

Studien zur analytischen Psychologie C.G. Jung
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thought that if I, who was a Jungian analyst with years of study and training behind me, could make such a glaring mistake, surely the type theory was unusable and must eventually be discarded as of any practical application in psychotherapy, to be kept only for its aesthetic enjoyment by a few superior minds. In this respect JUNG would then take his place among those philosophical geniuses of the past who have attained an unusual perception of life so far beyond the normal powers of apprehension that his theory must soon fall into the obscurity of that comfortable ignorance in which the majority of people commonly live.

But I persisted in the analysis of my patient and, recovering from my feelings of inferiority and doubt, I began to notice that my mistake did not seem in the least to trouble her. In fact she even thanked me for treating her as if she were an introvert because she felt it gave her added courage to accept this undeveloped side of her personality. Being a feeling type she was not bothered, as I was at the time, by the intellectual prejudice that a method must be scientifically exact and exactly applied if it is to be trusted at all. Furthermore it apparently did her good to learn that I was humanly vulnerable in the face of this very human problem. Then I saw that she had unconsciously presented me with the data of her inferior function, and because this was what she most needed to discover in seeking analytical help she had repressed, or rather had left at home, the most striking elements of her conscious personality.

Such a reaction to analysis is rare in my experience. A more usual approach is made through the medium of the superior or auxiliary function, and the inferior function is only encountered somewhat later on through a complicated play of opposites. I recall the initial dream in analysis of a woman of the extroverted intuitive type with thinking better developed than feeling. She dreamed she was on the deck of a large ocean liner about to set sail. Bands were playing; she waved farewell dramatically to countless friends seeing her off; all the excitement and anticipation of an impressive voyage occupied her whole attention until she began to realize she had not yet located her cabin. She went in search of it and then found she was no longer on the ship at all but on land, and her cabin was a dismal little room with no furniture and no windows. Here she would have to stay for an unknown period of time without enthusiasm or hope or even comfort. The dream reflected the actual enthusiasm with which she had come to analysis in the

THE INFERIOR FUNCTION

*A Study of the Application of Psychological Types
in Psychotherapy*

by

J. L. HENDERSON

WHEN an inexperienced psychotherapist begins to apply JUNG's concept of psychological types he is rather like a child who has been given a fine watch before he can read numbers accurately and before he has any idea of the significance of time beyond that associated with his immediate personal desires or needs. He can admire the precision of its craftsmanship and the gleaming metal of its case, but its actual use is fraught with subjective hazards. Like all superior creations of the human mind it is more nearly perfect than its user, yet its only real function lies in its use. Such application requires a conscious awareness which is extremely hard to maintain until through practice it may become in a way habitual. It is no wonder then that, in spite of its popular appeal and its many possibilities in understanding, psychotherapists not trained in Analytical Psychology have failed to apply the type theory correctly and have frequently tried to discredit its validity altogether.

I very well remember my own awkward attempts to determine the type and function of my first patient in analysis. An early case was a woman I judged to be an introverted type with intuition as the superior function and thinking as her best auxiliary function, and I treated her accordingly. Some months later I heard disquieting reports of her activities from a mutual friend, and an interview with her husband convinced me beyond any doubt that she was in fact an extrovert with feeling as her superior function and intuition as her best auxiliary function. Introverted thinking, which I thought was one of her best developed functions, turned out to be her inferior function. And so I

expectation that it would be like an exciting journey into unknown parts, promising the satisfaction invariably insisted upon by intuition that there should always be some new and fascinating possibility to explore. She was in fact disappointed in this expectation because instead of revealing new possibilities of development (to be considered in her case as the further development of an already vigorous and aggressive personality) her fate led her soon to the discovery that she was suffering from an incurable disease which would henceforth limit her to a highly restricted life in every outer sense.

