¹²

Not only toward the mystics but also toward the poets psychoanalysis must quit its pretension of supramundane superiority. Instead of exposing the neuroses of the poets, the psychoanalysts might learn from them, and abandon the naive idea that there is an immense gap, in mental health and intellectual objectivity, between themselves and the rest of the world. In the world's opinion, in the eyes of common sense, Novalis is crazy, and Ferenczi also: the world will find it easier to believe that we are all mad than to believe that the psychoanalysts are not. And further, it does not seem to be the case that the psychoanalytical mode of reaching the unconscious has superannuated the poetic, or artistic, mode of attaining the same objective. Anyone conversant both with modern literature and with psychoanalysis knows that modern literature is full of psychoanalytical insights not yet grasped, or not so clearly grasped, by "scientific" psychoanalysis. And anyone who loves art knows that psychoanalysis has no monopoly on the power to heal. What the times call for is an end to the war between psychoanalysis and art—a war kept alive by the sterile "debunking" approach of psychoanalysis to art—and the beginning of cooperation between the two in the work of therapy and in the task of making the unconscious conscious. A little more Eros and less strife.

Modern poetry, like psychoanalysis and Protestant theology, faces the problem of the resurrection of the body. Art and poetry have always been altering our ways of sensing and feeling—that is to say, altering the human body. And Whitehead rightly discerns as the essence of the "Romantic Reaction" a revulsion against abstraction (in psychoanalytical terms, sublimation) in favor of the concrete sensual organism, the human body.¹³ "Energy is the only life, and is from the Body.... Energy is Eternal Delight," says Blake.

A young critic, whose first book represents a new mode of criticism—a criticism for which poetry is an experience both mystical and bodily—has traced the persistent quest in modern poetry for the resurrection of the body and the perfection of the body.¹⁴ Wordsworth, in contrast with the sublime (and sublimating) tendency of Milton, "considers that his revelation can be expressed in the forms and symbols of daily life" and "sees Paradise possible in any sweet though bare nook of the earth." Hopkins "is engaged on a theodicy, and has taken for his province the stubborn senses and the neglected physical world"; "no one has gone further than Hopkins in presenting Christ as the direct and omnipresent object of perception, so deeply

ingrained in the eyes, the flesh, and the bone (and the personal sense of having eyes, flesh, and bone), that the sense of self and the sense of being in Christ can no longer be distinguished.” Rilke’s plaint throughout his career is that “we do not know the body any more than we know nature”: Rilke believes (in his own words) that “the qualities are to be taken away from God, the no longer utterable, and returned to creation, to love and death”; so that the outcome of his poetry is that “for Rilke, the body becomes a spiritual fact.” Valéry’s poetry “may be considered as the Odyssey of Consciousness in search of its true body”; and “the intellectual pursuit of Valéry is to this end, that the body may be seen as what it virtually is, a magnificent revelation and instrument of the soul. Could it be viewed as such, the eyes would not be symbol, but reality.”¹⁵

The “magical” body which the poet seeks is the “subtle” or “spiritual” or “translucent” body of occidental mysticism, and the “diamond” body of oriental mysticism, and, in psychoanalysis, the polymorphously perverse body of childhood. Thus, for example, psychoanalysis declares the fundamentally bisexual character of human nature; Boehme insists on the androgynous character of human perfection; Taoist mysticism invokes feminine passivity to counteract masculine aggressivity; and Rilke’s poetic quest is a quest for a hermaphroditic body.¹⁶ There is an urgent need for elucidation of the interrelations between these disparate modes of articulating the desires of the unconscious. Jung is aware of these interrelations, and orthodox psychoanalysts have not been aware of them. But no elucidation results from incorporation of the data into the Jungian system, not so much because of the intellectual disorder in the system, but rather because of the fundamental orientation of Jung, which is flight from the problem of the body, flight from the concept of repression, and a return to the path of sublimation. Freudianism must face the issue, and Freud himself said: “Certain practices of the mystics may succeed in upsetting the normal relations between the different regions of the mind, so that, for example, the perceptual system becomes able to grasp relations in the deeper layers of the ego and in the id which would otherwise be inaccessible to it.”¹⁷

