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Play and the Metaphors of the Body

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Freud's theories of psychosexual and ego development state that the ego is first and foremost a bodily ego and that, through the symbolic function, the child's organization of the world is constellated around various, maturationally determined, zones and functions of the body. This theory was a masterpiece of inference as it was based entirely on the dreams, fantasies, and free associations of Freud's adult analysands. He was able to further extend and elaborate his ideas through his consultations with his colleague, Max Graf, who described to Freud the play and sexual preoccupations of his son, Little Hans.

The history of psychoanalysis is filled with one so-called "innovation" after another that begins with the repudiation of the theory of infantile sexuality. It is typically repudiated on the basis of its physicalistic and reductive application to clinical material. But to regard the theory of infantile sexuality physicalistically is to ignore the fact that it is a psychological theory and to use it, or any other theory, reductively is to simply impose on a patient. The theory was not intended to be used this way but of course it is free to be misunderstood and misused by anyone. The theory of infantile sexuality is inextricably bound with the psychoanalytic notion of the symbolic function. Thus the psychosexual stages of development schematize the canalization of experience and the construction of a world-view. In this paper I will cover briefly a wide range of material from play configurations to children's fantasy narratives to libido development to the symbolic function to the role of metaphor in the construction of a world view and on to the recognition of metaphor as an organizing concept in psychoanalytic theory and technique. In doing so, I'll hope to illustrate the relationship between play and the metaphors of the body.

Freud introduced his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* in 1905, his analysis of the play and preoccupations of Little Hans in 1909, and his assertion that the ego is first and foremost a bodily ego in 1923. With the exception of the work with Little Hans, whom he learned of only through the boy's father, most of Freud's theorizing was based on inference from his work with adults. In 1913 Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, the third woman to join the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, began doing psychoanalytic work with children. She wrote about how she invited them to speak to her, not on the couch in free association, but, on the floor in the metaphors of play. Hug-Hellmuth was the originator of play therapy. But, alas, the subject about whom many of her papers are devoted was her own very troubled nephew who lived with her, was probably analyzed by her, and who subsequently murdered her in 1924.

Following Hermine Hug-Hellmuth, Melanie Klein and Anna Freud picked up the play therapy technique and developed their respective schools of child analysis. In Vienna, in the 1920s Anna Freud, Dorothy Burlingham, Siegfried Bernfeld, Willi Hoffer and August Aichorn became a nucleus for those studying children, child therapy and education from a psychoanalytic perspective. Bernfeld wrote *The Psychology of the Infant* (1925) and *Sisyphus or the Limits of Education* (1928). August Aichorn worked with juvenile delinquents and wrote *Wayward Youth* (1925). Around them there gathered a small group of people that included Peter Blos, Erik Erikson, Margaret Mahler, Rudolf Ekstein, Lilli Peller, Bruno Bettelheim, Berta Bornstein, Fritz Redl, Edith Buxbaum and others. The interest in the relationships between psychoanalysis and children and education gave rise to the journal *Zeitschrift für psychoanalytische Pädagogik*. It folded before World War II and was, in a sense, resurrected in 1945 as *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*.

While the zone of the psychosexual was formed on the border between the biology of the body and the experience of the body, ego psychology recognized the demands and prohibitions of society as factors in conflict with the impulses of the body. Subsequently there have been many attempts to bring the influence of the social into the construction of the psychic. Alfred Adler addressed life style and current life experiences as significant factors in the development of psychic structure and he geared much of his work toward teacher and parent training. Jung introduced the Collective Unconscious. Wilhelm Reich and others addressed the influence of politics on psychology. Harry Stack Sullivan formulated an Interpersonal Psychology. And Jacques Lacan introduced his notion of a symbolic order. But perhaps the best known of these efforts is Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of development and his concept of identity formation.

In Erikson's play configuration studies (1950,1963), he observed that latency age girls tend to construct play scenes depicting the interiors of houses. They often arrange a circle of furniture without walls, to create a static interior, which is architecturally open, yet has an enclosed quality as well. Furthermore, their play constructions are often intruded upon by a threatening force or an incongruous character in the course of their play. Erikson says these play configurations tend to be organized around the feminine modalities of the "open" and the "closed."