Having learned my lesson from the first case I mentioned, in this case I did not rush to the fore with a ready decision about her type and function, but waited until my initial hypothesis could be verified by time and experience. Accordingly I took the dream simply to represent a condition of hypomanic excitement (the sailing festivities) which would probably end in a state of depression (the empty room). It is true that this pattern could be verified as a cycle through which this patient passed every now and then, and of course her analysis activated it quite strongly. But the longer I knew her the more evident it became that a purely psychiatric evaluation of this cycle was inadequate either to explain it or to help her control it. As I have previously indicated, the understanding of her personality as extroverted intuitive with introverted sensation as her inferior function, therefore, became increasingly meaningful. Even then it was a long time before I dared feel sure that my judgement was to be trusted, not in fact until the inferior function was fully brought to light following the diagnosis of her physical condition. It is very often true that the extroverted intuitive person encounters the inferior function as a kind of somatic revolt against the lordly assumption of the conscious attitude that there are no material bounds to the exploration of life's possibilities. Such a person lives as far from the center of his natural being as he possibly can and is only drawn back to it again — back from his fascination with "the flaming ramparts of the world" — by the absolute necessities of the body. I do not mean that such a type invariably or even very often succumbs to a fatal illness; more frequently he falls into a depression which seems to be a wise provision of nature to protect him from physical exhaustion. Yet it is remarkable that even when he knows he is quite healthy he is frequently obsessed with hypochondriacal fears

which perform a similar function of limiting the free rein of intuition.

That intuitive extroversion is not to be confused with neurotic escape mechanism nor with manic-depressive psychosis was proven to me by my patient's reaction to her physical illness, which brought her in touch with the inferior function in a very important way. The "empty room" of her dream did not stay empty as it would in the case of the truly depressed person who everlastingly insists that he learns nothing from his experience and for whom depression is at best a kind of purgatory. For my patient this room became the stage upon which was enacted in subsequent dreams and fantasies an inner drama revealing her true feelings for herself and others which she had never really known before.

It is significant of the introverted sensation function that it is frequently represented pictorially by action, or rather by significant non-action, within a semi-enclosed space like a stage. JOAN EVANS' points out that introverted sensation (which she calls "slow" introversion) is expressed by the type of artist, such as Giotto or Velasquez, who usually places his subjects in a box-like frame such as a courtyard, formal garden or room and, eliminating all obvious romantic appeal, concentrates upon the essential lineaments of feeling which are not ordinarily seen, but when once revealed by the artist are so life-like that the picture is immediately convincing. For this reason I think it is also true that, if the psychotherapist is an introverted sensation type, he is likely to be the most reliable of all the types in his correct impression of the type and function of his patient. Like a good portrait painter he catches the essential reality of the person in the moment of time presented to view, knowing by his very nature what is important to show and what to leave out of the picture.

Accordingly my patient discovered this kind of function in herself, and I do not think she would have called it "inferior". She would rather have said it represented the most reliable and steady experience she had ever had in her life and which was much richer in possibilities for her future development than anything her intuition had hitherto discovered. It was not the first time she had encountered this function. She explained that it had come to her always when ill and had sustained and comforted her in other times of stress. At such times

1. Taste and Temperament, MACMILLAN, N. Y.

she had been able to say to herself, "I know how I feel", and the recognition of this simple capacity which one would suppose the commonest property of everyone alive was a heaven-sent revelation to her.

Another example of how the inferior function became of paramount importance at a certain phase of analysis is illustrated by another case, also an extroverted intuitive woman whose best auxiliary function was feeling. During analysis I was doubtful of this view of her functions because it appeared her inferior function might be thinking, to which she reacted so negatively in me. But as time went on it became clear that this reaction was really directed against the intellectual animus thinking she had developed in recent years, cutting her off from feeling and her relationships in a destructive way. Though she came to understand this and to feel comfortable in her relationship to me as her therapist a very strong resistance to further analysis persisted which worried us both because of its schizoid character. She would remain silent for long periods just when trying hardest to communicate and when she did say something she immediately wanted to say the opposite. Various somatic symptoms troubled her at such times, attacks of hay fever, feelings of exhaustion, and strange sensations which made it very difficult to function adequately. Yet she was in a position which called for something more than adequate functioning and, having achieved a high level of adaption all her life, found these new weaknesses particularly troublesome. Again in this case I resorted temporarily to a psychiatric explanation of her symptoms. She was, I thought, merely experiencing a lowering of her mental threshold in response to newly activated unconscious contents, and one could explain it all ways as a kind of "schizophrenic episode" from which she had a tendency to recover spontaneously if left to her own devices. But the symptoms remained in spite of optimism and my further attempts at analyzing them. At length the true state of affairs manifested itself as a breaking through of the introverted sensation function which seemed to insist that she accept reality in a new way as a significant personal experience and not as an objective problem of adaptation. Having recognized this fact as a normal compensatory equivalent to the highly intuitive function of consciousness she had previously used as the criterion of her life, the symptoms cleared and we could go ahead with the main task of analysis. In her case as in the other two I have described there were many pressing

problems to be analyzed other than the type problem. It seemed to me a if this merely came into the analysis as a reminder that the normal course of human events must allow for the many changes of personality found in everyone seriously concerned with achieving any kind of psychological insight.