Joseph Needham’s interest in what we have called body mysticism, an interest which underlies his epoch-making work *Science and Civilization in China*, reminds us that the resurrection of the body has been placed on the agenda not only by psychoanalysis, mysticism, and poetry, but also by the philosophical criticism of modern science. Whitehead’s criticism of scientific abstraction is, in psychoanalytical terms, a criticism of sublimation. His protest against “The Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness” is a protest on behalf of the living body as a whole: “But the living organ of experience is the living body as a whole”; and his protest “on behalf of value” insists that the real structure of the human body, of human cognition, and of the events cognized is both sensuous and erotic, “self-enjoyment.”¹⁸ Whitehead himself recognized the affinity between himself and the romantic poets; and Needham of course recognizes the affinity between the philosophy of organism and mysticism. Actually Needham may be exaggerating the uniqueness of Taoism. The whole Western alchemical tradition, which urgently needs re-examination, is surely “Whiteheadian” in spirit, and Goethe, the last of the alchemists, in his “Essay on the Metamorphosis of Plants” produced the last, or the first, Whiteheadian scientific treatise. Goethe, says a modern biologist, “reached out to the

reconciliation of the antithesis between the senses and the intellect, an antithesis with which traditional science does not attempt to cope.”¹⁹

Needham has recognized the crucial role of psychology in the philosophy of science. The refutation of Descartes, he has said, will come from psychology, not biology.²⁰ And yet he seems to be unaware of the profound affinities between the Tao, which he so much admires, and psychoanalysis. He seems to be unaware of Ferenczi’s brilliant essay attempting to reorganize the whole theory of biological evolution in the light of psychoanalysis.²¹ But the function of psychoanalysis in relation to Whitehead and Needham’s critique of science is not that of supplementing their ideology with sympathetic support; rather it is indispensable if their critique of science is to amount to more than mere ideology. For what they are calling in question is the subjective attitude of the scientist, and if their critique is to amount to more than mere dislike, it must be supplemented by a psychoanalysis of the subject. In fact a psychoanalysis of the subject (the “observer”) seems necessary if science is to remain “objective.” The essential point has been seen by Ferenczi, who coined the term “*utraquism*” to indicate the required combination of analysis of the subject and analysis of the object: “If science is really to remain objective, it must work alternately as pure psychology and pure natural science, and must verify both our inner and outer experience by analogies taken from both points of view.... I called this the ‘*utraquism*’ of all true scientific work.”²²

Ferenczi’s formulations date from 1923-1926: today we would presumably think of “integration” rather than alternation. Ferenczi saw psychoanalysis as marking a significant step forward in general scientific methodology, a step which he defined as “a return to a certain extent to the methods of ancient animistic science” and “the re-establishment of an animism no longer anthropomorphic.”²³ But the re-establishment of an animism is precisely the outcome of Whitehead and Needham’s line of thought. And Ferenczi argues that psychoanalysis is necessary in order to differentiate the new “purified” animism from the old naïve animism:²⁴

Insofar as Freud attempts to solve problems of biology as well as of sexual activity by means of psychoanalytic experience, he returns to a certain extent to the methods of ancient animistic science. There is a safeguard, however, against the psychoanalyst falling into the error of such naïve animism. Naïve animism transferred human psychic life *en bloc* without analysis onto natural objects. Psychoanalysis, however, dissected human psychic activity, pursued it to the limit where psychic and physical came into contact, down to the instincts, and thus freed psychology from anthropocentrism, and only then did it trust itself to evaluate this purified animism in terms of biology. To have been the first in the history of science to make this attempt is the achievement of Freud.

We therefore conclude with a plea for “*utraquistic*” integration between psychoanalysis and the philosophy of science. Ferenczi, in his important analysis of Ernst Mach entitled “The

Psychogenesis of Mechanism,” put it this way: “When will the physicist, who finds the soul in the mechanism, and the psychoanalyst, who perceives mechanisms in the soul, join hands and work with united forces at a *Weltanschauung* free from one-sidedness and ‘idealizations’?”²⁵

Perhaps there are even deeper issues raised by the confrontation between psychoanalysis and the philosophy of organism. Whitehead and Needham are protesting against the inhuman attitude of modern science; in psychoanalytical terms, they are calling for a science based on an erotic sense of reality, rather than an aggressive dominating attitude toward reality. From this point of view alchemy (and Goethe’s essay on plants) might be said to be the last effort of Western man to produce a science based on an erotic sense of reality. And conversely, modern science, as criticized by Whitehead, is one aspect of a total cultural situation which may be described as the dominion of death-in-life. The mentality which was able to reduce nature to “a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of material endlessly, meaninglessly”—Whitehead’s description²⁶—is lethal. It is an awe-inspiring attack on the life of the universe; in more technical psychoanalytical terms, its anal-sadistic intent is plain. And further, the only historian of science who uses psychoanalysis, Gaston Bachelard, concludes that it is of the essence of the scientific spirit to be mercilessly ascetic, to eliminate human enjoyment from our relation to nature, to eliminate the human senses, and finally to eliminate the human brain:²⁷

It does indeed seem that with the twentieth century there begins a kind of scientific thought in opposition to the senses, and that it is necessary to construct a theory of objectivity *in opposition* to the object.... It follows that the entire use of the brain is being called into question. From now on the brain is strictly no longer adequate as an instrument for scientific thought; that is to say, the brain is the *obstacle* to scientific thought. It is an obstacle in the sense that it is the coordinating center for human movements and appetites. It is necessary to think *in opposition to* the brain.

Thus modern science confirms Ferenczi’s aphorism: “*Pure intelligence* is thus a product of dying, or at least of becoming mentally insensitive, and is therefore *in principle madness*.”²⁸

What Whitehead and Needham are combating is not an error but a disease in consciousness. In more technical psychoanalytical terms, the issue is not the conscious structure of science, but the unconscious premises of science; the trouble is in the unconscious strata of the scientific ego, in the scientific character-structure. Whitehead called the modern scientific point of view, in spite of its world-conquering successes, “quite unbelievable.”²⁹ Psychoanalysis adds the crucial point: it is insane. Hence there is unlikely to be any smooth transition from the “mechanistic” point of view to the “organismic” point of view. It is unlikely that problems generated in the mechanistic system will lead to organismic solutions. The two points of view represent different instinctual orientations, different fusions of life and death. It is even doubtful that the adoption of an organismic point of view under present conditions would be a gain; it might be a relapse into naïve animism. Thus the kind of thinking which Needham hails

as Taoist wisdom (alchemy, etc.), is attacked by Bachelard as unconscious projection, dreaming, and naïve mythologizing; he sees science (and psychoanalysis) as sternly committed to the task of demythologizing our view of nature. It would seem, therefore, in line with Ferenczi's argument, that Taoist ideology without psychoanalytical consciousness could be a relapse into naïve animism. And psychoanalytical consciousness means psychoanalytical therapy also. Psychoanalytical therapy involves a solution to the problem of repression; what is needed is not an organismic ideology, but to change the human body so that it can become for the first time an organism—the resurrection of the body. An organism whose own sexual life is as disordered as man's is in no position to construct objective theories about the Yin and the Yang and the sex life of the universe.

The resurrection of the body is a social project facing mankind as a whole, and it will become a practical political problem when the statesmen of the world are called upon to deliver happiness instead of power, when political economy becomes a science of use-values instead of exchange-values—a science of enjoyment instead of a science of accumulation. In the face of this tremendous human problem, contemporary social theory, both capitalist and socialist, has nothing to say. Contemporary social theory (again we must honor Veblen as an exception) has been completely taken in by the inhuman abstractions of the path of sublimation, and has no contact with concrete human beings, with their concrete bodies, their concrete though repressed desires, and their concrete neuroses.

To find social theorists who are thinking about the real problem of our age, we have to go back to the Marx of 1844, or even to the philosophers influencing Marx in 1844, Fourier and Feuerbach. From Fourier's psychological analysis of the antithesis of work and pleasure Marx obtained the concept of play, and used it, in a halfhearted way to be sure, in some of his early utopian speculations. From Feuerbach Marx learned the necessity of moving from Hegelian abstractions to the concrete senses and the concrete human body. Marx' "philosophic-economic manuscripts" of 1844 contain remarkable formulations calling for the resurrection of human nature, the appropriation of the human body, the transformation of the human senses, and the realization of a state of self-enjoyment. Thus, for example, "Man appropriates himself as an all-sided being in an all-sided way, hence as total man. [This appropriation lies in] every one of his human relationships to the world—seeing, hearing, smell, taste, feeling, thought, perception, experience, wishing, activity, loving, in short, all organs of his individuality."³⁰ The human physical senses must be emancipated from the sense of possession, and then the humanity of the senses and the human enjoyment of the senses will be achieved for the first time. Here is the point of contact between Marx and Freud: I do not see how the profundities and obscurities of the "philosophic-economic manuscripts" can be elucidated except with the aid of psychoanalysis.

Psychoanalysis, mysticism, poetry, the philosophy of organism, Feuerbach, and Marx—this is a miscellaneous assemblage; but, as Heraclitus said, the unseen harmony is stronger than the seen. Common to all of them is a mode of consciousness that can be called—although the term causes fresh difficulties—the dialectical imagination. By "dialectical" I mean an activity of consciousness struggling to circumvent the limitations imposed by the formal-logical law of

contradiction. Marxism, of course, has no monopoly of “dialectics.” Needham has shown the dialectical character of Whitehead’s philosophy, and he constantly draws attention to dialectical patterns in mystical thought.³¹ The goal of Indian body mysticism, according to Eliade, is the “conjunction of contraries” (*coincidentia oppositorum*). Scholem, in his survey of Jewish mysticism, says, “Mysticism, intent on formulating the paradoxes of religious experience, uses the instrument of dialectics to express its meaning. The Kabbalists are by no means the only witnesses to this affinity between mystical and dialectical thinking.”³²

As for poetry, are not those basic poetic devices emphasized by recent criticism—paradox, ambiguity, irony, tension—devices whereby the poetic imagination subverts the “reasonableness” of language, the chains it imposes? (Compare Valéry’s theory of poetry; see chapter VI.) And from the psychoanalytical point of view, if we, with Trilling (see above, chapter V), accept the substantial identity between poetic logic (with its symbolism, condensation of meaning, and displacement of accent) and dream logic, then the connection between poetry and dialectics, as defined, is more substantially grounded. Dreams are certainly an activity of the mind struggling to circumvent the formal-logical law of contradiction.³³

Psychoanalytical thinking has a double relation to the dialectical imagination. It is, on the one hand (actually or potentially), a mode of dialectical consciousness; on the other hand, it contains, or ought to contain, a theory about the nature of the dialectical imagination. I say “actually or potentially” because psychoanalysis, either as a body of doctrine or an experience of the analysand, is no total revelation of the unconscious repressed. The struggle of consciousness to circumvent the limitations of formal logic, of language, and of “common sense” is under conditions of general repression never ending (see Freud’s essay, “Analysis Terminable and Interminable”).³⁴ “Dialectical” are those psychoanalysts who continue this struggle; for the rest, psychoanalytical terminology can be a prison house of Byzantine scholasticism in which “word-consciousness” is substituting for consciousness of the unconscious (see above, chapter XI).

And even if we take Freud as the model of psychoanalytical consciousness, we have argued that at such crucial points as the relation between the two instincts and the relation between humanity and animality, Freud is trapped because he is not sufficiently “dialectical.” Nevertheless, the basic structure of Freud’s thought is committed to dialectics, because it is committed to the vision of mental life as basically an arena of conflict; and his finest insights (for example, that when the patient denies something, he affirms it³⁵) are incurably “dialectical.” Hence the attempt to make psychoanalysis out to be “scientific” (in the positivist sense) is not only vain but destructive.³⁶ Empirical verification, the positivist test of science, can apply only to that which is fully in consciousness; but psychoanalysis is a mode of contacting the unconscious under conditions of general repression, when the unconscious remains in some sense repressed. To put the matter another way, the “poetry” in Freud’s thought cannot be purged away, or rather such an expurgation is exactly what is accomplished in “scientific” textbooks of psychology; but Freud’s writings remain unexpurgatable. The same

“poetical” imagination marks the work of Róheim and Ferenczi as superior, and explains why they are neglected by “scientific” anthropologists and psychoanalysts. The whole nature of the “dialectical” or “poetical” imagination is another problem urgently needing examination; and there is a particular need for psychoanalysis, as part of the psychoanalysis of psychoanalysis, to become conscious of the dialectical, poetical, mystical stream that runs in its blood.

The key to the nature of dialectical thinking may lie in psychoanalysis, more specifically in Freud’s psychoanalysis of negation. There is first the theorem that “there is nothing in the id which can be compared to negation,” and that the law of contradiction does not hold in the id. Similarly, the dream does not seem to recognize the word “no.”³⁷ Instead of the law of contradiction we find a unity of opposites: “Dreams show a special tendency to reduce two opposites to a unity”; “Any thing in a dream may mean its opposite.”³⁸ We must therefore entertain the hypothesis that there is an important connection between being “dialectical” and dreaming, just as there is between dreaming and poetry or mysticism. Furthermore, in his essay “The Antithetical Sense of Primal Words”³⁹ Freud compares the linguistic phenomenon of a hidden (in the etymological root) identity between words with antithetical meanings; he reveals the significant fact that it was the linguistic phenomenon that gave him the clue to the dream phenomenon, and not vice versa. It is plain that both psychoanalysis and the study of language (philosophical and philological) need a marriage or at least a meeting.

And, on the other hand, Freud’s essay “On Negation”⁴⁰ may throw light on the nature of the “dialectical” dissatisfaction with formal logic. Negation is the primal act of repression; but it at the same time liberates the mind to think about the repressed under the general condition that it is denied and thus remains essentially repressed. With Spinoza’s formula *omnis determinatio est negatio* in mind, examine the following formulations of Freud: “A negative judgment is the intellectual substitute for repression; the ‘No’ in which it is expressed is the hall-mark of repression.... By the help of the symbol of negation, the thinking process frees itself from the limitations of repression and enriches itself with the subject-matter without which it could not work efficiently.” But: “Negation only assists in undoing one of the consequences of repression—the fact that the subject-matter of the image in question is unable to enter consciousness. The result is a kind of intellectual acceptance of what is repressed, though in all essentials the repression persists.”⁴¹

We may therefore entertain the hypothesis that formal logic and the law of contradiction are the rules whereby the mind submits to operate under general conditions of repression. As with the concept of time, Kant’s categories of rationality would then turn out to be the categories of repression. And conversely, “dialectical” would be the struggle of the mind to circumvent repression and make the unconscious conscious. But by the same token, it would be the struggle of the mind to overcome the split and conflict within itself. It could then be identified with that “synthesizing” tendency in the ego of which Freud spoke,⁴² and with that attempt to cure, inside the neurosis itself, on which Freud came finally to place his hope for therapy.⁴³ As an attempt to unify and to cure, the “dialectical” consciousness would be a manifestation of Eros. And, as consciousness trying to throw off the fetters of negation, the “dialectical” consciousness would

be a step toward that Dionysian ego which does not negate any more.⁴⁴

What the great world needs, of course, is a little more Eros and less strife; but the intellectual world needs it just as much. A little more Eros would make conscious the unconscious harmony between “dialectical” dreamers of all kinds—psychoanalysts, political idealists, mystics, poets, philosophers—and abate the sterile and ignorant polemics. Since the ignorance seems to be mostly a matter of self-ignorance, a little more psychoanalytical consciousness on all sides (including the psychoanalysts) might help—a little more self-knowledge, humility, humanity, and Eros. We may therefore conclude with the concluding words of Freud’s *Civilization and Its Discontents*:⁴⁵

Men have brought their powers of subduing the forces of nature to such a pitch that by using them they could now very easily exterminate one another to the last man. They know this—hence arises a great part of their current unrest, their dejection, their mood of apprehension. And now it may be expected that the other of the two “heavenly forces,” eternal Eros, will put forth his strength so as to maintain himself alongside of his equally immortal adversary.

And perhaps our children will live to live a full life, and so see what Freud could not see—in the old adversary, a friend.