Boys, on the other hand, tend to erect tall structures, buildings, towers, and streets all of which were represented from the vantage point of the exterior or outside as opposed to the interior or inside. In addition to the preference they showed for erecting tall buildings, they also demonstrated an interest in tearing down their structures or allowing them to fall down. Thus, the boys' play configurations were said to be organized around the masculine modality of the "high" and the "low." (Erikson, 1963, p.97-107)

In Erikson's study, reported in his classic *Childhood and Society*, he found that children tend to construct symbolic representations that are homologous to their own genital structure - the boys creating phallic structures (towers) and the girls creating vulva-like or

vagina-like structures (enclosures). He did, however, report one very thought provoking exception. He described the case of a boy who had built two play configurations, both, in much the same way that the girls in his sample built them. The boy, he said,

"...was obese and of effeminate build. As thyroid treatment began to take effect, he built, in his third construction (a year and a half after the first) the highest and most slender of all towers - as was to be expected of a boy." (Erikson, 1963 p.101)

Was this new construction a result of the boy's changing bodily experience? or somehow the effect of his changing socialization in response to his own more slender appearance? Further research will either answer these questions or clarify the nature of symbolic representations formed in the dialectic between the personal body and the social body.

More recently, Elizabeth Lloyd Mayer and Daphne de Marneffe have replicated, in intent, Erikson's play configuration research by creating three block structures: a tower, a cross and an enclosed space which were then presented to 21 girls and 21 boys. Among several other questions, they asked the children, one at a time, to pair a boy doll and a girl doll with the structures. Twenty girls matched the girl doll with the enclosed space and 15 matched the boy doll with the tower. Eighteen of the boys matched the girl doll with the enclosed space and 16 matched the boy doll with the tower. The rest of their study is equally compelling and I refer you to Dr. Mayer's recent article in *Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Thought* for a fuller description of their work (1996). We turn, now, from the metaphors of the body concretized in play configurations to those transduced into language.

PSYCHOSEXUAL IMAGES AND THEMES IN CHILDREN'S FANTASY NARRATIVES

One of the earliest large scale studies in the area of children's fantasy narratives was conducted by Pitcher and Prelinger in 1963. Their sample contained imaginative stories told by children between the ages of 2-5. A content analysis of these stories revealed that fighting, shooting, and the use of weapons was more common in the stories told by the older children than in those told by the younger ones. Boys made more references, in their stories, to weapons that pierce, penetrate, or intrude than did the girls. They found that while boys are attuned to the violence, destructiveness, and the finality of death, girls tend to hold to the idea of the reversibility of death longer than boys and to be more attuned to the personal implications of death.

In a study of my own (1990), fantasy narratives, told by children, were analyzed for psychosexual content on the basis of psychoanalytic symbology. The intent of this study was to see if there were any age or sex related patterns discernible in children's preferences for particular images and themes in their stories.

One fantasy narrative from each of 44 children was selected from data gathered in an unobtrusive manner by a team of researchers and published as a book of raw data in 1981

under the title of *The Folkstories of Children* by Brian Sutton-Smith. The children included 24 boys and 20 girls between the ages of 2 and 9.

The results of this inquiry into the incidence of psychosexual images and themes between age groups failed to support the diachronic view of libido development. Oral, anal, and genital imagery simply increased with age rather than emerging and subsiding in any kind of sequential manner.

The analysis of the incidence of psychosexual images and themes between sexes, however, yielded some of the more interesting results. More girls' stories, than Boys' stories, were coded for Oral Receptive Orientation, Food, Authority, Need for Support, Reproduction, Houses, Symbols of Female Genitalia, Mothers or Women, Sisters or Girls, and Babies. On the other hand, there were more boys' stories coded for Anal Orientation, Masochism, Fearfulness, Strength, Male Genitalia, Buildings, Falling or Going Down, and Ascending or Going up.

The recurring images and themes in the boys' stories, it seems to me, reflect various symbolic representations of the world derived from the boy's bodily experience of the periodic rising and falling of the penis. Associated with the boys' phallo-centrism is his affinity with Buildings and a variety of other 'phallic symbols,' coded as Male Genitalia in this study. It is as though the boy's world is one, which revolves around his penis - his axis mundi. The boys' stories also reveal a strong interest in Fathers and Men over and above their interest in any other human figures.

Just as the boys in this study appear to have constructed worlds which mirror the structure and functioning of their genitalia, so too did the girls. Their interest in objects homologous to Female Genitalia was greater than that of the boys, as was their interest in Mothers and Women, and Sisters and Girls. Their greater interest in Authority, Food, the House, Reproduction, and Babies, however, may reflect not only bodily experience but, if I can artificially separate them, the socialization of that bodily experience.

While the girls' greater interests in Food, Reproduction, Mothers or Women, Sisters or Girls, Babies, and the House could be attributable to socialization factors, others might argue that the physical body is in some way involved. While the data are psychological, in kind, the apparent sex role differentiation implies a dialectic between the social and the physical body in which the formal structure and functioning of the female body is shaped by homologous social roles pertaining to holding, containing, receptivity, childbearing, childrearing, feeding, etc. Noteworthy in this regard is the girls' greater interest in the image of the 'House' as differentiated from the boys' greater interest in the image of the 'Building.'

While 'Houses,' it could be said, are small enclosures positioned close to the ground, homologous to the female genitalia, 'Buildings' are long and vertically oriented similar to an erect penis. Is this homologous relation between genital structure and architectural

construction socially conditioned? or is it that the little boy and little girl, construct their worlds around their respective bodily experiences and find themselves attracted to objects and events which parallel those experiences?

Anthropologist, Mary Douglas says:

"The social body constrains the way the physical body is perceived. The physical experience of the body, always modified by the social categories through which it is known, sustains a particular view of society. There is a continual exchange of meanings between the two kinds of bodily experience so that each reinforces the category of the other. (Douglas, 1970,1982, p.65)

The social body is the set of social constraints encoded in customs and language in which the physical body is situated. Without a recognition of the formative role of the social body, the psychoanalytic view of symbolism becomes a reductive game designed to generate simplistic statements about the physical body as if the body were a universal, and, presumably, real object rather than recognizing it as a socially constructed experience. Thus, it is the discovery of the social body, which makes wild analysis and dream-book interpretations obsolete and necessitates the use of free-association as a method of deriving personal meaning from derivative material.

Without a recognition of the formative role of the physical body, however, symbolism becomes an equally reductive game of hop-scotching from one social, political or religious idea to the next. Extreme culturism, then, ends up as nothing but a repudiation of the theory of infantile sexuality. Our only way out is between the Scylla of reducing meaning to bodily reality and the Charybdis of reducing meaning to social constructed realities. In the passageway between these two reductions the metaphor remains alive and meanings emerge.

An interpretation of the dream or narrative within the dialectic of the personal and social bodies addresses both the concrete idea (the bodily referent) as well as the abstract idea (the social or spiritual referent). When meaning is not reduced to one or the other, the interpretation is recognized as a metaphor, the imagination is engaged, the associations unravel and analysis becomes interminable. Its incompleteness is born of the evocative nature of such interpretive work in which all interpretations evoke additional material available to further interpretation. Thus, the theory of infantile sexuality comes to be seen as a constellation of metaphors with which we make meaning while standing with one foot on the shoulder of the physical body and the other foot the shoulder of the social body.

LIBIDO DEVELOPMENT

Freud's theory of human development, proposed both an ego development and a libido development. Each of these developmental processes is interwoven, one with the other. Yet, like the warp and the weft, they are aligned in different directions. *Ego development*

pertains to the maturation of cognitive functioning. It addresses 1) the progressive differentiation of ego consciousness out of the matrix of primary narcissism, 2) the development of the reality principle, 3) the progressive increase of secondary process thinking, 4) the development of psychological defense mechanisms and 5) a progressively more differentiated approach to interpersonal relations. *Libido development*, on the other hand, pertains to the transformations of psycho-sexual development. It addresses the movement of libidinal gratification as it shifts from the mouth to the anus to the genitalia (Baldwin, 1967, p.350; Freud, 1916-7,1963, pp.320-38). While the following brief account of libido development is, no doubt, familiar to the you, I will invite you to hear it anew, not as a set of reductive devices pertaining to the organs and functions of the body but as a set of lived metaphors through which we make meaning.

The '**Oral Stage**,' of course, is named after the oral orifice, which Freud identified as the primary site of libidinal gratification for the infant. The infant engages in pleasurable sucking at the nipple, thumb sucking, eating, making gurgling sounds, cooing, mouthing objects, inhaling, exhaling, burping, and engaging in mouth play. The infant also engages in the oral aggressive activities of biting, chewing, spitting, and pursuing the cannibalistic sexual aim. It is through this oral incorporative mode of existence and participation in the world that the infant gets to incorporate the world and at the same time is incorporated into the world (Benveniste, 1983, p. 110). Incorporation into the world is reflected in both the wish and the fear of being eaten (Lewin, 1950, pp.102-28). At this level, one merges with or masters the world by swallowing it whole or being swallowed by it. Thus, orality is the bodily metaphor pertaining to the infant's incorporation of the world, the infant's incorporation by the world and its converse - born of frustration - the nascent alienation of the subject from the other, the object, the world.

The '**Anal**' stage is so named because the site of libidinal gratification appears to shift or expand from the mouth to the anus. The toddler is learning to walk and talk, the neurological pathways between the central nervous system and the anal sphincter become established, and toilet training is now possible. There develops a differentiation between the 'passive' and the 'active,' the inner and the outer, the here and the there, the now and the then. Thus, anality is a bodily metaphor pertaining, not simply to a nascent alienation of the subject from the world, as in the oral stage, but to the establishment of a power dynamic between them. It pertains to the dynamics of dominance and submission. It has to do with control and loss of control. The nascent subject, still a victim of its overwhelming helplessness, struggles valiantly to declare itself by controlling the retention and evacuation of its personal products (i.e. urine, feces, flatus, touches, gazes and vocalizations), presenting them as love offerings or delivering them as war heads. While feeding is seen as the stage upon which the oral drama takes place, toilet training is said to be center stage for the anal drama.

In the next stage, the **Phallic Stage**, the site of libidinal gratification shifts or expands from the anus to the genitals. The child becomes increasingly aware of genital sensations and demonstrates a genuine curiosity in his/her own genitals and the genitals of others as

well. Children at this stage are becoming aware of gender and generational differences. Their curiosity leads them to ask questions and make comparisons. Along with the increase in genital sensations and the curiosity in gender and generational differences, there is also a development of fantasies concerning the gratification of genital wishes directed toward one of the parents and a corresponding rivalry with the other parent. The phallic stage is a bodily metaphor pertaining to the socialization of the subject. Society is the surround into which the infant is born. Socialization begins at birth with the naming of the child and it continues by means of the feeding, weaning, and toilet training practices, wherein the transmission of many cultural and familial attitudes toward the body and the established social system are non-verbally communicated. In the Phallic Stage, however, the oedipal child becomes a speaking subject mediating the maternal ground of bodily experience and the paternal surround of culture by way of a pre-established set of signifiers, that is, by way of language. Thus the child becomes socialized as a little boy or a little girl and learns to relate to girls, boys, men and women differentially. It is in this sense that the myth of Oedipus is a metaphor for socialization.

The Phallic Stage is followed by a **Latency Period**, in which the child sublimates the libido and directs it into new arenas. The sublimation, or transformation, of libido is directed toward the development of sex roles; intellectual understandings; physical prowess; and the acquisition of culturally valued knowledge, skills, and social roles. In other words, the preoccupations with the erogenous zones become metaphorized and sublimated into social pursuits. The Latency Period is followed by the **Genital Phase**, which begins at puberty when the adolescent enters into new sorts of love relations with peers. It is a time when issues associated with previous stages of libido development are re-worked, to some extent, in the wider social setting. The re-working of the phallic stage dynamics hopefully include two significant differences from their original resolution; 1) the love object has shifted from an incestuous partner to a non-incestuous peer and 2) the adolescent is capable of a more altruistic and tender love than is the young child whose love is incorporative, possessive, and exploitative (Baldwin, 1967, p.370).

Libido development is first and foremost a theory concerning the maturation of the sexual instinct. It pertains primarily to tactile sensations localized in the various erogenous zones, the sequential biological awakening of these zones and the manner in which the child meets the world through these zones. Beyond that, however, is the effect that all these sensations, awakenings, and meetings have on the structure of the psyche and the organization of a world-view. This organization of a world-view is not possible without a symbolic function through which the body is metaphorized and projected out.

SYMBOLIC FUNCTION

The symbolic function is the cognitive activity that enables an individual to transform, displace, and condense elements of subject and world onto and into one another. A symbol is a signifier, representative, or substitute for some other person, thing, idea, or quality. This uniquely well-developed ability to create, recognize, and respond to symbolic

meaning is what enables humans to become conscious, communicate, think, and be artistically creative in the ways that we are. It is largely responsible for the construction of our language, dreams, fantasies, personality styles, psychological symptomatology, and sense of self.

Freud says "The ego is first and foremost a bodily ego; it is not merely a surface entity, but is itself a projection of a surface." Thus, "The ego is ultimately derived from bodily sensations, chiefly from those springing from the surface of the body." (1923, p.26) This ego is a psychological construction fashioned out of symbolic representations of sensory experience. As sensory experiences are organized into psychic configurations, ever widening experiences of the world become organized along similar lines.

Ferenczi amplifies this when he says, "Thus arise those intimate connections, which remain throughout life, between the human body and the objective world that we call symbolic. On the one hand the child in this stage sees in the world nothing but images of his corporeality, on the other he learns to represent by means of his body the whole multifariousness of the world." (1913, 1956, p.194)

In a similar spirit, Ernest Jones says, "All psycho-analytical experience goes to shew that the primary ideas of life, the only ones that can be symbolized - those namely concerning the bodily self, the relation to the family, birth, love, and death - retain in the unconscious throughout life their original importance, and that from them is derived a very large part of the more secondary interests of the conscious mind." (1948, p.116)

The early analysts viewed the recurrence of symbolic forms as due to a collective mind, a collective unconscious, an archaic memory, or a phylogenetic inheritance. More recent theorists have toppled or modified these notions in order to recognize symbolic representations as being constructed entirely within the dialectic of the personal and social bodies. Thus, symbolism is neither genetically inherited nor psychically pre-existent. It is historic. It is formed on the threshold of bodily experience and cognitive organization within the context of culture. The symbolic function is a cognitive operation, which is derived from bodily experience and pertains to the linking of sensations into perceptions, which are further associated with or displaced from other perceptions or condensed into new forms. It develops through successive levels of non-verbal representation and is ultimately clothed in a veil of linguistic and culturally determined representations, which further reshape the experience of a sense of self, a sense of other, and a sense of the world. Thus, all symbolism from the personal to the cosmic is ultimately derived from bodily experience.

THE METAPHORS OF THE BODY

Symptoms and the sense of reality are built out of the reified metaphors of the body. From an open ear to an open mind; from a penetrating penis to a penetrating argument; from a receptive vagina to a receptive community; from a unified body and a unified

culture to the construction of monotheism; from excretion to repudiation; from urination to getting pissed off; from the naval to the center of the world; from dismemberment to postmodernity, over and over again the metaphors of the body are projected onto and into the world

A metaphor is something that stands in the place of something else. We speak of the eye of the storm; the mouth of the river; The Grand Tetons; the head of the line; the foot of the mountain; the butt of the joke. We say This relationship is suffocating.; He's just whistling in the wind.; She bit off more than she could chew.; He got screwed on that deal.; He rose to the occasion.; Let me sleep on that.; and I can't stand it. These are all metaphors derived directly from the anatomy and functions of the body. While other metaphors are derived more directly from weather, geography, technology, we can say that in a sense all metaphors are born of the flesh of bodily experience in that the world is known only through the medium of the body and through the association, condensation and displacement of one experience onto another. When we trace the etymology of words back to their "origins" we often discover the metaphors from which they are derived and are often able to trace them back to metaphors of the body.

In a sense, all language is metaphor in so far as words are signifiers which stand in place of that which they signify. David Leary, (citing Ralph Waldo Emerson) says, "that metaphor is the fertile soil from which language is born and literal language is the graveyard into which all "dead metaphors" are put to rest." (1990, p.6) In this metaphor, language is seen as a body which is born and which dies.

While metaphors are drawn from a wide variety of activities of daily life, and, not insignificantly, from the technology of the day, ultimately the body is the root metaphor of all metaphors. The body is the cloth from which all symbolic representations are cut. This is why we listen for the body metaphors in the speech of our patients. This is why we listen to the metaphors of sexual desire in our patients daily problems, in their transference, and in their gravitation toward familiar conflicts.

This notion of a world of representations derived from bodily experience is exemplified in the Indo-European cosmogonic myths, which contain the common motif of a cosmic Goddess (or God) who is said to have existed in the beginning and was dismembered in order to facilitate the creation of the universe. The parts of her body then became the various parts of the world - the sun and moon derived from her eyes; the earth from her flesh; the grass from her hair; the wind from her breath; the stones from her bones; the vault of heaven from the crown of her skull and so on (Lincoln, 1986). Thus we can see how encoded in our loftiest visions, myths, religions, and philosophical speculations are our most personal concerns.

What is delightful to discover is how bodily metaphors are projected into the world and then echo back to us as personal metaphors. In a hardware store a plug is "male" and a socket "female" and yet in another context a woman with business connections in her

community is said to be "plugged in." If the battery in your car isn't dead you can turn it on and if your lover approaches you sweetly, you may similarly be turned on. Thus metaphors may be drawn from the body, displaced into the world, become transformed in the world and then be returned to the body. That's just the way that we're programmed. Metaphors throughout the ages have been drawn from the daily activities and technologies of the day - hunting technologies, farming technologies, metallurgy, government, architecture, theater, machines, and so on. New metaphors delight us and allow us to think about things and experience them in a new way. Just as a new frame makes a picture look different, similarly a new metaphor helps us to reframe reality.

Let us imagine, for example, a person behaving in a problematic fashion. If the person and his behavior are framed in the metaphor of collaborating with the devil, he appears to us differently than when we reframe him as being innocently possessed by the devil. And he will appear differently again when he is reframed as a criminal, a sick person, a victim of political indoctrination, a victim of child abuse, an identified patient in a family system, a broken machine, a biochemical imbalance, and so on. Furthermore, ethical issues arise when we recognize that we tend to treat the person in accordance with the metaphor we use to describe him.

We live in the metaphors of our life and are imprisoned by them as well. The stories of our past are our cosmogonic myths, our creation myths, the stories of how we got to be the way we are. The past is a metaphor for why we are the way we are. The story of our past is not true. It is an interpretation, an excuse, an apology, a rationalization, a just so story. Psychotherapy deconstructs our stories, pulls them apart at the seams allowing us to have new experiences, recover lost memories, make new connections and stitch ourselves back together in a new way. A successful therapy does not deliver us to the truth. It provides a new metaphor to live by, a new past, a new view of the world and a new role within it.

Dead metaphors are both the substantive realities in which we live and the concrete realities that imprison us. New metaphors return us to the fluidity and flux of human experience. When children play with pleasure they know they are pretending. When they enter into conflict it is sometimes because the metaphor has died and the child has become the monster he was pretending to be. Therapy disengages us from our dead metaphors so that we can more effectively engage the world with a more current metaphor. Metaphors are like ice flows upon which we float down the river of life. We need the ice flow to stand on to stay dry, to stay conscious. But our ice flows melt long before the journey is over so we need to always keep our eyes open for new metaphors to stand on to help us on our way - otherwise we enter into panic, cling to our dead metaphors and suffer because of it. In other words, we are how we think of ourselves. In *The Question of Lay Analysis*, Freud says,

"In psychology we can only describe things by the help of analogies. There is nothing peculiar in this; it is the case elsewhere as well. But we have constantly to

keep changing these analogies, for none of them lasts us long enough."(1926, p.18)

We are the way we metaphorize ourselves. Our changing subjectivities are useful illusions in a sea of confusions. Our subjectivities are a function of the language we use. Or as the late Dr. Nathan Adler used to say, "Ontology recapitulates philology" (personal communication, 1994)

Erik Erikson made a distinction between three kinds of play "an autosphere for play with the sensations of the body; a microsphere for toys; and a macrosphere for play with others." (1982, p.50) It is easy to see how play with the sensations of the body can get displaced into play with toys and then further displaced into play with others. But it can also be further displaced into our ultimate concerns as expressed in art, literature, scientific inquiry, and religion. As Freud said, "I believe that a large part of the mythological view of the world, which extends a long way into the most modern religions, is nothing but psychology projected into the external world." (1901, p.258)

THE MOUTH

I once worked with an autistic boy who for five years, from the age of 9 to 14, drew five free drawings a week for me at my request. All of his drawings are pre-pictorial (circles) but in his very bizarre and limited speech he described each as a picture of a mouth. Because he was incapable of further verbal elaboration of the theme, I explored the symbolism of the mouth in the literature of myth and ritual from around the world. And just as Freud had found personal psychology in the mythic metaphors of Oedipus, Narcissus, Eros, Thanatos, and so on, I similarly found representations of the mouth in a wide variety of mythic representations. I schematized them as the five meanings of the mouth: 1) the mouth as the passageway into which the hero dies, 2) the mouth as the passageway from which the hero is re-born, 3) the mouth as the passageway by which the soul embodies the flesh, 4) the mouth as the passageway by which the soul disembodies the flesh, and 5) the mouth as a representation of integral consciousness.

We see both the death and re-birth of the hero in the myth of the swallowing and disgorging of Jonah by the great fish. The images of the hero's death and re-birth through the mouth is a common motif in mythology and it is re-enacted in the initiation rites of many cultures.

The mouth as a passageway for the embodiment of the soul, is described in the literature but even more common is the depiction of the mouth as the passageway for the disembodiment of the soul. Other illustrations depict the exorcism of demons out of the mouths of the possessed.

The mouth as integral consciousness is iconographically represented as a cosmic orb in the mouth of the East Asian dragon. The Ngadju Dyak of Borneo say that the cosmic

totality originally resided in the mouth of a great coiled water serpent and in a Hindu story the universe was seen residing in the mouth of Lord Krishna. (Benveniste, 1983)

PLAY AND THE METAPHORS OF THE BODY

The mouth becomes the gaping maw of hell or the life giving mouth of god. Biting and chewing come to represent psychological dismemberment. Cannibalistic instincts get displaced into holy communions and the pleasure of eating animal crackers wherein the soul of the other is incorporated. To take in an exciting new idea is to breath it in - to inspire and be inspired. The location of the anus, urethra, and genital organs and the term underworld are not unrelated. The blood of Christ, the Evil Eye, the hand of god, the long arm of the law, the head of state, and the body politic all involve the projection of bodily experience onto the social and religious screens. There are anal metaphors like tight ass, diarrhea of the mouth, get your shit together, and kicking ass. Some people are described as slimy or greasy which gives attributes of a viscous tactile experience to a personality style. I'm under her thumb. She's under my skin. He's a pain in the neck. It takes blood, sweat, and tears and a little elbow grease to get the job done. Children describe thunder as God rearranging his furniture and rain is his tears or urination. And on and on it goes.

When mythology is read with an eye on the metaphors of the body, the recurring references to sexuality (including infantile sexuality) between the gods and goddesses impresses us. There are marriages and incestuous acts, infidelities and castrations. Primal scenes are witnessed, male gods give birth, children are born through masturbation, and some goddesses even have penises. The primal fantasies that are so much a part of the clinical consulting room are suddenly seen projected onto the vault of heaven. In the mythologies of many traditions, the primal concerns and bodily metaphors that underlie the myths are clothed under layer upon layer of symbolization, displacement, and sublimation. But in other traditions, such as the Tantric Indian tradition, the bodily metaphors are covered by only a diaphanous veil. In the tantric tradition the universe is represented by the linga and yoni, which is a stylized sculpture of a penis and vulva. Speaking of the Tantric tradition, the Indian art historian, Ajit Mookerjee, says, "The complete drama of the Universe is repeated here, in this very body. The whole body with its biological and psychological processes becomes an instrument through which the cosmic power reveals itself. According to Tantric principles, all that exists in the Universe must also exist in the individual body." (1982, p.9)

From the penis to the axis mundi and from the breasts to the heavenly spheres the hills and valleys of the body become metaphorized and the personal body is projected into the house, the landscape, the body politic, and the cosmic body. Ferenczi says:

"The derisive remark was once made against psychoanalysis that according to this doctrine, the unconscious sees a penis in every convex object and a vagina or anus in every concave one. I find that this sentence well characterizes the facts." (1913, p. 193)

The convexities and concavities of the body are clothed in metaphors. With the metaphors of the body as our candle, the mysteries of meaning in play, dream, fantasy, and symptom are illuminated and thus the primal concerns and conflicts are revealed. To the extent that this informs the therapist's listening or even gets incorporated into an interpretation, it may help the patient to speak of those concerns that are difficult to discuss. And in doing so, the patient is afforded the opportunity to come to terms with his/her conflict rather than recreating it in the world - that is, to remember the conflict rather than repeating it in action.

Thus we can see the way in which the metaphors of the body get displaced and transformed into fantastic, religious and even everyday social forms. To reduce play, dreams, fantasies, symptoms, and narratives to preoccupations with **literal** infantile sexual concerns leaves many asking, "So what?" But the interpretation of play, dreams, and symptoms into the **metaphors** of infantile sexuality draws us into a hermeneutic adventure in which reality is deconstructed and new meanings reconstructed around a new metaphor and a new way of looking at the world. When bisexuality - penis envy - castration - cannibalism - orality - anality - oedipality - the primal scene - the phallic woman - and the rest are no longer anchored by the dead weight of a reductive interpretation that literalizes the fantasy or desire simply into an organ or an organ activity, we are free to make meaning and in doing so learn to live, perhaps, a little more comfortably in our own skin.

And yet the temptation to literalize is powerful. Metaphor is given a physical form in art but is actually taken for a literal reality in a delusion, a dream, a symptom. Thus, it is important for us to remember that there are stories encoded in sexual play, sexual pleasure, and sexual problems; in body postures and physical symptoms; in a relationship to one's own body, to hair, to skin, to words, to concepts, and to god. And similarly there are stories encoded in a sense of self and a sense of reality.

We see the influence of these metaphors teased apart and laid out in the structure of a person's free associations and slips of tongue. They are given a stage in a dream. They are given color and form in a piece of art. And they are personified in a child's play with toys.

Susan Isaccs says, "The external physical world is in fact libidinized largely through the process of symbol formation." (1952, 1970, p.110) And Melanie Klein says that "...in play the child's attitude to reality reveals itself." (1929, 1968, p.221)

In play, signifiers are consciously unhooked from the things that they signify and new signifiers are set in place. A stick becomes Mommy, a rock becomes a table and the sand becomes the food for the baby, who is represented by an acorn. In play we pretend. Reality is suspended. What is, is reconsidered. Reality is renegotiated. Similarly, in a happy sexual relation, the structures of social position, maleness and femaleness, impulse and prohibition, receptivity and activity are all playfully renegotiated. Thus in creative

play, in sex, and in therapy there is a suspension of business as usual. Signifiers are unhooked from that which they have routinely signified; dead metaphors are cast aside in favor of new metaphors; and familiar masks and roles are reconsidered.

While it is common to use patient generated metaphors in therapy, it is unpopular today, in psychoanalytic technique, to use therapist generated metaphors as interpretations. Therapist generated metaphors are often seen as clouding the analytic waters with the therapist's cleverness and countertransferential preoccupations. And yet, Anna Freud wrote, that some find it easier to accept interpretations "when given in the form of similes and analogies" (Freud, A., 1954). Norman Reider said that, "Telling a patient a brief illustrative story may sometimes get a point across better than a plain statement. The use of analogy is another of the most common and effective ways of making distance. Some patients have to see and understand behavior in someone else before they can see it in themselves." (Reider, 1972) Ella Freeman Sharpe said that "the mind is built up on analogy, that for the abstract thing there is an equivalent concrete one. We shall encourage the patient to find analogy, simile, for his difficulties in expressing himself. Similes are the surest guides." (Sharpe, 1950, p. 33) Kurt Eissler said, "With the help of pseudo-parameters one may be able to smuggle interpretations into the pathognomonic area with a temporary circumvention of resistances. A frequent device of this kind is the right joke told at the right moment." (Eissler, 1958, p.224)

And Siegfried Bernfeld, whom we met earlier in this discussion, is said to have made his interpretations in the form of metaphors or Yiddish stories (Nathan Adler, personal communication, 1991). His interpretations were not formulations, explanations or any other kind of cognitive appeal that might encourage rationalizing or intellectualizing. He used metaphors as a vehicle to interpret the resistance. In this regard, his technique was not unique but fully in keeping with Sigmund Freud's technique.

Roy Grinker, recalling his analysis with Freud, remembered that, "One of Freud's favorite techniques was the frequent use of metaphors. He always had some story to tell that exemplified an interpretation. He had anecdotes about everything. His stories made things extraordinarily clear." (Grinker, 1979)

Throughout the history of psychoanalysis the illusion and/or reality of sterile, rigid, autocratic, reductive technique has often given way to innovations. Sometimes the innovations were simply old resistances in new clothes. Other times they were attempts to revivify the analytic dialogue. Nathan Adler used to say that every generation has to rediscover psychoanalysis for themselves. At this moment in history there is an influx of psychoanalytic innovation in the form of object relations, self-psychology, interpersonal psychology and intersubjective theory. And yet with these new innovations one often hears (though certainly not always) the old resistances re-emerging (Adler, 1994). They say, "We have no need for the theory of infantile sexuality." and "We are beyond oedipus." But my question is, on whose shoulders are these innovators standing? How can you have an object relations theory without the theory of infantile sexuality? How

can you have any kind of psychoanalytic theory without the theory of infantile sexuality? While I understand the stale nature of a reductive view of infantile sexuality, I hope that this paper helps some to rediscover or recontextualize the theory of infantile sexuality as the brilliant innovation that it was and still is.

In the 1990s, the husks of dry, rigid, intellectualized and sterile analytic technique are being sloughed off (again) and giving way to more literary, hermeneutic, and humanistic views of the analytic dialogue - ones in which therapist and patient are involved in a mutual construction and deconstruction of one another within a linguistic field. As therapists and analysts, we have always been listening to the metaphors of our patient's narratives but now, without acting out, many of us are beginning to playfully give ourselves over to the metaphors of our spontaneous fantasies and, from them, generate interpretations that return to the patient disowned and denied parts of themselves. And in doing so, we help our patients find a way to live more fully and more playfully within their own skin.

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