Many more cases illustrating the phenomenon of the inferior function in analysis will occur to the student of JUNG's psychology. The fact that I have chosen a series of extroverted types does not in the least indicate that what I have said of them is any less true of the introverted types. I am also convinced that this type of encounter during analysis with the inferior function occurs independently of the personality of the analyst or of his influence, though there is not space in this brief account to implement these assertions with examples.

What I chiefly wished to show is that it would have been very inhibiting to the analytical process if I had interpreted these manifestations of the inferior function as a psychopathological phenomenon and I think it is a serious question to ask what other psychotherapist who have not the advantage of learning the dynamics of JUNG's psychological types do with such problems. It seems to me that if they fail to unearth this root of the personality in their patients they must eventually have to rediscover this kind of data and reformulate a theory of typology not unlike that of JUNG. Or else the patient himself will be forced to call upon those resources within himself which can recognize what is his own personality structure and differentiate this from his neurosis, however well the latter may have been analyzed. Possibly we may go even further in maintaining that a knowledge of the inferior function may contribute a most vital element to the formation of a psychology of the future by allowing psychotherapists to handle dynamically all those problems which do not properly speaking conform to the categories of the psychoneuroses or psychoses. As has often been pointed out the people we have increasingly to help are not in need of neuro-psychiatric treatment but are rather the victims of the natural changes in personality which affect everyone throughout life.

Of course there is no end to such a study and no final resolution of such a problem. In fact analysis only provides a beginning for the self-knowledge required to trace the inferior function to its source in the whole process of life. It is only after analysis that the patient really

comes to grips with it and has to work through the many stages of its integration into consciousness. Yet this is the conscious task most commonly reported by patients who have completed analysis; they do not report progress or regression of their psychoneurotic symptoms (which presumably have been successfully resolved and understood during analysis) so much as they report how they have succeeded or failed to obey the law of their intrinsic natures in winning over the unconscious to the conscious functions of the personality. This winning over to effective consciousness of the archetypal content of the inferior function constitutes a large part of the process of individuation which supercedes any psychotherapeutic task, but even without this progressive development it serves the function of maintaining consciousness from falling into the blind materiality of preconscious life.

KINDS OF OPPOSITES

by

VICTOR WHITE

WITHOUT contraries there is no progression. "BLAKE'S aphorism could well be described as the basic postulate of JUNG'S psychology; it certainly formulates the vital experience of anybody who has undergone analysis under Jungian auspices. It should be unnecessary to labour the point in this volume. It will be axiomatic to all its readers that the opposition of extroversion and introversion, of regressive and progressive tendencies, of the four functions, of ego, persona, shadow, animus-anima and self, and their mutual interplay in their countless different manifestations, constitute the whole dynamism of the theory and practice of the psychology which is C. G. JUNG'S. To the extent that its goal is some greater or less measure of integration or completeness, it is always that of some *coniunctio oppositorum*.

Yet, as every analyst knows, it is just this programme which arouses resistance in the consulting room, as well as a good deal of misgiving and criticism from without. JUNG'S psychology itself enables us to understand in great measure the source of the resistance. The sacrifice of the superior function, indispensable if inferior functions are to come into consciousness, can be no light undertaking, involving as it must the abandonment of familiar modes of apprehension, a transvaluation of one's accepted values, the death of one's whole world and an entry into one wholly strange and alien. The recognition and experience of opposites is often a task not lightly to be estimated: JUNG justly deprecates facile presentations of them which "are too optimistic and superficial; they forget the moral torment occasioned by the opposites, and the importance of ethical values". Nor is the torment to be assuaged by sweet reasonableness, by tidy logic and calm philosophy. JUNG has well reminded us that: