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ABSTRACT of a Thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Theology Department of the University of Durham, by Marion C. Way, in 1998.

DEPRESSED MOOD IN A THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE.

The symptoms of depression and those of *accidie* as described by the Desert Fathers overlap, in that feelings of despair, guilt, poor estimates of self-worth, lack of energy and self-absorption predominate. Tillich adds to these symptoms a sense of meaninglessness and purposelessness. A new model of depressed mood is proposed which incorporates a variety of different aetiological factors, integrating those from the body and the mind which are found in clinical practice, with others which have a spiritual origin. The need for reconciliation with God, the world and the self means that discernment of spiritual problems can be fundamental in finding an answer to disturbed mood.

The psychological aspects of guilt and self-hatred and lethargy are explored through the work of Karen Horney, mainly in a discussion of the compulsions caused by an inflated ego-ideal. The work of Carl Jung emphasises the integration of the *shadow*, stressing the importance of reconciling polarities in the psyche so as to generate a creative tension which can replenish spiritual and mental energy.

Many theologians, including Tillich, also emphasise that opposites must come together, so that God can be found at the centre of all things. Hans Urs von Balthasar is outstanding because of his understanding of Christ's *kenosis* in balance with His *plerosis* These polarities point to the way in which Christ, through His Passion and Resurrection redeems us from godforsakenness, and also suggest a helpful way of understanding the Trinity as Love.

Nicholas de Cusa and Ignatius of Loyola, from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, have a common strand of finding God in the midst of opposite and fragmenting influences. Miguel de Unamuno at the beginning of this century adds a dimension of God's involvement in tragedy and suffering, and Charles Williams stresses our co-inherence with God, and the need for forgiveness in bearing each other's burdens.

The convergence of psychological and theological insights concerning polarities is applied to a recovery model for depressed mood through cognitive therapy, art, and prayer - methods which search, respectively, for truth, beauty and goodness. The process of healing is part of redemption, in that the 'Fruits of the Spirit' are the antithesis of some of the symptoms of depression, such as guilt, anger, self-absorption and fear. We may feel helpless and vulnerable because of negative feelings, but in His total self-giving, Christ suffered the helplessness and agony of the Passion in order to transform our disorders and bring us to His Kingdom of service and praise.

DEPRESSED MOOD IN A

THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

BY MARION C. WAY.

Thesis presented for Doctor of Philosophy,

in the University of Durham, Department of Theology,

1998.

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NOTES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Biblical references are given in the Revised Standard Version unless otherwise stated.
Jerusalem Bible is noted as JB, and Authorised Version as AV.

PUBLISHERS
Dartman, Longman Todd - DLT.
Routledge and Kegan Paul - RKP.
Oxford University Press, Oxford - OUP.
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge - CUP.
Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge - SPCK.
Student Christian Movement - SCM.
Classics of Western Spirituality - CWS.
New Jersey - NJ.
New York - NY.
University Press - UP.

The place of publication is London, (or Harmondsworth in the case of Penguin books) unless otherwise stated.

AUTHORS FREQUENTLY QUOTED

Balthasar, H.U. von., trans. Leiva- Merikakis, E. and McNeil, B. et al.(1961-69: 1982-89) The Glory of the Lord 1-7, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh referred to as Glory 1-7.

Julian of Norwich, ed. Wolters, C.(1966) Revelations of Divine Love, Penguin, referred to as Revelations

Jung, C. G., trans. Stein, L. and Hull, R.F.C., (1951:1971) The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Vol. 1-20, RKP, referred to as Jung, CW 1-20

Munitiz, J.A., and Endean, P., eds. (1996) St Ignatius of Loyola, Personal writings, Penguin, referred to as Ignatius, Personal Writings or Spiritual Exercises.

Palmer, G.E.H., Sherrard, P. and Ware, K., eds and trans. (1981) The Philokalia, vols. 1 and 2, Faber and Faber, referred to as Philokalia 1 or 2.

Tillich, P. (1951) Systematic Theology Volumes 1,2 or 3, will be referred to in the 1978 edition published by SCM Press, as S.T. 1, 2 or 3.
Tillich, P. (1952:1963) The Courage To Be, Collins, Fontana, referred to as Courage.
Tillich, P., ed. Kimball, R.C. (1959:1972) The Theology of Culture, OUP, referred to as Culture.

Way, M.C. (1994) 'Developmental Processes of Transition Applied to Religious Understanding and Therapeutic Change: the Functions of Relationships, Symbol and Paradox' - M.A. Thesis, University of Durham. Will be referred to as Transitions.

NB. Where there are several publications by the same author referred to repeatedly in the same chapter, a significant word will be highlighted and used after the first full reference.

GLOSSARY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL TERMS

This glossary is compiled using information from:-
Gelder, M., Gath, D., and Mayou, R. (1990) Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry. Second Edition.
OUP, Oxford.
Jung, C. C.W. 6. 'Psychological Types'.
Milner, M. (1969) In the Hands of the Living God. Hogarth. Press.
Walrond-Skinner, S. (1986) A Dictionary of Psychotherapy. RKP.
Rycroft, C. (1968) A Critical Dictionary of Psychoanalysis. , Penguin.

ACTIVE IMAGINATION. The use of art and other forms of imaginative work to stimulate associations which will liberate thoughts and feelings from the unconscious.

AFFECT. Mood, or the emotions and state of mind associated with a set of ideas.
AFFECTIVE DISORDERS. Disorders of mood such as depression and mania.

ANHEDONIA. Inability to experience pleasure.

ANIMA. This term is used in several different senses by Jung:
a) Soul image as in the Latin meaning.
b) An archetype which is the personification of the feminine nature in the unconscious of a man. When not in balance it is manifested by 'irrationalities' in feeling.

ANIMUS. Jungian personification of archetypal male nature in a woman's unconscious. When not in balance it is manifested by 'irrationalities' of thinking.

According to Jung both *Anima* and *Animus*, the contrasexual archetypes, act as mediators between the conscious and the unconscious, for instance in guiding dreams and helping further understanding of the whole person. They are complementary to the *persona*.

ARCHETYPES. A Jungian term for prototypes, models and complexes common to mankind, which are found in the COLLECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS. They represent inherited experience of, for instance, good, evil, mother, *anima* and *animus*. They are primordial images and modes of apprehension by which people can have a common understanding. They are typically manifested in dreams and are found in myths and fairy tales.

COMPLEX. In Jung this is a synthesis of unconscious thoughts and feelings which are separate from other thoughts and feelings in the unconscious. They consist of innate elements and those learnt from experience. They do not interact with the rest of the psyche so are not subject to modification. They erupt into consciousness as feelings and judgements sometimes giving rise to obstinate paranoid or hypochondriacal delusions.

DEFENCE MECHANISMS. Means of avoiding stress, using unconscious processes such as projection, repression, sublimation, reaction formation, displacement. First described by Freud.

DELUSION. A belief or fixed idea which is not related to the objective facts as perceived in the prevailing culture.

DENIAL. Denial is failure to recognise the truth of clear facts because of their unpleasant implications. The facts are then repressed to avoid pain.

DISPLACEMENT. Transfer of feelings onto a substitute (eg. kicking the cat)

DYSPHORIA. Inappropriate emotion usually associated with anxiety and depression

EGO. Freudian word for the self which is the central part of the personality, relating to the outside world with volition, feeling and thought. Used by Jung to mean a complex of awareness - how we see and feel ourselves to be as a person. It is the centre of the field of consciousness and mediates between other aspects of the psyche.

ENERGY. Psychical energy is considered as an analogy, comparable with physical energy. When attached to the Ego, Freud called it 'bound', and when expressing the Id it is 'freely mobile'.

EROS. Greek God of sexual love; an aspect of love, linked to desire - spiritual and aesthetic as well as sexual and material; in psychoanalysis often used as 'life instinct', synonymous with *libido*.

EXTRAVERT OR EXTROVERT. Used by Freud and Jung as a term for a psychological type looking mainly outwards to other people for value and energy.
Jung considered the extravert to be the most likely to develop affective disorders.

HALLUCINATION. The apparent perception, usually auditory or visual, of an external object which has no basis in reality.

HYPOCHONDRIASIS. Preoccupation with bodily functions and with symptoms not related to physical cause.

ID. A Freudian term for unconscious instinctive impulses wanting gratification for pleasure.

INDIVIDUATION. Used by Jung to denote the coming together of divided parts and polar opposites in an individual. The making of a whole integrated person by harmonising the 'shadow' with the conscious aspects of the self. Jung regarded it as a phenomenon of the second half of life and not one which occurred in many people. A life long process of becoming oneself.

INTROJECTION or IDENTIFICATION. Incorporation of the feelings, thoughts and actions of someone else. Taking onto oneself part of their personality. It complements projection and may take from good or bad aspects.

INTROVERT. Used by Freud and Jung to denote a type of person whose concerns and values are mainly from looking inwards to thoughts and feelings.

LIBIDO (or *EROS*). Freudian name for the driving force from unconscious sexual urges towards life. It has both physical and psychological components. Also used to mean desire and the creative energy of the mind.

MANIA. HYPOMANIA. Elated mood with excess activity, impulsive rapid thought and speech. The opposite pole from depression in bipolar affective disorder. No insight into irresponsible grandiose behaviour in manic psychosis.

MANIC DEFENCE. Defensive manoevre against guilt which may include denial of experience, projection of bad aspects of the self onto others, fantasy of omnipotent control and identification with people who are thought to provide power.

NEUROSIS. A Mental state or illness usually consequent on anxiety or avoidance of stress. Evaluation of reality and insight into the condition are retained in that people know that they are ill. The outer world remains real though the inner world is confused and misinterpreted. Examples are hypochondriasis, obsessional or compulsive neurosis and hysteria.

OBJECT RELATIONS. A term used by psychoanalysts for the emotional bonds with other people or with their parts, such as the breast, which start as primitive instinctual responses in infants but may develop into a disinterested relationship. The 'subject', or infant, desires and relates to the mother, or

her breast, which is the 'object'. Symbolic images of the 'object' may also lead to the same mode of attachment.

PARANOIA. A state where delusions of jealousy, suspicion or persecution predominate.

PERSONA. A Jungian term for the way in which people present themselves to the world, as if with a mask.

PROJECTION. The reverse of introjection - falsely attributing thoughts and feelings, belonging to oneself, to someone else. If these mental images are undesirable there is also 'denial' and projection becomes the basis of suspicion and paranoia. Sometimes good aspects of the self may also be projected in the search for heroes or soul-mates. Projection and introjection are normal in early development.

PSYCHE. Used by Jung as synonymous with Soul, infused with mystery and eluding both affective and cognitive explanation. It encompasses both conscious and unconscious. It is the essence of a person.

PSYCHIC ENERGY. For Jung this replaces Freud's ideas of *libido* as a driving force though he uses the terms interchangeably. It is not necessarily based on sexual instincts in Jung's work.

PSYCHOLOGICAL TYPES. According to Jung they are determined by attitudes and preferred ways of functioning along three axes which are, Introvert to Extravert, Feeling to Thinking and Sensing to Intuition. Isobel Briggs added the attitudes, Judging and Perceiving, making four axes and a possibility of 16 types.

PSYCHOSIS. Mental Illness in which there is a severe disintegration of the personality and an inability to evaluate some or all of external reality. It is usually without insight into the state.

RATIONALISATION. Justifying something unacceptable by specious arguments and believing the excuse. A defence mechanism that is often unconscious

REACTION-FORMATION. Consciously feeling or thinking the opposite of the true unconscious feeling or thought, eg. compensatory care or politeness towards someone who is fundamentally disliked or rejected. This is sometimes the basis of compulsions eg. excessive cleanliness because of an obsession with dirt.

REGRESSION. Reverting to an earlier stage of development when under stress, eg. comfort eating, retiring to bed when upset and temper tantrums.

REPRESSION. Instinctive and involuntary relegation of threatening ideas, memories and feelings to the unconscious. These thoughts are apt to surface in dreams sometimes clearly and sometimes disguised in more acceptable symbols.

SELF. The self is the 'subject' who is aware of identity and agent of behaviour. It is sometimes used synonymously with the ego. In Jung, however, there is also an archetypal Self which is the organising principle of the psyche making an integrated individual. It is a totality or wholeness which resonates with the symbol of the 'Image of God' in mankind. In Jungian psychology alienation occurs when Self is out of touch with the ego.

SHADOW. Jung's term for repressed aspects of the personality which are not compatible with the chosen conscious attitude or ethical stance. It comes from the collective unconscious as well as from experiences in life. It comprises everything an individual does not want to acknowledge about himself or herself. It is not necessarily evil, as good instincts and insights may be relegated to the unconscious, but it is the carrier of irrational guilt.

The shadow also ties up energy which is kept unavailable for useful and creative purposes. This energy can also be perverted into evil.

SUBLIMATION. A form of displacement where acceptable substitute activity is found to replace unacceptable impulses. Sport, work and art are the most common pursuits to benefit.

SUPEREGO. A Freudian term for a 'neurotic conscience' which is built up from early experiences. If the *Ego* gives in to the demands of the *Id*, and the the *Superego* does not approve, guilt and anxiety will result.

SUPPRESSION. Voluntary and conscious means of avoiding painful thoughts feelings and impulses. Contrasted with repression which is instinctive and unconscious.

SYMBOL. Used by Jung as a way of conceptualising the merging of opposites and bringing about transformation with a new centre for the integration of the personality.

He used symbols from various religions and from alchemy in his work. A Mandala is a pictorial symbol such as a circle in conjunction with a square or another geometric form, which is visualised to help the process of integration. It derives from Asian religious and meditative processes.

Jung describes symbol as the best possible representation of something that can never be completely known.

THANATOS. Urge towards death and destruction.

UNCONSCIOUS. (noun) Aggregate of forces and experiences not available for voluntary conscious recall. In psychodynamic practice it is approached by gradual associations of past memories or through dreams and symbol. Jung divides the unconscious into that which is personal caused by repression of experiences and that which is collective containing archetypes.

The SUBCONSCIOUS is on the edge of awareness, and is more readily available to consciousness.

INTRODUCTION - DEPRESSION AND PSYCHIC ENERGY

'Everything that lives is Holy.'[1]

After the common cold, depression is the most prevalent complaint to afflict mankind, varying from transient swings of mood and periods of dysphoria or anhedonia which few people escape, to an entrenched biological condition and physical illness which pre-empts normal functioning, and which may be fatal through suicide or starvation. A depressive mood may be chronic or acute, intermittent or cyclical, and has been given many names through the ages. Depression, melancholia, dejection, *tristitia, accidie,* and despair are allied states, the symptoms of which overlap and have been described from the time of the Pharaohs onwards.[2] These conditions which lower mental, physical and spiritual energy are always the enemy of growth, change and vitality. The relevance of Christianity to these allied conditions is considered in three sections which converge, and are related to personal clinical experience: Firstly a general discussion of tensions which need to be addressed, secondly psychological perspectives on the polarities which cause the tensions, and thirdly theological insights into the self-giving which is inherent in all constructive change.

1. MOODS.

Some of the tensions and antitheses which are relevant to the problems of depressive mood changes are the result of disturbing situations which demand a change of attitude, repentance or a different understanding. Psychological and theological insights both tend to disclose that we are living with polarities which we struggle to reconcile.[3] When tension is no longer tolerable, the conflict of opposites in desires,

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[1] Blake, W., ed. Keynes, G. (1966) The Complete Writings of William Blake. The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Plate 27, OUP. p.160.

[2] Jackson, S.W. (1986) Melancholia and Depression, Yale UP, pp. 3ff.
Thomas, W. (1958:1961) Documents from O.T. Times. 'The Book of the Dead: A Dispute over Suicide', Harper & Row, pp. 162-166.

[3] For example, see Ch. 6 The fundamental work of Ian Suttie also shows that hate cannot exist without there first being love which is then clouded by ambivalence when too much is expected of someone who is loved. Suttie, I.D. (1935:1938) The Origins of Love and Hate, Free Association, p.39.
The principle applies to the self, and to God as much as to others, giving rise to paradoxes rather than contradictions. Intimacy and solitude are also examples of opposites in paradoxical tension because one

thoughts or feelings may cause repression of the painful aspects and then psychic energy is used to maintain unconscious complexes. Mood changes are then likely to occur because psychological vigour is tied up in conflicts often involving fear or anger. Lethargy, despair, misery and distaste for life supervene.

Some of the anxieties found in disturbances of affect, are summarised by Paul Tillich - in particular fear of purposelessness, meaninglessness and condemnation. There is remarkable overlap between Tillich's analysis of despair, aspects of clinical depression, *accidie* as described by the Desert Fathers, and other self-absorbed static conditions in which vitality is lost. Tillich, applying psychological insights to his theology, also spells out some of the basic polarities which need reconciling in our inner lives if we are to transform anxiety and regain normal mood.

An Ignatian perspective is used here as an example of how there can be growing consciousness of God at the centre of all things - holding contraries together and enfolding them in love and forgiveness. The response to this presence of God, and our willingness to give of ourselves to it, is related to changing moods in 'consolation' and 'desolation', and it is argued that these states also have relevance to the extremes of affective disorder. A model is proposed which relates some of the physiological, psychological and spiritual factors in mood change.

2. POLARITIES IN PHYSCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Using concepts derived mainly from the psychological works of Carl Jung and Karen Horney, it is argued here that every time a dilemma presenting with apparent contradiction is faced in our affective life, there is a need to give up some treasured misconception[4], or an emotional attitude to an entrenched value system, so that opposites can be held together in equilibrium without conflict - this is a form of self-denial. Each act of reconciliation is liberating because a false position is abandoned, and the 'psychic energy' which was holding polarities apart becomes available for creative use - a hypothesis which is supported by examples from psychotherapeutic practice. Tension may occur, for instance, between personality and experience, or

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cannot exist satisfactorily without experience of the other. Paul Tillich gives many examples of theological opposites in tensions, many of which are relevant to psychological problems - see chapter 2.

[4] An example could be a inner problem which is ignored, denied and then projected onto the outside world, causing a distorted view of other people.

between ideals and reality, but in a creative situation, opposed tendencies are not held in conflict, wasting energy in hostility; nor are they avoided, dissipating energy in useless, bitter or destructive extremes.

The convergence of psychological observations with a theological understanding of our fragmented and contrary selves is explored. There are similarities which confirm the importance of reconciliation through forgiveness - a process which involves the self-giving and changed attitudes of two people. The contrite person recognises and accepts the distasteful realities of the psyche without projecting them onto other people. The forgiving person no longer blames the other, and the person forgiven recognises the truth about themselves and 'accepts acceptance'.[5] The psychologists help us to see that we should accept the fact that we sin, and sin again, and are hurt by other people's sins. They tell us that, notwithstanding these inevitable and interminable flaws, and our corporate responsibility for disastrous evil, we need to aim at the integration of our whole personality, and to maintain our self-esteem.

3. VULNERABILITY AND *KENOSIS* - A PATTERN FOR LIFE

The main theologians of this century who are quoted here, Paul Tillich, Hans Urs von Balthasar and Charles Williams, also recognise the importance of reconciling polarities. They relate their theology to God's abiding presence in the world and our struggle with negative forces, both as individuals and in communities. Von Balthasar is particularly pertinent when he draws attention to the extreme self-giving of God revealed in Jesus, and points out that His willingness to experience god-forsakenness is reconciled with, and even part of, His glory and splendour. Nicholas de Cusa and Ignatius of Loyola, writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, lead to this understanding of the ultimate significance of the polarities in humanity by illustrating the importance of finding God at the centre of all things, even of ourselves. Spirituality can foster a realistic and hopeful approach to the integration of our negativities, including sinfulness, diminishment, alienation, loss and anguish, and we should maintain self-love in the face of these trials, acknowledging failure and accepting forgiveness, without following those spiritual teachers who advise self-hate.[6] It is

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[5] Tillich, P. Courage, p. 163.

psychologically damaging to despise and hate ourselves, and this approach leaves a trail of guilt-ridden misery. The principle of hating the sin but loving the sinner applies as much to ourselves as to other people. God's *kenosis*[7] and suffering in Christ, which is the ultimate paradox of strength through weakness, guarantees our forgiveness and enacts the pattern of our redemption, demonstrating our worth as people created in the image of God.

It is argued here that, if opposites which threaten to clash or separate into extremes are to be reconciled, there must be a decision to join this pattern by entering a psychological process of self-giving. We need to consent to loss and diminishment – something which is valued too much may have to be abandoned, something in our nature which is despised may have to be accepted, and in other ways a previous stance may need modifying if our experiences are to lead to integration, wholeness and vitality. In the Christian life, we only gain our soul by losing it, and 'when I am weak then I am strong'[8] St Paul's writings are rooted in the paradoxical power of the Cross which brings life through weakness, vulnerability and death. Moreover, it is not through our virtues that we come close to God but through sin and helplessness for which we need love and forgiveness. Exposure of our vulnerability can be healing, if in the spirit of the Beatitudes[9], it helps us to revolutionise our values and accept love.

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[6] Self-hate is recommended by spiritual writers in all traditions, though not with the same emphasis or implications. Often it means hatred of selfishness rather than hate for the soul. For instance, Evagrius says 'the beginning of salvation is to condemn oneself', and 'the first of all the *logismoi* is that of self-love, the eight others derive from it', - quoted in Spidlik, T., trans. Gythiel, A.P. (1986) The Spirituality of the Christian East, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, pp. 89 and 255. Maximus the Confessor writes that 'from self-love, which causes hatred for all men, everything evil is derived ... or this terrible enemy self-love is foremost of all evil dispositions'. Maximus, in *Philokalia*, 2, 1:33, p.172. He also says however that there can be a spiritual self-love. Ibid, 1:49, p.174.

In the Western Catholic tradition, Thomas à Kempis is an example. He writes of the dangers of self-esteem and self-love, saying that 'love of yourself is more hurtful than anything else in the world. Thomas à Kempis, trans. Sherley-Price, L. (1952) The Imitation of Christ 2:27., Penguin, pp. 130-131. He reiterates that we should despise ourselves and hate everything in the world. The Imitation of Christ 2:20, p.119.

In the Protestant tradition the attitudes tend to be most uncompromising and often deny any remnant of created goodness. An extreme example can be taken from the writings of John Calvin who says that 'man is rotten to the core and so wretched that even the angels veil their faces in terror'. Calvin, J., trans. Battles, F.L. (1559:1960) The Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1:3, Library of Christian Classics, SCM, p.39. Calvin quotes Augustine to prove the total depravity of human nature, holding that 'everything proceeding from the corrupt nature of man is damnable'. Institutes, 3, pp. 289ff.

[7] *Kenosis* is taken to mean the self-emptying and self-giving of God in Jesus, though He still remains Almighty God. It is also a term used more generally to mean self-giving love in the Christian life.

[8] Matthew 16:25, and 2 Corinthians 12:10.

[9] Matthew 5:3-11

The love of God for his world is manifest in the central message of the Cross, which a pattern of self-giving which is transforming. Charles Williams' theology of 'co-inherence' emphasises the place of our interactions with other people in the processes of transformation. As we share each other's burdens by forgiving each other, we participate in the life of God and He in ours. The world is based on a fundamental pattern of exchange which necessitates self-giving and receiving from others. This pattern means that extremes complement and balance each other, with our negative experiences fitting into this pattern

Our notion of God is important and there can be no absolutes, except in God 'beyond the coincidence of contradictories' as Nicholas de Cusa expresses it.[10] The nature of God's concern for our feelings is considered through pioneer writings such as those of Miguel de Unamuno and others who were convinced that an ability to feel and suffer does not detract from God's transcendent Essence. A number of other literary and autobiographical examples are used to illustrate the integration of psychological and theological polarities in the search for authenticity and acceptance.

The conclusion is that Jesus Christ, by showing the extent of God's compassion, in being vulnerable yet authoritative, weak yet full of power, crucified and resurrected, draws together every polarity, so that we can trust in God's loving and forgiving nature as a source of healing and energy for our fragmented and discordant lives.

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[10] Nicholas de Cusa references in Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 1. - MELANCHOLY MOODS IN THE DESERT - OVERLAPPING SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

'Why are you so heavy, O my soul and why are you so disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise Him.' Psalm 42:11

CONTENTS

1. *ACCIDIE,*ONE OF THE *LOGISMOI* - EVAGRIUS PONTICUS (346-399)

Melancholy is found in disorders of feeling such as depression and despair, and it will be argued that changes of mood are affected by factors coming from body, mind and spirit. There are many features in the ancient concept of *accidie* (a state of evil thought or sloth) which also occur in some forms of clinical depression. The overlapping components will be explored through a historical perspective which enables account to be taken of spiritual and other factors often neglected. Too much responsibility may have been allocated to the person suffering in the past, but occasionally there is now too little.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, emotions are described by the effect they have on the bowels, heart, belly, bones, head, eyes, kidneys, sinews, loins, throat, flank, and liver. Through these organs, distress, grief, agony, fear, dread, and anger are expressed as well as desire and love. Change of mood can have an effect on every organ and every function, but the heart is given a particular role in being the point of

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contact with God, the centre of reason, will and emotion. It can be glad, sad, courageous, fearful, envious, trustful, moved by hatred or love, and it is the seat of desire and of moral choice. Physical symptoms such as palpitations, trembling, weariness and faintness which accompany the emotions cause Mumford to comment that 'metaphors based on somatic sensations act as a bridge between somatic, and psychological experience'.[1] The Bible has many examples of depression, particularly notable in the Book of Job[2] and the Psalms[3], and in these examples there is always a close interconnection of mind, body and spirit.

The clear early descriptions of melancholy written by monks of the African Desert also highlight the need to attend to the whole person if despondency is to be kept at bay. *Accidie*, as a spiritual problem, has been recognised since Classical times when it originally meant lack of care, weariness, exhaustion and apathy. The word is also found in the Septuagint where it has the additional connotations of faintness, anguish and depressed mood from the original Hebrew roots (as in Psalm 119:28). It is a contradiction of all that is understood as the work of the Spirit because it kills love and vitality - an enemy that prevents change because it makes everything seem pointless and without meaning.

The Stoics laid the foundation for the inclusion of *accidie (akedia)*, and later *tristitia (lype)* in the lists of sins which originated with those of the early Desert Fathers. Sleepiness, laziness and cowardice are also described as sins in earlier writings - in the second century, for instance, in The Shepherd of Hermas, melancholy (*lype* or grief) is called 'the most evil of all spirits' bringing bitterness and ill-temper.[4] The first clear analysis of *accidie* is, however, found among eight temptations or sinful thoughts documented by Evagrius Ponticus, a monk and philosopher who left

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[1] Mumford, D.B. (1992), British Journal of Psychiatry, 160, 'Emotional Distress in the Hebrew Bible', pp. 92-97.

[2] Job pours out his anguish with symptom after symptom, saying, for example, 'perish the day that I was born' (Book of Job, 3:3) 'why was I not still-born ... why was I not hidden like a untimely birth. (3:11) 'why should the sufferer be born to see the light? why is life given to men who find it so bitter? They wait for death but it does not come' (3:20).

[3] For example, 'afflicted and close to death from my youth up, I suffer thy terrors; I am helpless', Psalm 88:15, and 'for my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace. My heart is smitten like grass, and withered; I forget to eat my bread ... I lie awake, ... all the day my enemies taunt me .... I eat ashes like bread and mingle tears with my drink', Psalm 102:4,5.

[4] Grant, R.M. ed., and Snyder, G.F., trans. (1968) The Apostolic Fathers 6. The Shepherd of Hermas, Thomas Nelson and Sons, pp. 83-4.

Constantinople where he was noted as a preacher to live amongst the monks of the Egyptian desert south east of Alexandria. He wrote extensively but much of his work was lost when he was condemned as having Origenistic views in the sixth century.[5] It was only saved by the translations that were made into Latin or Syrian, and through his influence on John Cassian who perpetuated Evagrius' systematic grouping of sinful thoughts, referred to collectively as *logismoi*.[6]

Evagrius used the term *logismos*, sometimes meaning evil thought and sometimes meaning spirit or demon, at a time when belief in demonic temptation was common. Belief in demons and spirits which entered into people had been the norm, but by the fourth century it was beginning to be recognised that evil thoughts (*logismoi*) are not imposed from outside, but come from an inner susceptibility to perverse desires and habits. Though Evagrius says that demons can be recognised by their 'evil smell' as well as by the thoughts they induce[7], it is quite clear that the monk is held responsible for his thoughts.[8] The *logismoi* have a great resemblance to the 'autonomous complexes' described by Jung who says that 'complexes behave like independent beings'.[9] *Logismoi* are, likewise, thoughts which arise from the deep desires which underlie our behaviour, and which Evagrius, like Jung says, may be revealed during sleep through dreams.[10] Complexes are constellated around repressed *archetypes* in the unconscious, and Evagrius, like the psychologists, stresses the importance of the self-knowledge which is revealed when these thoughts surface. He says, 'do you wish to know God? Learn first to know yourself', and, because temptation reveals weakness to be forgiven, he adds that 'without temptation no one would be saved'.[11] Evagrius also knew, from his experience and intuition, that prayer

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[5] Origen, a third century scholar in Alexandria, wrote controversially about the eternal relationship between the Father and the Son, and about the possibility of human 'deification'.

[6] Evagrius Ponticus, trans. Bamberger, J.E. (1970) The *Praktikos*, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, pp. 17ff.

[7] Spidlik, T., trans. Gythiel, A.P. (1986) The Spirituality of the Christian East, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, p. 245.

[8] Bloomfield, M. W. (1952) The Seven Deadly Sins, State College Press, Michigan, p. 157.

[9] Jung, CW 8, p.253, and see below, pp. 140ff.

[10] Tugwell, S. (1984) Ways of Imperfection, DLT, p.15.

[11] Evagrius, in Kadloubovsky, E. and Palmer, G.E.H. trans. and eds. (1992) Early Fathers from the Philokalia 1, Faber and Faber, p.109.

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is a means of knowing the self because it is concerned with the deepest desires. Prayer can, therefore, penetrate unconscious complexes and defuse them.[12]

In addition to *accidie*, the other *logismoi* described by Evagrius were gluttony, impurity, avarice, sadness, anger, vainglory and pride. The eight vices reflect the threefold Platonic division between the appetitive, the incensive (irascible) and the intelligent. Thus gluttony and lust were temptations of the body, dejection, anger and despondency of the emotions, and vainglory and pride of the reason. Kallistos Ware explains that the order which Evagrius uses is deliberate in that it reflects the development of the spiritual life from temptations against the grosser materialistic sins of gluttony, lust and avarice which are sins of incontinence, through the inward temptations of dejection, irritability and despondency, to the subtle spiritual vices of pride and vainglory.[13] The *logismoi* have and addictive quality so that evil thoughts and wrong desires easily become habitual. Tomas Spidlik describes the early monastic understanding of the way in which the will is undermined - firstly by a suggestive image, then by drawing near and 'parleying' with the image, then after a struggle giving mental consent, followed by captivity when the passion rules, and then after many assents it becomes a vicious habit.[14] Repeatedly allowing such thoughts to be entertained becomes weakening , so that a habit is made self-perpetuating as 'second nature' - in other words the *logismoi* become compulsions. If on the other hand the image is rejected by turning in the other direction towards God, the underlying desires can be transformed so the image is less beguiling.

Accidie is our prime concern, and of all the thoughts it is most opposed to change, inviting the other temptations to join it, because it saps energy and reduces the will to resist. Evagrius describes the listlessness of *accidie* as the noonday demon of Psalm 90:6, saying that, 'the monk cannot stay at his work or prayer. He is restless, feels isolated, disaffected and bitter, flitting from one thing to another without satisfaction' ... he has 'a hatred for the place, a hatred for his very life itself and a hatred for manual labour'.[15] He adds that 'it begins by making a man notice how slowly the sun moves, or does not move at all, and the day seems to have become fifty

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[12] See below, pp. 75ff.

[13] Ware, K. (1982) Introduction, <u>John Climacus</u>, CWS, Paulist Press, NY, p.62.

[14] Spidlik, <u>op. cit,</u> p.241.

[15] Evagrius Ponticus, trans. Tugwell, S. (1987) <u>*Practikos*</u>, Faculty of Theology, Oxford, pp.8ff.

hours long'. In his misery, the monk longs to escape, trying to persuade himself that God can be worshipped anywhere. He is also full of self-pity when he feels there is no charity in any of the brethren and no one will visit him, but, if they come he will not be civil.[16] We recognise in these descriptions a state which we would now call depression. Lethargy, self-hate, self-pity, lack of purpose, self-absorption, projection of negative feelings onto others, misery and agitation are equally found in modern clinical descriptions (see below).

2. LATER DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONCEPT OF ACCIDIE

John Cassian (c.360-435), a monk who travelled between the Eastern and the Western traditions of Christianity, was influenced by Evagrius. and brought the tradition of the *logismoi* to the West.[17] He emphasises their interdependence, suggesting that when they are conjoined they have offspring which also overlap and interconnect. He lists numerous progeny for each sin, and in his account, listlessness (*akidia*) gives rise to idleness, somnolence, rudeness, restlessness, wandering about, instability of mind and body, chattering and inquisitiveness'.[18] There is some confusion in the concepts of dejection (*tristitia*) and listlessness (*akidia)* which both overlap with our present understanding of depression. In writing of *tristitia*, Cassian provides descriptions that resonate with modern psychological observations of clinical syndromes. For instance, he says that 'we feel overwhelmed, crushed by *tristitia* for which we can find no motive ... our train of thought becomes lost, inconstant and bewildered ... we complain, we try to remind our spirit of its original goals, but in vain - sterility of the soul! and neither the longing for Heaven nor the fear of Hell is capable of shaking our lethargy'.[19]

The Benedictine Rule owes much of its foundation to Cassian, and it is significant that the vow of stability is fundamental. Much of the rule is intended to counter *accidie* - those who are under vows are not to move about restlessly as people do when they are suffering from spiritual malaise. Cassian says, of listlessness,

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Cassian, J., in Philokalia 1, p. 72.

[18] Ibid, p.90.

[19] Cassian, J., trans. Trevelyan, W.B. (1927) Conferences 4:2, in A Master of the Desert, p.83, quoted in Bringle, M.L., Despair: Sickness or Sin, Abingdon Press, Nashville, p. 57.

that it is a fearful demon making the monk slack, lazy and anxious with hatred of the life he has chosen.[20] He too stresses the overwhelming bitterness and self-pity that occurs in this state as he describes the insidious virulence of dejection (*tristitia*). He quotes 'as a worm devours wood, so dejection devours a man's soul' (Proverbs 25:20), as a warning to rouse people out of carelessness about their spiritual duties.[21] He is also clear that anger is closely related and often the cause of *accidie*.[22]

Cassian links profound spiritual apathy with cowardice which, in Tillich's terms, would be failing to have 'the courage to be' and slipping into non-being, choosing nothingness, instead of accepting the implications of a life of prayer.[23] The link between *accidie* and fear is frequently noted, and is attributed to failure to meet the challenges of faith. Cassian, in suggesting virtues that would replace the demonic thoughts, says that *fortitudo* (courage) 'will build up whom *akidia* has laid in ruins', and he links prayer with physical and mental energy, calling it 'the energy which accords with the dignity of the intellect - its true and highest activity'.[24] It should be noted that Cassian has a concept of 'spiritual energy' which is available through prayer and which affects every aspect of life, but is lost in *accidie* and *tristitia*. Cassian was realistic enough to realise that stillness is not always possible and recommends manual work and exercise (not pointless activity) as the best ways to deal with entrenched conditions of dejection.[25] He notes that melancholy 'is good only if it leads to repentance - all other melancholy leads to despair, and only 'godly sorrow' can nourish the soul'.[26]

Simon Tugwell is right to comment on the Fathers' flair for psychology which makes them perceptive about human weakness.[27] The descriptions Evagrius and Cassian give of the monastic temptations have a coherence which is still persuasive and relevant in ordinary life. Owen Chadwick also notes that Cassian had 'a very

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[20] Cassian in <u>Philokalia</u>, 1, pp. 88-89.

[21] <u>Ibid</u>, p.87.

[22] <u>Ibid</u>.

[23] Tillich, <u>Courage</u>, pp. 49 & 88ff.

[24] Cassian, in <u>Philokalia</u>, 1, p. 65.

[25] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 89.

[26] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 88. See below, pp. 127ff.

[27] Tugwell, S. (1984) <u>Ways of Imperfection</u>, DLT, p. 25.

penetrating and rare ability for psychological analysis, especially of the nature and force of temptation'.[28] Cassian was particularly sensible about the temptations of the ordinary person, and repeatedly stresses the interaction of the body with mental and spiritual problems.[29] There is also a prominent strand in modern Greek Orthodoxy that holds that 'Christianity is not a philosophy or an ideology, but it is a therapeutic science and a therapeutic treatment which cures the innermost aspect of man's personality'.[30] Archimandrite Hierotheos Vlachos has recently written extensively about the therapy of the soul which is obtained through prayer and 'ascesis',[31] but though he claims that there is a connection and that our ills are linked to the spiritual, there is little in his translated writings that connects the spiritual life with specific psychological problems. On the whole the link with our miserable compulsions is more clearly stated in the writings of the Fathers. The connection between the work of Karen Horney and that of Maximus the Confessor is, however, made in considerable depth by George Varvatsoulis, in a thesis which structures the problems of the soul on the *logismoi*, and suggests religious discernment of vice and virtue is paralleled by Horney's concepts of insight into unconscious drives. [32]

Gregory the Great (540-604) consolidated the tradition of the *logismoi* in the West. He was an outstanding example of the creative tension which comes from balancing a life of contemplative prayer with pressing responsibilities and activity. This tension makes his teaching on the *logismoi* particularly relevant to ordinary busy people. He amalgamated *tristitia* with *akidia* and named it *tristitia* possibly because it would then have wider recognition from those not in an ascetic tradition.[33] The

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[28] Chadwick, O. (1986) in Jones, C., Wainwright, G. and Yarnold, E, eds., The Study of Spirituality, SPCK, p. 146.

[29] Cassian, op. cit, p. 74.
A modern Greek writer also describes *accidie* as 'a psychophysical paralysis - spiritual and physical slothfulness'. Vlachos, Archim. H., trans. Mavromichali, E. (1991) A Night in the Desert of the Holy Mountain, Birth of Theotokos Monastery publication, Levadia, Greece, p.171.

[30] Ibid, Back page review.

[31] Vlachos, Archim. H., trans. Mavromichali, E. (1991) The Illness and Cure of the Soul in the Orthodox Tradition, Birth of Theotokos Monastery publication, Levadia, Greece. pp. 111.ff.

[32] Varvatsoulis, G. (1996) Neurosis according to Karen Horney and the Anthropological Aspects of Maximus the Confessor: a Comparative Study, PhD Thesis, University of Durham, pp.285ff.

[33] Wenzel, S. (1960) The Sin of Sloth: *Acedia* in Medieval Thought and Literature, UP, North Carolina, p. 26.

comparisons of both conditions with depression show considerable overlap, justifying the link which Gregory makes. He wrote a mammoth commentary on the Old Testament story of Job, much of which is an analysis of the *logismoi* and the contrariness of our desires. He advised the practice of inner stillness amid all the bustle, because thinking the right thoughts helps us to do the right things, keeping *accidie* at bay.[34] Gregory writes extensively about the dangers which result from giving in to *tristitia*, and with great insight into the major dangers, he says that 'if despondency festers in silence it sours into bitterness, resentment, and a self-perpetuating self-pity'.[35] Like Cassian, he also concludes that melancholy and dejection give rise to other vices, such as 'malice, rancour, cowardice, despair, slothfulness and illicit thoughts'.[36] Gregory notes that 'the sad are never far from anger'[37], and he adds to this association by saying that melancholy arises from the other sins, particularly from anger and loss of tranquillity. He joins his predecessors in saying that patience, prayer, courage and hard work are necessary to combat sadness, and puts great emphasis on love and joy as the opposite virtues.[38]

Gregory also links melancholy and avarice, saying that 'when the disturbed heart has lost the satisfaction of joy within, it seeks for sources of consolation without, and is more anxious to possess external goods'.[39] Erich Fromm, in this century, writes similarly of those who feel 'the source of all good to be outside' and of 'those who measure their value through commodities', whether these are actual goods that are acquired or some other form of marketable attribute.[40] Gregory, like the other Orthodox writers, realised that there is an interaction between body, mind and soul and he seems to have recognised that sometimes melancholy is an illness needing care

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[34] Gregory the Great, (1884) Benedictine translation, Library of the Fathers,
Morals on the Book of Job :31, J.H.Parker, Oxford, p. 20.

[35] Gregory quoted in Bringle, op. cit, p. 59.

[36] Gregory, Morals, p.409.

[38] Gregory quoted in Bringle, op. cit, p. 58.

[38] Wenzel, op. cit, p. 55.

[39] Gregory, Morals, p.491.

[40] Fromm, E. (1949:1986) Man for Himself, RKP, Ark, p. 62.

rather than censure.[41] He ministered to every kind of person, and was concerned that there should be proper care of physical health.

John Climacus (c.579-649) was about twenty five years old when Gregory died, and he may not have known of Gregory's list of sins[42]. He was also a contemporary of Maximus though he is also unlikely to have been in contact with him. Climacus lived at the foot of Mount Sinai, where he wrote The Ladder of Divine Ascent, basing it on the allegory from Jacob's dream in Genesis 28, - a work with many vivid metaphors. In it, he describes a journey through temptation and sin, saying that 'we travel a truly dangerous sea, a sea full of winds, rocks and whirlpools, of pirates, waterspouts and shallows, of monsters and waves'.[43] In accidie, despair is a whirlpool, and despondency a shallow.[44]. Climacus notes that tedium of spirit gives rise to headaches when it comes to the time for prayer! He was also shrewd enough to realise that, through the associated compulsions, paradoxically overwork could be caused by despondency.[45] Despondency seems harmless enough, but Climacus calls it the 'gravest of all the eight deadly vices', leading to spiritual death and unreality - there is 'discontent which comes from indulgence in foolish desires, harping back to the past and not being immersed in present reality'[46]. Winning a victory over despondency means that 'he who has won is really outstanding in all virtue'[47].

Climacus, like Cassian, often suggests that the main sins have dependent sins in a chain of disaster: for instance, as summarised by Kallistos Ware, anger leads to malice, malice leads to slander, slander leads to talkativeness, talkativeness leads to falsehood and despondency, despondency leads to lust and gluttony, gluttony leads to insensitivity, insensitivity leads to unbelief, unbelief leads to vainglory and pride, and these lead to blasphemy![48] Despair is linked to pride which is denial of God's

[41] Gregory, Morals, p. 9.

[42] Ware, K. (1982) Introduction, John Climacus, CWS, Paulist Press, NY, p.62.

[43] Climacus, J., trans. Luibheid,C. and Russell, N. (1982) The Ladder of Divine Ascent, Paulist Press, NY, p.231.

[44] Ibid, p.207.

[45] Ibid, p.207.

[46] Ibid, p. 162.

[47] Ibid , p. 164

[48] Ware, John Climacus, p. 65.

compassion, forgiveness, and therefore precludes hope. Climacus puts it in no uncertain terms by saying that despair is, 'like a whirlpool with the hopelessness that lays hold of the mind and struggles to drag it into the depths. Nothing equals the mercy of God or surpasses it, therefore to despair is to deny God's mercy and to inflict death on oneself'.[49] The emphasis in all these writings is not, however, on these negative tendencies but in rejoicing in God's love and mercy which is found in a joyful life of prayer and work[50].

3. THE MEDIEVAL TRADITION

The tradition which first suggested that there are seven or eight basic temptations leading to the same number of basic sins (one of which is despondency, melancholy and listlessness) has borne the test of time, surviving the probing of the Scholastic period. *Akidia* and *tristitia* became known as sloth, vainglory came under the heading of pride, and envy was added. The *logismoi* then became the medieval 'seven deadly sins', no longer considered primarily in terms of tempting thoughts and images but as actual sins to be confessed. Cassian's metaphor of a tree with its roots, describing the way in which the sins become entrenched and keep their hold, was an image that became more elaborate in the medieval period. There were various interpretations of the branches which sprung up as well as fascinating bestiaries to illustrate our deplorable tendencies.

Dante was well versed in the significance of the *logismoi* on the spiritual journey, and he based much of his work on Hell and Purgatory on them. He also shows that a degraded tendency can reveal the true nature of something which is fundamentally good, for instance when he describes sins which are perversions of love, each revealing a different type of antithesis.[51] Mark Musa summarises Dante's ideas on the degradation of love: it is wrongly directed in pride, envy and anger because we take delight in ourselves; deficiency of love occurs in sloth and despondency; and an excess of love for the wrong things results in avarice, gluttony

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[49] Climacus, op. cit, p. 241.

[50] Ibid., pp. 274ff.

[51] Dante, A., trans. Musa, M. (1985) The Divine Comedy: Purgatory, Canto xvii, Penguin, pp. 181ff.

and lust.[52] Commenting on Dante's Purgatory, Sayers notes that the key-note of sloth in the Divine Comedy is 'make haste! lose no time! work while the daylight lasts!'. The slothful are pointlessly rushing around, restless because without love, and leaving no opportunity for adequate rest and reflection.[53] This activity is not the work of the Kingdom because there is a time (*kairos*) which invites each kind of loving activity, including enjoyment. The passive despondency of *accidie* with its lethargy or compensatory pointless activity has to be reversed by repentance and peaceful creative work.[54]

There are many other medieval descriptions of *accidie* including Chaucer's The Parson's Tale where gloom, irritation, bitterness, sullenness and many other negative tendencies are similarly associated with inactivity and despair - it is also found in the prologue to the Second Nun's Tale.[55] In the Ancrene Riwle of the twelfth century, sloth is well recognised and all the consequent evils detailed. It is likened to a bear with cubs of torpor, pusillanimity, heaviness of heart, idleness, grudging, deathly grief, negligence and despair.[56] The remedy is 'spiritual joy and the comfort of joyful hope, which comes from reading, from holy meditation or from the sayings of others.... reading teaches us how to pray and what to pray for, and then prayer achieves it'; and then, lest too much effort might be self-defeating, the writer continues that 'there may be excess in all things. Moderation is always best'.[57]

The mystics, of whom Walter Hilton is an English example in the late fourteenth century, also describe the experience of meeting the *logismoi* when being purified in 'faith and feeling'. Hilton uses them to structure that part of his work which describes sin[58], and counsels 'godly sorrow and persistence through the rigours of purification'. He recognises the danger of despair and depression when there are conflicts aroused by these temptations, but says that 'Divine Love works within the soul as He wills, wisely and quietly. He destroys anger, envy, despair and all such

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[52] Dante, op. cit, note, p.189. See also Paget, F. (1928) The Spirit of Discipline, Longmans, Green and Co, p. 18.

[53] Sayers, D.L. (1957) Further Papers on Dante, Methuen, p.119.

[54] Ibid, p.146.

[55] Chaucer, G., trans. Coghill, N. (1957) The Canterbury Tales, Folio Society, pp. 230 and 291.

[56] Salu, M.B. ed. (1955) The Ancrene Riwle, Burns & Oates, p. 90.

[57] Ibid, p. 127.

[58] Hilton, W., trans. Sherley-Price, L. (1494:1988) The Ladder of Perfection, Penguin, p. xxiii.

passions, and brings the virtues of patience, gentleness, peace and kindness into the soul'.[59] This kind of transformation with these spiritual elements should be considered in our approach to depressed mood, whatever the main causative factors appear to be.[60]

4. CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATIONS.

The centrality of *accidie* as an enemy in the ethical struggle has been noted through the centuries, and those with no belief, as well as those professing faith, have recognised it as a temptation allied to our present understanding of depression. *Accidie*, used as a word to describe a common insidious and destructive state, has an extensive literature which describes it so well that, though it may seem an archaic word, none other conveys the intensity of a problem which has equal relevance today. A few examples of its more recent use will be given. Aldous Huxley, for instance, in an essay on *accidie*, describes the futility and boredom which makes people want to be anywhere but where they happen to be - preferring to stay sullenly in the mire. In 1923 he regrets the speed of change and the disillusionments which multiplied after the French Revolution tending to make melancholy respectable.[61]

Dorothy Sayers describes *accidie* as,

the sin which believes in nothing, cares for nothing, seeks to know nothing, interferes with nothing, enjoys nothing, loves nothing, hates nothing, finds purpose in nothing, lives for nothing, and only remains alive because there is nothing it would die for.[62]

She may be wrong about 'hating nothing' and 'interfering with nothing', but the overall picture of hopeless negativity is right, and she shrewdly recognises that dissembling activities, involving other sins, with which we cover up our sloth and the despair, exclude God. The sluggard is oblivious of God, disobedient and ungrateful, self-orientated, wanting to be left alone in misery. The seeds of *accidie* are always with us, leading to lethargy and boredom and preventing progress out of ingrained habits and compulsions, but Mary Louise Bringle brings a more hopeful note when she

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[59] Ibid, p. 216.

[60] See below, pp. 84ff.

[61] Huxley, A. (1923) On the Margin, Chatto and Windus, pp. 22ff.

[62] Sayers, D. (1943) The Other Six Deadly Sins, Methuen, p. 24.

says of *accidie* (and despair) that 'buried within it lie the seeds of its own transformation; the person who dares to despair possesses a tensile spirit which can learn to brave the even more radical venture of hoping'.[63]

Inevitably the question arises of whether the 'Dark Nights' of the soul, as described by St John of the Cross, have an affinity with depression, desolation or *accidie*. Are they, perhaps, all different aspects of similar disorders, with the dark nights at the spiritual end of a spectrum? John suggests in a passage on discernment, that sin, weakness, lukewarmness or bodily indisposition may all lead to similar feelings of desolation and aridity.[64] Denys Turner explores the possibility of a major difference between depression and spiritual darkness, saying that there is a desire to be free of self and emptied of self-will in the dark nights of the soul, whereas in conventional therapy of depression the aim is to recover and strengthen the self. Turner rightly warns that the cure of depression may lead to the renewal of fictions about the self if there has been no change of perspective or readjustment of priorities.[65] He says 'when depression passes, all is restored, normality is resumed, the emotional life is rehabilitated and so, for all the sufferings of the depressed, which are otherwise indistinguishable from the passive nights, nothing is learned'.[66] Fortunately he is mistaken in many cases, for God also works creatively in depression so that frequently people become more realistic about themselves and more sensitive to others as 'wounded healers'.[67]

5. LINKS WITH MODERN PSYCHOLOGY: MOOD AND ENERGY

Robert Burton (1577-1640) under the pseudonym of Democritus Junior, wrote a detailed and accurate analysis of melancholy which provides a link with modern observations. He recognised the interaction of the body and the mind, and though he does not mention *accidie*, his description of the effects of the 'humours' give a good

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[63] Bringle, op. cit. p. 174. The term 'tensile spirit' is particularly appropriate in the context of this thesis.

[64] St John of the Cross, trans. Kavanaugh, K. and Rodriguez, O. (1979) Ascent of Mount Carmel, 1:13:11, Institute of Carmelite Studies, Washington, p. 313.

[65] Turner, D. (1988) Downside Review, July, pp. 157ff.

[66] Ibid. p. 167.

[67] Transitions, pp. 216ff.

picture of it. [68]   The phlegmatic humour makes people slothful, dull and heavy, the choleric humour makes them furious and impatient, and the black humour makes them solitary and sad, thinking they are bewitched or even dead.

In this century, Rom Harré, however, represents those who come to the perfunctory conclusion that melancholy and *accidie* are outmoded, obsolete and even extinct concepts. He concludes that laziness is not now associated with misery, and that melancholy is no longer thought to be associated with depth of thought.[69] Robert Finlay-Jones, in the same book, equates *accidie* with boredom and insensitivity to pain or pleasure, as a 'suburban neurosis' - dis-gust or lack of taste for life.[70] Their views are dismissive, coming from a paradigm which measures all emotion solely by its social implications.

Frank Lake, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst and founder of the training movement called 'Clinical Theology', however, comes to the opposite conclusion. Unlike Harré, he makes a detailed comparison of the symptoms described under the heading of *accidie* and finds that they are identical with those in clinical depression of the reactive type.[71]   Lake takes a psychodynamic view of depression saying that the overwhelming lack of energy is the result of intrapsychic conflict which leaves people

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[68] Burton, R., alias Democritus Junior (1621:1628) The Anatomy of Melancholy, third ed., Henry Cripps, Oxford, p. 128.

[69] Harré, R. ed. (1986) The Social Construction of Emotions, Blackwell, Oxford, p.221.

[70] Ibid, p.232

[71] World Health Organisation (1992) International Classification of Disease 10th revision, Geneva (ICD 10)
American Psychiatric Association, (1993) Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th revision, Washington. (DSM-4).
  In a 'Depressive Episode' the following symptoms occur: 'depressed mood, loss of interest and enjoyment, reduced energy, diminished activity, marked tiredness after only slight effort, reduced concentration and attention, reduced self-esteem, self-confidence, ideas of guilt and unworthiness, bleak and pessimistic views of the future, ideas of self-harm or suicide, disturbed sleep and diminished appetite. In some cases there may be agitation, anxiety, irritability, restlessness, loss of libido, social withdrawal and hypochondriasis'.
  The complex nature of diagnosis is illustrated by the multitudinous subheadings of classifications. Though these provide categorisations using a medical disease model they allow for other axes of influence in the aetiology. In DSM-4 they are: Axis 1. Clinical syndrome and psychopathology. Axis 2. Personality and developmental disorders. Axis 3. Physical Disorders. Axis 4. Psycho-social stressors, rated according to severity 1-7. Axis 5. Adaptive functioning, rated 1-7 (from superior to impaired).
  The Hamilton Rating Scale and the Newcastle rating scale considered the most reliable for an observer assessing the severity of depression based on sadness, guilt, tension and anxiety, reduced sleep and early waking, reduced appetite, poor concentration, lassitude, retardation of function, diurnal variation, suicidal thoughts. Hamilton, M. (1959) British Journal of Medical Psychology, 32, pp.50-55.
Beck, A.T. et al (1965) Archives of General Psychiatry, 4, pp. 561-571.

bereft of vitality in other functions as well as in their mental state.[72] He also takes quotations from many descriptions of *accidie* and compares them with those in psychiatric textbooks.[73] The main overlapping symptoms of depression and *accidie*, apart from misery and lethargy, are:

1. Despair and total despondency which makes someone loathe and detest the place he is in with self-pity.

2. Sense of impending death which is dreaded, yet desired as a way out of distress.

3. Inner rage leading to resentment, bitterness, and 'savage discontent' (Dante). There is sullenness and irascibility, impatience and peevishness.

4. Guilt without hope, sometimes resulting in scrupulosity.

5. Projection resulting in overwhelming resentment. God is felt to be distant, angry and rejecting.

6. Lack of concentration and attentiveness to necessary tasks, leaving room for escapist fantasies.

7. Hypochondriasis exaggerating fatigue and vague discomforts.

8. Anxiety and dread which lead to a paralysis which stops any activity, or to restlessness, distractibility and pointless activity.

9. Loss of energy, slowness, dullness, and torpor.

10. Loss of normal social concern and self-absorption.

11. Small matters seem overwhelming and grievances predominate.

12. Irritability.

Guilt, self-absorption and lack of energy are central problems in abnormal mood, not only in the desert, but in any descriptive passage from a clinical point of view. Psychomotor retardation is typical of the clinical and biological illness of depression in which every aspect of function becomes slow, ponderous and fatiguing, though it sometimes turns into paradoxical restlessness or agitation. Usually, the patient walks and talks slowly with many pauses, everything is an effort and routine tasks are left unfinished.[74] This lethargy is associated with disturbed sleep, poor

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[72] Lake, F. (1966) Clinical Theology, DLT, pp. 111, & 129ff.

[73] Ibid, p.132.

[74] Gelder, M., Gath, D., and Mayou, R. (1991) Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry, OUP, pp. 187ff.

memory, loss of libido, decreased appetite, neglect of appearance, characteristic stooping posture, and downward gaze. Usually there is a lack of spontaneity and the facial expression is fixed, mournful and immobile, though a few people may manage a deceptive smile. Persecutory or somatic delusions, anger and feelings of worthlessness or guilt are associated. Body, mind and spirit are affected, and though depressed people often recognise that there are better options, they suffer from a 'paralysis of the will', preventing them from changing.

6. SEVERE DEPRESSION AND ANGER

The symptoms of depression bring with them the pain of guilt, self-hate, self-pity, worthlessness and purposelessness which feed each other in vicious circles of increasing misery.[75] The agony may be so great that self-harm or suicide seem the only way to relieve tension, and such an action seems to the person to be just because they see themselves as irredeemable. Anger with the self is almost always the underlying problem which causes these and any less extreme destructive tendencies. Evagrius, Cassian, Gregory and Climacus, like those who came after them, shrewdly linked melancholy and dejection to anger, and the problem of anger may need attention before there can be a chance of dealing with despondency.[76] They all recommend, a little naively, that anger should be used to fight the demons and the thoughts that they induce.[77] It is now, however, recognised that anger against the self will be counter-productive, only increasing depression.[78] Murdoch Dahl describes the

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[75] There a plethora of demographic and statistically valid studies linking the presence of overt and hidden anger with depression. They come from different countries and cultures and most of them also point out that anger is a defence against anxiety. For instance: Friedman, A.S. (1970) Archives of General Psychiatry 23, pp. 524-527, Rothenberg, A. (1971) Amer. J. Psychiat, 128:4, 'On Anger', pp. 454-460, Riley, W.T., Treiber, F.A., and Woods M.G. (1989) Journal of Mental and Nervous Diseases, 117:11, pp. 668-674, Blackburn, I (1974) Brit. J. Psychiat 125, 'The Pattern of Hostility in Affective Illness', pp. 141-145, Kellner, R. et al. (1985) Journal of Mental and Nervous Diseases, 173:9, pp. 554-560, and Biaggio, M.K. and Godwin, W (1987) Psychological Reports 61, Indiana, pp. 87-90.
The failure of psychiatrists in Britain to recognise anger as a potent factor in morbidity is highlighted in Kennedy, H.G. (1992) Brit. J. Psychiat. 161, 'Anger and Irritability' pp.145-153.

[76] Philokalia 1, p. 87.

[77] Tugwell, S. (1984) Ways of Imperfection, DLT, p.29.
Maguire, A. (1995) The Deadly Sin of Accidie, Guild of Pastoral Psychology, (available on tape).

[78] Alistair Campbell summarises well the constructive and destructive effects of anger and the dangers of suppressed or repressed anger. Campbell, A. (1986) The Gospel of Anger, SPCK, pp.102ff.

'dark, sad and implosive rage' which destroys the inner life and paralyses someone who is depressed,[79] and Gonville ffrench-Beytagh writes from his own experience of the paralysing effect of depression, with the pain, dread and wish for oblivion. He describes a half-acknowledged anger, grief and guilt for being alive at all.[80]

Sigmund Freud developed his own schema to explain the changes in melancholia, relating depression to loss or separation from a loved 'object' (person).[81] The consequent anger can be projected outwards, but in depression, is turned inwards so that there is inner hate, and a sense of worthlessness and guilt. The inner world becomes empty and useless because the loss has been introjected (in mourning it is the outer world which has become empty). In Freud's view considerable amounts of libidinal energy are tied up in repressing negative feelings and maintaining introverted anger, so that in depression, energy is bound into unconscious conflicts, which render the psyche static. Freud at one time thought of this energy in neurophysiological terms but his original scheme is not now credible. When some depressed people become verbally or physically aggressive, however, suppressed anger erupts with unexpected energy and physical concomitants, and it is then more obvious that there is a connection between different kinds of energy in this condition.

At the opposite end of the affective scale from depression, mania or hypomania is a state of elation in which energy abounds but is dissipated in unconstructive ways, often hostile and aggressive. There is rapid careless speech and movement, flight of ideas with irrational associations, expansive and grandiose plans, extravagance, recklessness and lack of inhibitions. Libido and appetite are increased but sleep decreased. These changes in energy can be expressed in terms of entropy, that is, disordered energy that becomes unavailable for constructive use.

Following psychoanalytic tradition, Frank Lake points out that depression is linked to anger that has been forgotten, repressed and turned inwards, calling it 'frozen rage'. Sometimes this anger can be traced to infant experiences of separation which caused excessive anxiety, jealousy, insecurity and frustration - introverted anger that

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[79] Dahl, M. (1989) Daughter of Love, Churchman Publishing, Dahl points out that rage often accrues as a defence against mounting anxiety, and he contrasts a Christian way of trust.

[80] Ffrench- Beytagh, G. (1990) Out of the Depths, Fairacres, Oxford, p. 9.

[81] Freud, S., trans. Strachey J.et al. (1959:1974) Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 14, 'Mourning and Melancholia', Hogarth Press., pp. 243ff. See also Gilbert, P. (1984) Depression, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, New Jersey, pp.26-27.

becomes recognisable later in the self-hate, low self-esteem and guilt feelings.[82] Much anger comes from instinctual response to adverse circumstances, and as such, it can serve a useful purpose, and there may be a point at which a genuine reaction without repression may be therapeutic - perhaps this is one of the lessons to be gleaned from the <u>Book of Job</u>.

A case history gives an example of the damaging power of anger which was built up over many years. Ethel was a physically healthy but neurotic 76 year old widow with three daughters and a son. They were a reasonably conscientious family who visited her in the residential home and took her to their own homes on Sundays. Ethel had always been of an anxious and demanding disposition and she had extracted a grudging service from her family, exhausting them one after the other. They were very relieved when she agreed to go into a home where 'she could be properly cared for'. She sensed that there was an element of rejection in this, and developed a neurotic depression with diminished self-esteem. She would not cooperate with any of the efforts made to distract and enliven her nor would she talk reasonably about the way in which she saw the situation. As her anger at the way she thought she had been treated increased, so did the paranoia which fed it. A vicious circle of hatred engulfed her feelings for the family and for herself, and this began to be reciprocated. She decided to use her power to make other people miserable if her own misery could not be relieved, and so she threatened her family that if they did not take her to live with one of them she would die, and she added 'then you will be sorry'. They resisted this moral blackmail, but being a determined lady used to getting her own way in the past, and seeing no point in living, Ethel stopped eating and drinking, presenting the medical profession with the dilemma of whether or not to put up drips or institute forced feeding.

Ethel died leaving a legacy of helplessness, guilt and anger shared between all those who had attended her last days. This was a tragic situation when lack of self-worth, anger and guilt were projected onto others, making the depressed patient determined to die rather than accept that she could not manipulate her daughters into loving and serving her in the way she wished. It is certain that she had had difficult times in childhood which had been instrumental in leading her to such an angry and dependent lifestyle. Most of the aggressive feelings were projected but there was

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[82] Lake <u>op. cit</u>, p. 111.

enough self-hate to lead her to suicide. If Ethel's value as a person could have been affirmed earlier in her life, she might, just possibly, have been less angry and become less dependent on the enslavement of others.

7. IS THERE CHOICE AND RESPONSIBILITY?

The early descriptions of *accidie* indicate clearly that there are choices in depressed mood, and that improvement could come about through faithfulness to a disciplined spiritual life. The task here is to determine whether the elements in clinical depression which overlap with *accidie* could be approached in a similar manner. It is, above all, necessary to make no sweeping statements, for the extreme, sometimes unbearable, suffering which occurs in biological endogenous depression must not be underestimated nor confused with the melancholy of avoidable feelings or moods. The symptoms may bring with them further pain of guilt, more self-hate and self-pity, worthlessness and purposelessness - in vicious circles of increasing misery, but it is nevertheless essential to recognise and treat the physical illness. The agony may be so great that self-harm or suicide seem the only way to relieve tension, until it is so extreme that there is a paralysis of all effort and thought, so that total mental withdrawal causes a numbness which is nearly stuporose.

Some people, however, recognise that, even in severe illness when paralysis of will seems almost complete, there may still be a small area of choice. The cocoon of inactivity, emulating death can give a strange security, and more than one person has described to me the frightening prospect of returning to normality after depression, and their experience of having choice. One person felt that they were going around a pit which offered diminishment of painful feelings, and there was a temptation to fall into it in order to become numbed or stuporose. The pain which is countered by cutting off feeling and separating from circumstances is convincingly described in fiction by Paul Sayer in The Comforts of Madness.[83] An elective mute in a long term hospital resists all the efforts of well meaning people to stimulate or feed him and makes no response whatsoever to them, preferring a slow death by starvation.

If there is no spontaneous cyclical improvement in a depressive illness, there are a number of routes that lead away from despondency and depression, all of them

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[83] Sayer, P. (1988) The Comforts of Madness, Constable.

difficult and many of them painful. William Styron speaks for others when he describes his own experience of the courage needed to return to health. He describes emerging from 'depression's dark wood --- its inexplicable agony, ---- trudging upward and upward out of hell's black depths', 'despair beyond despair.' He gives a very detailed catalogue of the symptoms of his illness, describing feelings of loss, self-hatred, dread, and 'the grey drizzle of horror which took on the quality of physical pain'.[84] He was in the grip of an indescribable torment for which he felt oblivion was the only answer. He could not think except about suicide and planned this in detail, but he had just enough hold on life to make the choice to be hospitalised instead.

A feeling of acute terror, without any logical reason for it, is also common in many sufferers, and for this reason, a return to some degree of normality is slow even when most available medical and psychological therapies have been given. There is also a tendency to hopelessness which makes people cling to their depression as a known companion rather than risk any change - it may be the painfulness of recovery and unpleasant realities that have to be faced or a difficulty in accepting responsibilities. In the most severe depression there is a state when all feeling may be lost - the negative feelings are so painful that stasis is almost complete.

Most depression is not so severe, but when the need for prayer is recognised and there is a desire for it, the will may seem befuddled with energy low and concentration absent. Even then, an element of choice may be possible, as it was in the desert. The Fathers say that a decision to return to the Scriptures, in spite of despair, is more important than any effect from their recitation[85] - the desire for God is, in itself, a prayer. People also know that an effort of will can be undermined by the relative security of inertia - they recognise a turning point when an act of will overcame their lethargy. We are frightened of the unknown and the possible risks we may encounter, preferring our petty constricting securities - miserable though they are. This tendency has been described by Alexander Shand as a 'great clinging impulse of sorrow'.[86] He wrote some perceptive comments in his early analysis of everyday emotions and different kinds of melancholy, amongst which is a view that even

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[84] Styron, W. (1991) Darkness Visible, Jonathan Cape, p. 84.

[85] Burton-Christie, D. (1993) The Word in the Desert, OUP, Oxford, p.126.

[86] Shand, A.F. (1914:1926) The Foundations of Character, Macmillan, p. 321.

despair can stimulate courage and energy though it may 'break the spirit in weak characters' who do not love enough.[88] He takes the unusual stance of looking for the value which can be gained from melancholy, and adopts a positive view of the anger with which it is associated, and which can provide energy to use constructively.[89] His analysis provides a cognitive approach to the constricting tendencies of depression, suggesting that sorrow in the present will colour expectations for the future unless there is a deliberate effort to counter this tendency with realistic thinking which will modify desire.[90] Shand quotes Henri Amiel who suffered from severe depression but also writes, 'It is dangerous to abandon oneself to the luxury of grief: it deprives one of courage and even of the wish for recovery'.[91] Ursula Fleming writes pertinently from her long experience of treating people with pain and depression that 'prison can become a home. Stasis even in prison, becomes preferable to change'.[92]

Several other writers have expressed their horror of the state of depression and the difficulty of making choices which enable people to emerge from it. Amongst these is William James who, from his own experience, says that 'it is a positive and active anguish, a sort of psychical neuralgia unknown to normal life'[93]. James illustrates his ideas on the relationship between melancholy and religious experience by citing those who do not suffer, calling them 'healthy minded', and contrasting them with others who have clearly had periods of depression, calling them 'sick souls'.[94] He uses the self-revelations of people (such as Leo Tolstoy, John Bunyan and Martin Luther) whose depression seems to have been necessary to show them their need of God and which has enabled them to surrender themselves to Him. James uses the axiom 'man's extremity is God's opportunity' to emphasise that these states may have an intrinsic value.[95] Meeting the extreme opposite of the Christian life in depression and despair may stimulate people into a new attitude in which 'the habitual centre of

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[88] Ibid, p. 350.

[89] Ibid, p. 349.

[90] Ibid, p. 565. See also pp. 234ff.

[91] Amiel H.F., trans. Ward. M.A, (1898) Journal Intime, Macmillan, p. 192.

[92] Fleming, U. (1992) Eckhart Review, June, p.53.

[93] James, W. (1902:1987) The Varieties of Religious Experience, Penguin, p. 147.

[94] Ibid., pp. 145ff.

[95] Ibid, p. 210.

personal energy' can be shifted, and habits of inertia changed.[96] It is possible that, though people may not be able to help themselves now, some disability may be due to having established harmful habits of thought (such as resentment and self-pity) in the past. Our choices depend on the establishment of intentions which keep open a vision of life which is not self-absorbed. Such a background does not take away suffering, but it enables an integration of all experiences into the pattern which will ultimately redeem and transform them.

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[96] Ibid, pp. 196ff.

CHAPTER 2.

THE RELIGIOUS AND THE PSYCHOLOGICAL TASK : PAUL TILLICH (1886-1965).

'In Him we live and move and have our being'.[1]

CONTENTS.

The previous chapter looked at the overlapping symptoms in different types of depressed mood. This chapter adds to these the need for a faith which can counter the concomitant meaninglessness, purposelessness and fear of condemnation. We have to struggle to accept life as it is and ourselves as we are. In Tillich's terms, we need the 'courage to be' in the face of 'non-being'. After a brief introduction to Tillich's interest in this field, exploration of his contribution is undertaken in three main areas. Firstly, there is a discussion of the fundamental ontological polarities through which the symptoms of affective disorder can be interpreted. Secondly, existential anxiety is seen to include tensions between faith and unbelief, hope and despair, love and apathy; reconciliation can occur through forgiveness, leading us from existential estrangement

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[1] Quotation used by St Paul and attributed to Aratus or Epimenides - Acts 17:28.

to our essential state of participation in the divine. Thirdly, a critique of Tillich's work, as interpreted by John Dourley, highlights some of the relevant theological issues.

1. TILLICH'S BACKGROUND AND INTEREST

Tillich's work adds another perspective to our modern understanding of depressed mood. It contains profound statements about human dilemmas and psychological pain, much of which would seem to have been informed by his own problems of faith. John Newport describes him as 'an emotionally sensitive person .....characterised by periods of melancholy, loneliness and anxiety'.[2] Tillich was born and educated in Germany, and worked as an army chaplain during the First World War. He was betrayed in his first marriage which ended in frustration and divorce in 1921.[3] He then married Hannah, with whom he maintained a turbulent relationship until his death, in 1965. His public life, with activities in philosophical and sociological fields, brought him into conflict with the Nazi government, and the Tillichs were obliged to move to New York in 1933. He rapidly became a professor of the Philosophy of Religion at the Union Theological Seminary, moving on to Harvard in 1955, and then, after retirement, to another professorship in Chicago in 1962.

Tillich lived dangerously 'on the boundaries' seeking the relevance of religion in cultural, social, political matters, always relating his theology to the real world, and trying to find answers to existential questions by his 'method of correlation', especially in the fields of philosophy and psychology. In a recent book which aims to bring together religion and psychiatry, William Fulford points out that the two disciplines inhabit the same territory, 'a landscape of meaning, significance, guilt, belief, values, visions, suffering and healing'.[4] Tillich's work pioneered some of this territory. Psychiatry and psychology are, on the whole, empirical and, because they are always striving to be recognised as respectable sciences, they tend to rationalise and be reductionist about any religious manifestations. Equally blinkered, religion can sometimes assume its priority and disregard scientific facts. Fulford pleads that we

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[2] Newport, J.P. (1984) Paul Tillich, Word Books, Waco, Texas, p.199.

[3] May, R. (1973) Paulus: Reminiscences of a Friendship, Harper and Row, NY, p.53

should avoid a destructive dialogue, 'the smug deconstruction of other people's certainties' and let the religious 'world of values' interact with the scientific 'world of facts'.[5] George Carey (Archbishop of Canterbury) has recently reminded the psychiatrists of this aim in an article which reassesses some of the common problems such as guilt.[6] Tillich's desire for rapprochement is indicated when, in a seminar with students, he makes it quite clear that one of the main reasons why he agrees with the psychologists (and in this instance he cites Erich Fromm) is that they consider that self-acceptance is an ethical necessity, because self-love, when it is understood as self-acceptance and self-affirmation, prevents the inadequacies and disgust that lead to self-preoccupation.[7] Tillich's respect for the work of psychologists is also indicated when he writes that psychoanalysis is a discipline as rigorous as any spiritual regime because it means facing guilt and estrangement.[8] He was convinced that 'the whole Christian message is salvation from despair about one's guilt[9], and that 'bringing to mind the horrors of the past in therapy is a 'transformation just as radical and difficult as that presupposed and demanded by Socrates and Paul'.[10] His comments on Freud are on the whole respectfully critical, as he recognises the potential of the unconscious.[11] He considers, however, that findings of psychology should not interfere with the insights of revelation, which refer to matters of ultimate concern, because psychology lacks the vertical dimension.[12] Tillich is also critical of Freud's failure to recognise the positive creative value of *eros*, pointing to the negativity of Freud's descriptions of *libido* as an urge that is never satisfied and therefore damaging.[13]

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[4] Fulford, K.W.M., in Bhugra, D. ed.(1996) Psychiatry and Religion, Routledge, p.5.

[5] Ibid, p.7.

[6] Carey, G. (1997) British Journal of Psychiatry, 170, pp. 396-397.

[7] Tillich, Ultimate concern, p.48

[8] Tillich., Culture, p.123.

[9] Tillich, ST 2, p.178.

[10] Tillich, ST 1, p. 96.

[11] Ibid. p. 179.

[12] Ibid. p. 130.

[13] Tillich, ST 2, p. 54.

Tillich found a Jungian approach more congenial and attended a major Jungian meeting when he returned to Europe in 1936, but at that time his interests were more in the political implications of Christianity than in psychology.[14] In his later writings, however, although he does not mention Jung by name, Tillich constantly refers to the relevance of depth psychology, to the extent that the <u>Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy</u> says his work is 'existentialist in tone, but infused with Jungian psychology'.[15] He rejects, however, the excessive subjectivity of depth psychology which, though it reveals existential problems, is not adequate for atonement without the objective aspects of Christianity which include a sense of justice.[16] It also neglects our essential origins, and does not look towards salvation or our 'teleological nature'[17]. Theology, in its relevance to the human problems found in conflict and misery, adds a dimension and understanding which is not available through psychology alone. Much of Tillich's work is based on opposite forces or polarities which should be balanced in the Christian life. I, therefore, propose to look first at the polarities of imbalance in manic-depressive illness, and then to suggest ways in which these demonstrate an imbalance in the ontological polarities which Tillich describes.

2. AFFECTIVE DISORDER AND ONTOLOGICAL POLARITIES[18]

In affective disorder of a bipolar type there are biological features affecting sleep, appetite and libido which swing from one extreme to another as well as contrasting mental and even recognisable spiritual changes. Severe depression with its biological components is stasis; there is no balance from the opposite pole, no movement, no dynamic element and no participation. The effective withdrawal from life is sometimes so great that even suicide is too much effort. Mania is, in most respects the reverse side of the same illness as depression, possibly, according to the

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[14] Tillich, P., Brauer, J.C. ed., Pelikan, M. trans. (1970) <u>My Travel Diary,</u> SCM, p.157.

[15] Blackburn, S. (1994) <u>The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy,</u> OUP, p. 377.

[16] Tillich, <u>ST 2</u>, p. 172.

[17] Tillich, <u>Culture,</u> p. 110.

[18] Ontological means basic to 'being'; ontological polarities are part of the elemental structure, found in existence. Adrian Thatcher points out that the prologue to St John's Gospel is ontological in a

psychoanalysts, due to unconscious defensive denial of guilt, anxiety and other unpleasant aspects of depression and the projection of personal flaws onto other people. In mania there is a fantasy of power and omnipotence and an obsessional desire to control people and situations which contrasts with the complete lack of self-assurance in depression.

The main psychiatric symptoms can be summarised as follows[19]:

In Depression	In Hypomania
Depressed mood	Elated mood
Lethargy	Energy abounds
Retarded movement[20]	Over activity
Slow thinking and speech	Quick flight of ideas and speech
Lack of self-esteem	Grandiose inflation
Guilt feelings	Self-assurance and no guilt
Social withdrawal	Insensitive sociability

Tillich's work on ontological polarities underlying the tensions we experience can be applied to the symptoms of clinical depression and hypomania. The fundamental and universal polarities to which Tillich refers are as follows:

1) Tillich uses the terms 'Individualisation and Participation' to include the tension between the individual and the 'other'.[21] Imbalance with too an great emphasis on the community and too little on the individual means that there is danger of disintegration towards the pole of 'participation', resulting in self-loss in a culture or collective and a loss of individuality through meaningless activity. On the other hand, imbalance towards the pole of 'individualisation' results in disintegration because of isolated self-preoccupation. Without balance there is stasis at the centre, or dispersion of energies

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philosophical sense because it is about everything that is; and it is ontological in a theological sense because it is about how it came to be. Thatcher, A. (1978) The Ontology of Paul Tillich, OUP, p. 163.

[19] See also Transitions. pp. 11-12.

[20] Agitated overactivity may sometimes replace the slow, lethargic movements which are characteristic.

[21] Tillich, ST 1, p. 174.

and loss of identity at the periphery. As Tillich says we have to unite elements of self-identity with elements of self-alteration.[22]   These extremes can be interpreted in psychological terms as the self-centred absorption of extreme introversion and lethargy, as in depression, at the static pole; and unchecked extroversion which dissipates life in pointless activity, as in mania, at the pole of chaotic disintegration.   Only when there is a balance between these poles can anyone function fully to their own potential, within their legitimate circles of activity.   Tillich uses the metaphor of balanced circular movement around a centre, as a picture of self-integration - always active and neither self-absorbed in lethargic misery nor escaping into pointless activity.

2) 'Dynamics and Form' are the terms Tillich uses to describe the polarities between structure and change. The tension lies between the essential form and the creative vitality which allows change.[23] We remain ourselves, with the security of an identity, balancing the need for change and self-alteration. Again, in psychological terms, affective disorder can be formulated in terms of these polarities. In depression there is a static inactivity and lethargy which resists change; in mania there is constant change and no stability. It is as if chaos and instability has taken the patient to the limit of either pole. Tillich uses a horizontal metaphor for this dimension because he sees a balance between the poles enabling creative growth by human means such as culture, symbols and artefacts.

3) The tension between necessity and free choice, is called 'Freedom and Destiny', and these polarities determine the way in which the present self can be transcended and can relate to eternal values. Freedom, Tillich says, is experienced as 'deliberation, decision and responsibility', whereas destiny is determined by the necessary concrete elements of life which lead to a particular end and fulfilment.[24]   Tillich refers to these polarities as the vertical dimension between the inexorable and limited conditions of human life, and the infinite possibilities of divine life which determines the essence of

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[22] Tillich, ST 3, pp. 32ff.

[23] Tillich, ST 1, pp. 178-180.

[24] Tillich, ST 1, p. 185.

each person.[25] They have to come together to enable the development of the 'essential self' which Tillich regards as the ultimate goal of life. Choices should be made in the knowledge that there is this destiny. The pathological feelings of guilt found in depression are symptomatic of disorder between polarities, because responsibility within the community is not resumed after repentance and forgiveness. Tillich considers the polarities of law and spontaneity in this context - each makes the other possible, and spontaneity is not possible without an ethical structure in which the self is centred.[26]

The spatial metaphors used by Tillich are appropriate: the mood should not be too high nor too low, not too expansive nor too constricted, not dissipated at the periphery nor centrally encapsulated. All the symptoms of depression, and the underlying conflicts, fit into the dialectic framework Tillich provides, and each pair of opposites can be linked, in broad terms, to specific symptoms: lack of self-esteem and social withdrawal are an expression of imbalance between 'individualisation and participation' and result in feelings of meaninglessness. 'Retardation' and lethargy are related to an imbalance between 'dynamics and form' because a sense of purpose is lost. Guilt feelings arise from an imbalance between 'freedom and destiny' and there may be no motivation to change. The extent to which the polarities are balanced determines our progress in self-transcendence, a term Tillich uses for self-integration, working through the presence of the Spirit towards full personal potential. It is interesting that in the Anglican Doctrine Commission's publication on the Holy Spirit the same tensions are described as the arena in which the Spirit works. This publication says that 'God is the God of order as well as of freedom, of continuity as well as of innovation, of regularity as well as of surprise'[27], and 'of the community as of the individual'.[28]

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[25] Tillich, ST 3, pp. 86ff.

[26] Tillich, ST 1, p. 185, and ST3, pp. 232,266ff.

[27] Church of England Doctrine Commission (1991) We Believe in the Holy Spirit, Church House Publishing, p. 13.

[28] Ibid. p. 57.

3. ANXIETIES OF MEANINGLESSNESS, PURPOSELESSNESS AND GUILT

a) THE COURAGE TO BE.

If the essential or ontological polarities are not in balance, there is anxiety, depression, mania or despair instead of creative tension. Like other existentialists such as Kierkegaard[29], Tillich considered that anxiety from the shock of possible non-being is a universal human problem, likely to cause despair, and the extent to which he felt the horror of this was increased by his experiences in the First World War. He writes of the horrifying experience of falling to pieces in suicidal despair, and points out that it is often associated with a longing for rest from conflict.[30] Loss of a 'determining centre' through despair is linked with evil, and often vividly illustrated in the 'deserts and jungles of the human soul' portrayed in art, poetry, drama and literature.[31]

Tillich suggests that there are three major anxieties which paralyse living by undermining a sense of identity and purpose. The first of these anxieties is fear of death, an inevitable fate which we fear might mean 'non-being' and without purpose. The second anxiety is about emptiness, loss of meaning and doubt about the nature of reality. The third anxiety comes from guilt and fear of condemnation.[32] The courage of faith is needed to be self-affirming and honest in the face of these feelings, and 'in spite of' their continuing presence.[33]

The concept of courage, 'striving towards what is noble', is taken from *thymós* in Platonic thought - an 'element of the soul, which bridges the cleavage between reason and desire'.[34] Tillich considers that the courage he describes is the same as that known to the Stoics, but concerned with faith and hope in a Christian context, and linked to love, because only by the courage which enables self-affirmation can

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[29] Kierkegaard's earlier study of despair is linked to anxiety about the threat of non-being, and he describes some of the ways in which we avoid facing the reality about ourselves and about death. Kierkegaard, S., trans. Hannay A. (1849:1989) Sickness unto Death, Penguin.

[30] Tillich, Courage, pp. 61-3.
   Tillich, ST 2, pp. 61, and 75ff.

[31] Tillich, Courage, pp. 136ff.
[32] Ibid, pp. 48ff.

[33] Tillich, Courage, p.148.
[34] Ibid, p. 15.

there be relationship with other people.[35] He says that 'Stoic courage presupposes the surrender of the personal centre to the *Logos* of being (see below); it is participation in the divine power of reason, transcending the realm of passions and anxieties'.[36] If there is no hope, no faith and no courage, a state of alienation and fragmentation results, and, in this, internal polarities cannot be reconciled. There is a sense of abandonment in a purposeless morass, and no sense of the reality of God, nor of participation in a divine world. Tillich often reiterates that 'self-loss is the loss of one's determining centre, the disintegration of the unity of the person', and then there is no self through whom we can relate to others.[37] Excessive wilfulness and restlessness, because of contingent pressures without regard to destiny, is misuse of freedom caused by pride. It prevents centred decisions, and estrangement occurs because 'the attempt of the self to be the centre of everything gradually has the effect of its ceasing to be the centre of anything'. [38]

The need for forgiveness cannot be found without the courage to accept reality, and neuroses are usually unrealistic and compulsive, means of avoiding reality, displacing existential anxiety when it becomes more than an individual can manage.[39] However, courage alone does not remove anxiety, and as Tillich suggests, courage and fear should be present in a balance which allows enough vitality and motivation for the essential risks of life and relationship.[40] He calls neurosis an escape and a 'way of avoiding non-being by avoiding being'.[41] We need the courage to face our fear and our destructive urges and accept acceptance, believing that we can be forgiven by other people and by God, and, therefore, that we should forgive ourselves. If we face the reality of our anger and our anxieties, they can be transformed, and as Tillich says 'when we break through the surface by penetrating the deep things of

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[35] Ibid, pp. 20, 33.
[36] Ibid, p. 24.

[37] Tillich, ST 2, p. 61.

[38] Ibid, p. 62.
[39] Ibid, pp. 78ff.

[40] Tillich, Courage, p. 82
Neurophysiologists, ethologists and psychologists also bear witness to the fact that some anxiety or stress is necessary for arousal, motivation and activity, though, in excess, stress has the opposite effect, inducing self-absorbed stasis. Scherer, K.S. and Ekman, P. eds. (1984) Approaches to Emotion, Laurence Erlbaum, New Jersey, pp. 225ff.

[41] Tillich, Courage, p.71.

ourselves, the world and of God ... we can experience the joy that has eternity within it, the hope that cannot be destroyed, and the truth on which life and death are built'.[42] He repeatedly says 'the courage to affirm oneself must include the courage to affirm one's own demonic depth'.[43] This courage, which keeps opposites together in creative tension, enables forgiveness and generates energy. Tillich's recognition of our need to accept the polarities within ourselves is an alternative way of expressing Jung's belief that the *ego* must recognise and accept the *shadow* if it is to develop healthily.

As Hannah's biographical reminiscences tell, Tillich's two overwhelming problems were doubt about his own salvation, and his complicated and apparently illicit relationships with women.[44] Hannah herself was, however, also very far from blameless in her sexual life. Rollo May, a Jungian psychoanalyst who was a student of Tillich's, became a close friend and discusses Tillich's doubts about God, guilt and fear of death. He thinks Hannah's picture is unjust and exaggerated, and does not do justice to harmless and intellectually stimulating relationships with both sexes, nor to Tillich's robust enjoyment of the good things of life.[45] May does not, however, deny that much of Tillich's guilt and uncertainty arose because of his experiences and fantasies.[46] The Paucks suggest that temptations arising from these problems continued all Tillich's life and gave rise to lasting guilt and self-doubt, with a personal anguish and struggle which is likely to have influenced his writings.[47] The value of contraries (ambivalence, love and hate) which occur in sexual encounters were certainly of great importance to Tillich as well as other passions. He thought that if an inner adventure of depth is undertaken with humility and faith, relationship, participation and risk can become spontaneous and loving whatever the circumstances. Tillich wrote on the flyleaf of the copy of The Courage to Be which he gave to May that 'the self is the stronger the more non-being it can take into itself', but May says that Tillich himself did not find it easy to 'accept acceptance' because his life-style courted anxiety.

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[42] Tillich, P. (1949:1962) Shaking the Foundations, 'the depth of existence', Penguin, p.66.

[43] Tillich, Courage, p. 122.

[44] Tillich, H. (1973) From Time to Time, Stein and Day, NY, and Tillich, H. (1976) From Place to Place, Stein and Day, NY.

[45] May, op. cit. p. 52.
[46] Ibid, p .61.

b) RECONCILIATION AND PARTICIPATION

Tillich is clear that God and Creation are not to be separated, and one of his main thrusts is towards a theology that can incorporate the 'demonic' without denying the strength of its negativity, or the power of God to encompass and transform it. Tillich elaborates the interaction of polarities, saying, in the concluding part of his major work, that 'there can be no blessedness where there is no conquest of the opposite possibility, and there is no life where there is no otherness'.[48] Throughout his systematic theology, he uses a method which demonstrates the interdependence of extremes, relating them to a structural whole. His method of correlation chiefly concerns the relevance of Christian symbols to the tensions of the human situation of fragmenting polarities which need to be brought towards the centre through the Cross of Christ, thus making theology relevant to everyday life and giving theological answers to existential questions.[49]

Tillich's answer to our anxieties is the power of 'being to incorporate non-being', as he interprets non-being as it is experienced in our negative and conflicting feelings.[50] Robert Scharlemann summarises these thoughts of Tillich's, by saying that God is 'continuously creating, and incorporating destructiveness'.[51] The polarity between being and non-being is, therefore, unequal because creativity enfolds the negative.[52] Tillich is insistent, however, that God's becoming does not compromise his Being, saying that 'His going out from himself does not diminish or destroy his divinity. It is united with the eternal "resting in himself"'.[53]

Tillich's term for the immanence of God is the *Ground of Being* (see also *logos* below), and he considers that courage enables reconciliation at a level which unites us

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[47] Pauck, W. and Pauck, M. (1977) Paul Tillich, Collins, p. 275.

[48] Tillich, ST 3, p. 421.

[49] Tillich, ST 1, p.60.

[50] Tillich, Courage. pp. 174-5,and ST 1, pp.186ff.

[51] Scharlemann, R. P. ed. (1992) Negation and Theology, UP of Virginia, Charlottesville, p. 7.

[52] Adrian Thatcher, however, points out the ambiguities of Tillich's position. For instance, God is by definition absent in estrangement, yet he is present as the Ground of being and incorporates non-being. Thatcher, op. cit. p.137.

[53] Tillich, ST 1, p. 247.

with the *Ground of Being*. God's power is available, providing a dynamism which overcomes the power of non-being and sustains existence. Life becomes a tragic existence when it is separated from its Ground or Essence, meaningless, without purpose. The *Essential* is God in essence, the goodness of creation and the potential which is within human life - the power and energy of all things. The *Existential* is the human situation with all its distortions, fragmentation and disconnectedness, as we find it in the world.[54] If we had no connection or continuity with the essential or divine, there would be 'non-being', without meaning or purpose in existence, leaving us with only the Existential. Tillich does, however, say that 'man is never cut off from the ground of being, not even in the state of condemnation'.[55] One must presume, therefore, that the estrangement felt is not related to reality or only relative.

There are inevitable tensions between the potential of what might be and the actualities of existence as we progress in a process moving, in the eschatological language Tillich uses from Essence to Existence to essentialisation.[56] Tillich argues that our hope in God stems from His nature of love whereby finitude (all our limitations, ambiguities and 'non-being') is incorporated into His infinite embrace. God envelops both being and non-being and this does not take from Him his power as God - 'the infinite power of being is 'in everything and above everything'[57] The 'forgiveness of sins' is an assurance of justification and unconditional acceptance by God.[58] Our task is to accept our acceptance (and the consequent demands of love) in spite of our guilt and doubt.[59]

Christ, in reflecting God's nature, provides the divine response to man's anguish and alienation, and in the paradox of Christ's death and suffering there is the absolute love of God which goes into every situation to heal our fragmentation. Being reborn by participation in the divine life entails forgiveness, and means exchanging the polarised characteristics of estrangement for those of new birth, 'faith instead of unbelief, surrender instead of hubris, love instead of concupiscence' and thereby entering a new

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[54] Tillich, ST 1, pp. 202ff.
[55] Tillich, ST 2, p.78.
[56] Tillich, ST 3, p. 422.
[57] Tillich, ST 1, p. 236.

[58] Tillich, ST 3, pp. 225-227.
[59] Ibid, pp. 228 and 277ff.

state in Christ.[60] This is a state of reconciliation in which conflict and negative mood can be healed, and unavoidable tensions held together in peaceful harmony.

Tillich's recognition of people's alienation, and his emphasis on the possibility of participating in God through the love of Christ makes him respected by other Churches. For instance George Tavard, a Roman Catholic, though he is extremely critical of Tillich's Christology[61], says that 'we should heed Paul Tillich's eagerness to interpret Christianity for the man of today, for the estranged, the puzzled, the frightened man of today'.[62] Tavard also comments favourably that Tillich's view of the power of reunion in spite of estrangement, and his understanding of the sacramental principle as a way of mediating love, bring him close to Catholic thought.[63] The way in which Tillich continues to influence some Catholic thought has been reassessed, with particular emphasis placed on the theology of the Cross, revealing the God who participates in all our brokenness, affirms and accepts us.[64] The fascination with his views are expected to last because of the historical perspective, and a sense of social commitment together with emphasis on symbolism, sacramentalism, mysticism and spirituality.[65] There is no hint, in his writings, of a tyrant God who demands satisfaction and payment for sin, though we may wonder whether he entirely convinced himself of this.

c) THE 'GROUND OF BEING' AND CHANGE

The concept of *Logos* is important to Tillich and underlies his thought in relating the concepts of essence and existence to Christianity. He describes the *Logos* as 'divine reason' and the principle of truth and rationality which is the means of God's self-

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[60] Tillich, ST 2, p. 177.

[61] Tavard, G. (1962) Paul Tillich and the Christian Message, Burns and Oates, pp. 163ff. Tavard finds traces of Nestorianism in Tillich's Christology though Tillich pays lip-service to the paradoxes of the Council of Chalcedon. (ST 1, p. 57 and ST 2, p.145). Tillich's views are not compatible with Chalcedon because they incorporate a hidden docetism. That is, there is no real humanity within Christ, the *Logos*, when understood only through myth and symbol, as distinct from the historical Jesus. (Tavard op. cit, pp. 129ff.) Tavard, however, spoils his argument by linking it to a literal interpretation of the Genesis myths of the Fall, ibid, p. 42.

[62] Tavard, G., in O'Meara, T.A. and Weisser, C.D. eds. (1964) Paul Tillich in Catholic Thought, DLT, p.236.

[63] Ibid, p. 232.

[64] Dwyer, J.C. in. Bulman, R.F. and Parrella, F.J., eds. (1994) Paul Tillich: A New Catholic Assessment, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, pp. 76-78.

revelation throughout all ages.[66] He also considers that it is only through God's immanence as the *Ground of Being* that there can be any relationship with Him, and it is only because of this closeness that there can be hope, and a perception of His transcendence.[67] The concepts of *logos* and *Ground of being* appear to be very similar, if not the same. Through the *Logos*, essence comes into existence and can be recognised, bringing 'the immanence of creative potentiality in the divine ground of being'.[68] He maintains, that to avoid pantheism, one must say that God is not present in an all permeating manner but that he is present spiritually, providing the ground for potential. He says that 'nothing is outside the centred unity of his life; nothing is strange, dark, hidden, unapproachable - nothing falls outside the *logos* structure of being', and 'the dynamic element cannot break the unity of the form; the abysmal quality cannot swallow the rational quality of the divine life'.[69] This inclusiveness, implying a view of Creation and Redemption with God at the centre of all things, will recur throughout this thesis.

Tillich distinguishes between Jesus the man (about whom he is never too clear), and God's self-revelation as Christ the *Logos* as described in the Gospel: 'in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through Him and without Him was not anything made'.[70] He is God's revelation of Himself affirming the continuity of all nature with the Creator, and enabling each individual to be reunited with their essential self. There is in Tillich's understanding an interpenetration of the transcendent and the immanent with a strong belief in the *Eternal Now* or *kairos*, when the power of the Cross is evident in self-transcending moments of history and the immanence of the Kingdom is revealed.[71]

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[65] Bulman,. and Parrella, op.cit. pp. 308ff.

[66] Tillich joins others who say that, through prayer, we are able to find God at the centre of all things. The values of love are paramount and Tillich quotes Blaise Pascal's 'reasons of the heart' which can assimilate concepts which are not apparently rational and often dubbed mystical. Hamilton, K. (1963) The System and the Gospel, SCM, pp. 56ff.

[67] Tillich, ST 1, pp. 237 and 263.

[68] Tillich, ST 3, p. 422.

[69] Tillich, ST 1, p. 279.
Paul Fiddes describes the abysmal quality of God as 'the hollow in the heart of God which hungers for the good of the world'. Fiddes, P.S. (1988:1992) The Creative Suffering of God, p. 253.

[70] John 1:1.

These revelations of eternal time transcending the present confusion and also being at the heart of it, also occur in individual lives, and Tillich's larger vision for the world does not lessen his concern for the individual's transformation from states of 'anxiety, guilt, despair and emptiness' through the Spirit. The *Spiritual Presence* is a symbol of God's reconciling and loving presence which is dynamic, transforming and energising, - bringing about *New Being* through the uniting of polarities. With the presence of the Spirit we can gain a state of self-realisation. Dourley describes Tillich's theology as having 'a lively sense of the vastness and vitality of human interiority'[72], and he suggests that we can move towards ever increasing self-transcendence (integration) because of our participation in the life of God within this world, without Tillich's insistence on divine transcendence (see below).

Reconciliation, healing and renewed energy occurs when our weakness accepts the strength of God. In negative moods we despair, isolating ourselves, not from the power which remains steadfast, but from any thought of its presence, so that we lose trust and hope, becoming myopic in self-absorption. As Tillich puts it, the energy of the Spirit 'unites the power of being with the meaning of being'[73], giving purpose and understanding to all that is, and is to be, in the Kingdom of God, now and at the end of time.[74] These symbols of power and meaning stand for the vast potentiality there is in all things when united, enlivened and made purposeful through the Spirit. They are allied to the polarities of dynamics and form, and as Dourley explains, this is a polarity which is particularly vital for self-integration, in the horizontal movement of growth from our centre to an ever more inclusive centre.[75]

Self-transcendence, by which Tillich means the presence of the Spirit in the Christian life, implies change. It is a term which is used with many different nuances by different writers, usually meaning to get beyond, or above, or deeper, than the present state. It is one of the principles which Tillich uses to describe the process of sanctification and 'participation in the holy'.[76] Other terms he uses which do not, at first sight, seem to be

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[71] Tillich, ST 3, pp. 369ff.

[72] Dourley, J. P.(1980) Jung, Tillich and the Quest for Home and Self, Guild of Pastoral Psychology 209, p. 8.

[73] Tillich, ST 3, p. 111.
[74] Ibid, p. 385.

[75] Dourley, J.P. (1981) The Psyche as Sacrament, Inner City Books, Toronto, p. 87.

directly related to the 'holy' are 'self-integration' and 'self-alteration'[77], but Tillich understands them to be part of a 'vertical axis' which takes people towards the ultimate and infinite Ground of Being. Transformation by grace occurs in ordinary circumstances so that the transcendent is seen to shine through the contingencies of life. The importance of healing, progress and development is evident in all Tillich's writings, and he grapples with the problem of God in relation to change. He asks how much there can be reciprocity and the responsiveness of the personal Biblical God when, according to tradition, Being-itself 'transcends all the categories of change such as time, space, causality and substance'.[78] He concludes that 'Being itself' is also 'Personal-itself' - beyond any limitations that we might devise - and that there is no contradiction between the philosophical and the Biblical concepts.[79] There are tensions which have to be considered in our concept of God - between the God whom we know as the unchangeable power of being, and the compassionate loving God who responds to our needs. Tillich does not allow an escape into platitudes about the divine mystery when discussing the passibility or mutability of God.[80] He declares that the Divine Life is not immovable perfection, but that it includes the negative and its blessedness is in constantly 'becoming', conquering and transforming. God 'does not lose his identity in his self-alteration; this is the basis for the dynamic idea of eternal blessedness'.[81] He repeats these views in many of his writings, saying, for instance, that the infinite is not limited by the finite but contains it within a unity of divine life so that 'being includes non-being' and 'the infinite embraces itself and the finite, the Yes includes itself and the No which it takes into itself'.[82] The antitheses within the divine are the source of His vitality and dynamism because 'without a No which he has to overcome in himself and in his creature, the divine Yes to himself would be lifeless'.[83]

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[76] Tillich, ST 3, p. 235.
[77] Ibid, pp. 30ff.

[78] Tillich, P. (1955) **Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality**, UP Chicago, p.31.

[79] Tillich, Biblical Religion, p. 83.

[80] Tillich, ST 3, p. 404.

[81] Ibid, p. 405. See also in chapters 7 and 8 below.

[82] Tillich, Courage, p.175.

[83] Ibid, p.174.

4. A CRITIQUE THROUGH THE WORK OF JOHN DOURLEY

Tillich's emphasis on God as the Ground of being, and his sympathy with the psychologists, has led to the criticism that he was only concerned with the immanent, humanistic or even pantheistic. Tillich, however, also maintains the distinct role of theology in accessing the mystery of the transcendence of God. He points out that, 'psychotherapy can liberate one from a special difficulty. Religion shows to him who is liberated and has to decide about the meaning and aim of his existence, a final way'.[84] Some of the accusations against Tillich's theology can be examined through a critical look at the work of John Dourley. Dourley tries, in vain, to bring Tillich and Jung together by ignoring some of in the traditional Christian beliefs Tillich's work. There are aspects of Christianity not well presented by Tillich, but in three areas relevant to the theme of God's involvement in our negative moods, Dourley's critique is unconvincing:

a) The Nature of God and Creation

b) Symbols and the Reconciliation of Polarities in the Psyche.

c) Christ as Archetype

a). THE NATURE OF GOD AND CREATION

If religion is to be relevant to individual or corporate disorder, it is important to clarify our understanding of the nature of God, and the means by which the divine life interacts at the level of personality and relationships. The tradition which emphasises the importance of holding polarities in balance and which finds God at the centre of opposites is longstanding, and Tillich often refers to Nicholas de Cusa as an early resource for this understanding. Tillich agrees with Cusanus that that we are aware of 'the infinite which is present in everything finite, though infinitely transcending it'[85],

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This view brings him very close to Jung's view of a quaternity in God which would include *shadow* aspects, and Jung's conviction that energy only comes from accepting and incorporating negative aspects of reality.

[84] Tillich, Culture, p. 143.

[85] Tillich, ST 1, p. 81.

and quotes Cusanus' view that God can be found in the coincidence of opposites.[86] We can question, however, whether the concept of bringing opposites together can be applied to salvation (and Tillich includes psychological healing in his concept of salvation) without reference to a personal God who is also transcendent. In contrast to Dourley and Jung, Tillich tries to keep a balance between immanence and transcendence by saying that the infinite distance between God and man is never bridged, and 'nothing can be said about God which is not symbolic'.[87] There is an eschatological element in Tillich's writing, and he describes faith in terms of 'ultimate concern', in which there must always be an element of mystery if we are not to reduce God to human categories of subject and object.[88] The extent to which he felt the otherness of God, who cannot be known or described, is indicated by his unwillingness to name Him, instead he calls Him the 'God above God', that is, beyond our conceptions of theism. He is not even 'good', because good is a human category.[89] Tillich is concerned about religious experience, revelation, mystery and 'ecstasy' in relation to the transcendence of God. He preached of God as the 'eternal now' taking as a text 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end'.[90] We can be resurrected into the Kingdom of the God of Love now, but the Kingdom is also yet to come. Tillich says 'God as the *Ground of being* infinitely transcends that of which He is the ground. He stands against the world in so far as the world stands against him' and to clarify matters, he adds that 'to call God transcendent in this sense does not mean that one must establish a "superworld" of divine objects'.[91] An object is something in this world, but God is Being itself, not a being, and Tillich considers that it is impossible to create a human picture except by analogy for instance, with our concepts of love, power and justice.[92]

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[86] See chapter 8 below.

[87] Tillich, ST 1, p.239.

[88] Tillich, ST 3, p.422

[89] Tillich, Courage, p.180.

[90] Tillich, P. (1963:1973) The Boundaries of our Being, Collins, p.100.

[91] Tillich, ST 2, p.7.

[92] Herberg, W. (1958) Four Existentialist Theologians, Doubleday, NY, pp. 302ff.

Tillich can be placed as a panentheist whose emphasis on human participation in God emphasises immanence without destroying God's transcendent otherness.[93] This view is abundantly clear when he says, for instance that,

> it is as wrong to speak of God as the universal essence as it is to speak of Him as existing. If God is understood only as universal essence, as the form of all forms, he is identified with the unity and totality of finite potentialities; but he has ceased to be the power of the ground in all of them, and therefore has ceased to transcend them.[94]

George McLean, a Roman Catholic writer, states that Tillich's greatest contribution was, perhaps, 'his defence of the transcendence of God'.[95]   McLean points out that Tillich places the concept of participation in God at the heart of religion, and that this belief in participation is not a contradiction of God's transcendence, but the foundation of our knowledge of God, particularly though sacramental grace.[96]   Tillich often writes about the element of mystery, and considers that an apprehension of the *Spiritual Presence* which is only conscious and rational does not involve the whole person - a balance from the intuitive faculties and the unconscious is needed. On the other hand a sacrament, with its symbolic meaning, is likely to affect the unconscious, and Tillich warns against the possibility of magic or superstition if there is not also a conscious element of control and balance.[97]   He realises that the sacraments are fundamental and valuable routes to God[98], mentioning the symbols of water, fire, oil, bread and wine which are used sacramentally[99] to bridge the distance between humanity and God. The sacraments in which they are used have aspects of cleansing, healing, repentance and forgiveness. Forgiveness is the first stepping stone to a relationship with God, and

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[93] Taylor, M.K. (1987) Paul Tillich, Collins, p.23.

[94] Tillich, ST 1, p. 236.

[95] McClean, G.F., in O'Meara, T.A. and Weisser, C.D. eds. (1964) Paul Tillich in Catholic Thought, DLT, p.70.

[96] Ibid, p. 80.

[97] Tillich, ST 3, p. 122.

[98] Tillich combines the 'Protestant principle' with 'Catholic substance'. The Protestant principle allows for immediacy of revelation without the mediation of an institution. Catholic Substance works through sacrament and symbol, as an 'embodiment of the Spirit', to gain harmony and continuity between God and His creation. In this way 'the experience of our daily life is the premonition of the sacramental unity of matter and Spirit' Ibid, pp. 121ff. and 201.

[99] Ibid, p.123. The sacrament of penance has no obvious material symbol, and is not in Tillich's repertoire.

Tillich recognises this, expressing it in terms of 'justification by grace through faith'[100], or as the 'psychology of acceptance', that is acceptance of God's unconditional and reuniting love which takes us as we are, good and bad.[101] He is not always convincing when he talks in terms of relationship, but he is clear that forgiveness is a prerequisite for the reconciliation of our contrary tendencies and healing of our fragmentation. There is an analogous process of inner healing in Jungian psychology when the *ego* and the *shadow* are reconciled, and in his early work, Dourley suggests that Tillich is putting depth psychology into theological language so that it can be considered in the light of God's immanence as 'spiritual'. God undoubtedly works through psychological processes, but reliance on human resources alone is idolatrous, and cannot take the place of forgiveness by the transcendent God.

Dourley starts with good credentials for a discussion on the immanence of Jungian 'religion' in the light of Christianity; being a Roman Catholic priest and an oblate of a religious community, but as his views develop they become increasingly heterodox. He describes, in autobiographical detail, how he comes to his present position. At first, he was fascinated by Tillich's sense of a God who is, in Himself, a unity of opposites and source of creativity and energy.[102] He later came to think that Jung, because he is freed from the confines of creed, is better able to interpret numinous experiences.[103] Dourley was encouraged by Tillich opinion that Aquinas 'cut the nerve of the ontological approach'[104], realising that an effort to understand God by reason alone is doomed to failure. They both try to restore a sense of the common ground between the human and the divine, in order to work towards healing the alienation and isolation felt by human beings, but their concepts of divinity are very different.[105]

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[100] Ibid. p. 224.

[101] Ibid. pp. 226-7.

[102] Dourley, J.P., in Spiegelman, M. ed. (1994) **Catholicism and Jungian Psychology,** New Falcon, Temple, Arizona, pp. 75ff.

[103] Ibid, p.84.

[104] Tillich, Culture, p.17.
Sherrard, P. (1959) The Greek East and the Latin West, OUP, p.147. Philip Sherrard analyses some of the discontinuity between God and the world brought about through the Aristotelean influence. The polarities of revelation and reason, intuition and science fragment our understanding, and distance us from the belief of the Fathers. ibid, pp. 150ff.

[105] Dourley is particularly interested in Tillich's essay on Two Types of Philosophy of Religion which. emphasises the need for subjectivity and intuition in our understanding of God, linked with Platonic rather

Revelation, for Tillich, unlike Dourley, occurs through what he calls the 'vertical axis' which, he points out, is not in the remit of psychologists whose axis is in the horizontal plane. There is no 'revealed psychology'[106], but the mysteries of God are known by manifestations of the Spirit when we can go beyond reason without destroying it, when, as Tillich puts it, we are grasped by the Spiritual Presence.[107]

Dourley distorts Tillich's emphasis on apprehension of God through symbols, interpreting everything in a Jungian paradigm in which God is frequently identified with the *collective unconscious*. In Strategy for Loss of Faith, he suggests that the numinosity of all religious experiences comes from the energy of *archetypes*, and that, through them, 'God is the experience of the energy that makes us whole'.[108] All the Christian stories become archetypal myths, relating only to the *collective unconscious*, and the word 'God' takes on a different meaning.[109] For Dourley, as for Jung, there is no Absolute to whom our understanding and affections can relate, only the symbols and myths that stem from the corporate human mind - the transcendent Creator God is irrelevant and His immanence is no more than a psychological experience. Dourley considers that Tillich's understanding of a God who encompasses all the contraries of 'being and non-being' is equivalent to Jung's insistence on a dark aspect of God[110], However, he acknowledges that Jung's concept of a quaternity in God which includes the darkness of evil is 'hostile to traditional ideas of transcendence and self-sufficiency'.[111] Dourley presses his human-centred views even further away from traditional belief when he suggests that God is in the world working out his own

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than Aristotelian influences. The Aristotelian approach, used by Thomas Aquinas, declares that God can only be known through analogy, thus making the basis of revelation depend on rational systematisation rather than intuitive knowledge. Tillich, Culture, pp. 10ff.
Dourley, J.P. (1987) **Love, Celibacy and the Inner Marriage**, Inner City Books, Toronto, p.7.

[106] Tillich, ST 1, p. 130.

[107] Tillich, ST 3, pp. 112ff., and Dourley, J.P., Catholicism, p. 81.
Dourley pursues Tillich's interest in Anselm's 'faith seeking understanding', and, in also studied the early Franciscan tradition exemplified by Bonaventure who says that 'God is most truly present to the very soul and immediately knowable'. Bonaventure's work is, however, based on an orthodox Christian philosophy and spirituality, and it is centred in Christ crucified. Bonaventure, trans. Cousins, E., (1978) The Soul's Journey into God, C.W.S. Paulist Press, NY, pp.53ff., quoted by Tillich, Culture, p.13.
Dourley, J.P. (1975) Paul Tillich and Bonaventure, E.J.Brill, Leiden, p.46.

[108] Dourley, J.P. (1992) A **Strategy for Loss of Faith**, Inner City Books, Toronto, p. 76.

[109] Dourley, Strategy, pp. 53-64.

[110] Ibid, pp. 25-26.

redemption, and that God created man in order to redeem Himself, agreeing with Jung that the atonement is not so much the payment of a human debt to God, as reparation for wrong done by God to man[112], a view that is much more extreme than that of Tillich, and exceeds that of most Process theologians. The opinion that we are working out our salvation as the locus where God's self-contradiction can also be healed, can be contrasted with Tillich's belief, that in the eternal, there are pre-existing perfectly balanced and integrated opposites in which we may be privileged to participate.[113] Dourley is disappointed not to find Tillich able to enter into the concept of polarities in God which include good and evil.[114] For Tillich, God is not finite and conditioned, and therefore no God at all.

Dourley, thinking that religion is firmly rooted in human experience without any God 'out there', fails to find kinship with Tillich.[115] His increasing distance from all traditional religion is clear, and in many of his later writings this becomes more explicit as he abandons one strand of belief after another. He settles for the Jungian concept of *anthropos*, the *archetype* of human unity and wholeness found in mythology[116], and for the idea of *unus mundi*, which is borrowed from medieval alchemy to mean 'the world of all possibility and the source and ground of all human experience and action'; it is beyond time and brings all opposites together.[117] This definition of *unus mundi* is considered, by Jungians, to be equivalent to a concept of an immanent God, and Dourley likens it to Tillich's *ground of being* in which contraries are united.[118] Though the concept could be remotely connected to an understanding of *logos*, and can provide useful existential paradigm, but without a transcendent pole there can be no power and no connection with Judeo-Christian concepts of our origin and destiny. In his more recent writings, Dourley abandons the task of reconciling any Christian writer with

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[111] Ibid, p. 133.

[112] Dourley, Love, p.104.

[113] Dourley, J. P. (1995) Religious Studies 31, 'Jacob Boehme and Paul Tillich on Trinity and God', pp. 429-445.

[114] Dourley, J. (1995) Religious Studies 31, p. 436.

[115] Dourley, Catholicism, p. 79.

[116] Dourley, Love, p. 29.

[117] Ibid, p.17.

[118] Dourley, J. P. (1981) The Psyche as Sacrament, Inner City Books, Toronto, p. 59.

Jung, saying that, 'the human consciousness is in and of itself incorrigibly religious ... removal of the energies of the Self through their projection on to a divinity beyond the psyche debilitates the psyche thus victimised ... projected divinity becomes a psychic weight and a betrayal of the inner self'.[119]

Dourley, like Jung, has some excellent insights into processes in the psyche which may well be part of God's immanence, but his concept of God leaves little on which worship, praise, hope or joy can be based.[120] It is faith in the God who is transcendent, absolute and reliable, as well as compassionate, that gives us value and hope, putting our negative thoughts into perspective - only He can encompass all the polarities of our experience. In comparison, the potential chaos of an archetypal god arising out of the *collective unconscious*, or equivalent to the *unus mundi* scarcely bears thought.

b). SYMBOL AND THE RECONCILIATION OF POLARITIES IN THE PSYCHE

Tillich's concern with the participation of symbols in the reality to which they point is an example of Platonic influences and has been discussed in Transitions.[121] Because a religious symbol, in Tillich's writing 'participates in the reality of that for which it stands'[122], it reveals something of the God who is both immanent and transcendent. Dourley, however, considers that the ability of religious symbols to mediate in 'revelation' (by which he means a sense of the numinous) by bringing polarities together is a psychological fact and occurs without any need to postulate a Creator God. He identifies Tillich's conception of 'the Spirit as the unifier of opposites' with Jung's concept of 'the *Self*[123] in its role of uniting the *ego* with the unconscious, and in so doing uniting the many centres of energy within the individual'.[124]

It is undoubtedly true that powerful personal symbols enable people to face inner tension and suffering including that of guilt and meaninglessness. Moreover, they have

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[119] Dourley, J.P., in Ryce-Menuhin, J. ed. (1994) Jung and the Monotheisms, Routledge, p. 126.

[120] . He calls the monotheistic transcendentalism of Buber and White dualistic. Ibid, p. 128.

[121] Transitions, pp. 40ff.

[122] Tillich, ST 1, p 239.

[123] See chapter 6 below.

[124] Dourley, Catholicism, p.83.

'religious' significance if they lead to numinous experiences. There is, however, a gulf between Tillich's view that all communication about God can only be through symbol, and Dourley's statements which suggest that there is no transcendent Being beyond the symbol. There is some truth in Dourley's theme taken from Jung that our concept of God cannot be extrinsic to the psyche, but Dourley argues beyond this, that Tillich's view of the immediacy of God (made possible by His immanence everywhere as ground of being) suggests that *theos* and psyche are one.[125] It is also possible to agree with Dourley that there is a very close association between religious and psychological processes but he is greatly overstating his case when he concludes a major work by saying that 'the realisation of the age of the Spirit depends to no small extent on man's moral response to himself and the powers that rage within. And in this vital work performed in the depths of the human soul, the psychological task and the religious task are one'.[126] The religious task, if there is faith in a transcendent Creator, must supersede and surpass that which is limited to psychology - forgiveness and acceptance by the God of Love is not

only in a human dimension - a point of view that is rejected by Jung or Dourley who would equate forgiveness with reconciliation of the *ego* and the *shadow*.

c) CHRIST AS ARCHETYPE

Dourley has some similarity with Tillich in his use of symbolism for the significance of the Cross, with its intersection of horizontal and vertical which can be seen in terms of earth and heaven, finite and infinite, good and evil, flesh and spirit, love and hate, weakness and glory, darkness and light, judgement and salvation, hope and despair and many other polarities, with Jesus uniting all things. Tillich visualises integrating forces working in a dynamic situation to counter disintegrating forces through the meeting of these polarities, with ever greater convergence towards the centre. Jungians who are sympathetic to Christianity can also regard Christ as the totality of archetypes where all polarities meet. They consider that Christ is a numinous symbol of man made whole, an archetype of the totality of the Self or *Imago Dei*.[127]

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[125] Dourley, Love. p.59.

[126] Dourley, Psyche as Sacrament. p.101.

They need not, however, recognise the historical significance of Jesus, and in Dourley's understanding, the figure of Christ symbolises a container in which the divine-human encounter takes place - an example of *anthropos*. His concept is a 'Gnostic Christ' who can be experienced and internalised as a centre where opposites meet[128], and who thus becomes the symbol for which all mysticism is searching. Dourley tends to use trinitarian language only because of its evocative images (as Jung does) so that the substance of religion is in the symbolic inner experience, not in the actuality of Christ's Incarnation.[129] Tillich is more positive about the historical Jesus, but Dourley is right in noting that symbolism plays a greater role than relationship in Tillich's understanding.[130]

The archetype may help a psychological understanding of the paradox of strength through weakness, but there is no satisfactory model for *kenosis* without a God who has a pre-existent glory from which He can empty Himself. Dourley dismisses vicarious suffering altogether because it is necessary that the experience of each person should incorporate a sense of death and resurrection.[131] He makes a very pertinent comment, however, saying that 'both Tillich and Jung talk, from different perspectives, of the cruciform nature of life and growth in which powerful opposites and polarities must be reconciled in such a way that their seeming contradictory truth is preserved'.[132]

5. HEALING AND SALVATION

Tillich makes the provocative statement that 'health in the ultimate sense of the word, health as identical with salvation, is life in faith and love'.[133] He also explains his meaning in an unforgettable sentence: 'healing means reuniting that which is estranged, giving a centre to what is split, overcoming the split between God and man, man and his

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[127] Jung, CW 14, para. 520.

[128] Dourley, J.P. (1984) The Illness that We Are, Inner City Books, Toronto, pp. 93ff.

[129] Dourley, Psyche as Sacrament, p. 68.

[130] Ibid. p. 67.

[131] Ibid, p. 77.

[132] Dourley J.P., in Moore, R. and Meckel, D.J. eds. (1990) Jung and Christianity in Dialogue, p. 93.

[133] Tillich, ST 3, p. 280.

world, man and himself'.[134] Many psychologists see health in terms of equilibrium and balance, and there is also a long tradition using the Centre as a metaphor for God who reconciles all things so the connection is acceptable and will be pursued.[135] Harmony in the midst of discord, keeping a balance of polarities, is a necessary feature of the Christian life. The psychological antitheses with which we are faced, as illustrated for instance, by our experiences of guilt and forgiveness, loneliness and intimacy, trust and fear, can be integrated through Christ. As individuals, we can only progress towards The Kingdom of God in the context of historical and social development. In this wider setting, the tension of polarities is of prime importance and the reconciliation of opposites, as they impinge on society, form a large part of Tillich's argument for the role of the Christian Church. He postulates an ideal 'theonomy' - life in a community which, because of the presence of the Spirit, is centred on God's will and rooted in the ground of being.[136]

People can only be healed as part of the society in which they live, and as Tillich relies on a concept of the *Spiritual Presence* for the emergence of *New Being*, it is surprising that he discusses the Christian concept of Godhead (from whence the Spirit comes) so cursorily Tillich tends to be iconoclastic rather than constructive about the Trinity[137], regarding the three persons as symbolic names for 'creative power', 'saving love' and 'ecstatic transformation'.[138] These descriptive names may be helpful ways of describing the work of the Trinity, but they suggest a limited and intellectual approach which could be related to Tillich's understanding of Christ. Although Tillich's sermons were unmistakably devotional[139], and he sometimes talks about forgiveness and healing through Christ in a manner which indicates personal experience[140], his theological language can alter the message of Scripture, as Kenneth Hamilton suggests. Hamilton points out, for instance, that there is a world of difference between saying that we should cherish 'a religious concern which is ultimate, unconditional, total and infinite',

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[134] Tillich, ST 2, p. 166.

[135] See chapter 8 below.

[136] Tillich, ST 1, p. 84, and ST 3, p.249ff.

[137] Particularly about 'three in one and one in three'. Tillich, ST 3, pp. 291-293.

[138] Tillich, ST 3, p.283.

[139] As, for example in Tillich, P. (1949:1963) The Shaking of the Foundations. Penguin.

[140] Tillich, ST 2, pp. 15, and 167ff.

compared with the commandment to 'love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength'.[141] Similarly James Jones comments on the impersonal nature of Tillich's concept of God by contrasting it with Buber's insistence on an I-Thou relationship.[142] Nevertheless Tillich has provided a sound basis for considering human polarities in the light of religious belief, and his view that humanity's salvation depends on participation in divine life is fundamental in this thesis.[143] The meaning of participation can, however, only be gauged through Christ's life which suggests that there is a pattern of reconciliation, depending on self-giving love.

In chapter 7 below, more attention will be given to the importance of Christ's *kenosis*, viewed through the light of the Resurrection. If we are made in the image of God (Genesis1:27), we have reason to believe that there is a universal pattern of polarities, and that the opposites causing the conflicts and destructiveness of humanity have analogous opposites in the Godhead, where, through love, they are held in balanced and creative tension. Scripture suggests that, in Christ, the nature of the Godhead is revealed[144], and if this is so, the polarities of power and vulnerability which are found in Jesus Christ are also part of the divine life. The polarities revealed in Christ include strength and weakness, and pain and joy, but above all there is the love which holds together His utter self-giving and His infinite glory. The hypothesis emerging from these considerations which will be considered later is that, through forgiveness and participation, we can join this pattern of balanced polarities, in order to be healed from our disorders and fragmentation.

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[141] Hamilton, K. (1963) The System and the Gospel, SCM, p. 193.

[142] Jones, J.W. (1991) Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Religion, Yale UP, p.129.

[143] See chapter 9 below.

[144] John 14:9, Hebrews 1:3.

CHAPTER 3.

DISCERNMENT OF MOODS - A SCHEMATIC MODEL OF DEPRESSION

'I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life'.[1]

CONTENTS

1. DISCERNMENT OF MOOD

1. DISCERNMENT OF MOOD

    1a) TRADITIONS OF DISCERNMENT - PASSIONS, INSTINCTS AND *APATHEIA*

    If it is accepted that there is interdependence between the material, the psychological and the spiritual, as Tillich's theology suggests, we should look for a spiritual as well as a cognitive element in changes of mood - a dimension which sets values beyond those which are immediately expedient or driven by the pressures and tensions of the moment. Fortunately there is a corpus of work that can enlighten our recognition of these values, helping us to make choices and direct our moods - of these,

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[1] Deuteronomy, 30:19.

the guidelines set by Ignatius of Loyola are outstanding. Discernment of mood-change in the Ignatian Tradition (through his concepts of desolation and consolation) reveals opposing forces, desires and assumptions which need modifying in order to live fully.

Some of the trends which preceded this understanding should be examined in that desolation has some affinity with *accidie* (already described), and consolation with the Stoic concept of *apatheia*. In the second and third centuries, early descriptions of Christian discernment are recorded. For instance, in The Shepherd of Hermas, 'the passions' are distinguished by saying that 'the angel of righteousness is delicate and modest, and meek and quiet ...... the evil angel is ill tempered and bitter and foolish'.[2] St Antony (c.251-356), an early solitary in the Egyptian desert, describes how to discern good thoughts from those that are evil. As quoted by Tomas Spidlik, he says that 'good visions give rise to joy unspeakable, cheerfulness, courage, renewed strength, calmness of thought, boldness and love of God; the others, by contrast bring with them apprehension of soul, confusion and disorder of thought, dejection, hatred towards ascetics, spiritual sloth, affliction, memory of one's family, and fear of death.'[3] Athanasius (who wrote Antony's life) describes the 'good spirit' as 'not distressed, calm, rejoicing, not agitated, mild, peaceable, having a desire for divine things and security of soul', whereas the evil spirit has 'a distressed mind with noise and clamour, trembling anxiety, thoughts in disarray, dullness of heart'.[4]

In these early descriptions by the early Church, there is already a detectible difference from *apatheia* as it was originally conceived by the Stoics, that is as a state of mind without strong feelings.. Clement, probably a Greek who came to the Christian centre in Alexandria in the year 180 when Marcus Aurelius died, considered the 'passions' to be 'the worst disease', bringing distorted emotions which colour perceptions of the outside world with non-existent sources of fear, anxiety or hope - or else bath it in a false glow of optimism. The Stoics aimed to suppress emotions and stand away from life so that their calm equanimity (*apatheia*) would not be disturbed and only reason would guide them.[5] Clement, likewise, aimed for tranquillity in the

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[2] Grant, R. ed., and Snyder, G.F, trans. (1968) The Apostolic Fathers: The Shepherd of Hermas, Thomas Nelson, p. 77.

[3] Spidlik, T. (1986) The Spirituality of the Christian East, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, Michigan, p.245.

[4] Rahner, H. , trans. Barry, M. (1968) Ignatius the Theologian, Geoffrey Chapman, p. 168.

[5] Nussbaum, M. C. (1994) The Therapy of Desire, Princeton, New Jersey, pp. 91, 393, 428, & 496.

Christian life, with freedom from the 'destructive interior whirlwinds of panic, rage and grief'. He applied Stoic concepts, while remaining a detached academic thinker without much involvement in the affairs of the world.[6] Peter Brown writes that Clement envisaged an ideal state of mind which gave serenity of purpose, largely by increasing knowledge and learning.[7] The association with love (agape[8]) seems to have been made a few centuries later.

Whatever the interpretation of *apatheia*, the message that moods are related to spiritual states remained constant throughout the early Christian era. In order to combat the 'evil spirits' that bring temptation and hence bad moods, monks (in particular) were advised to cherish stillness and to be watchful in prayer giving hospitality to the 'good spirits'. Peace of heart, in Evagrius' words, 'the practice of stillness full of joy and beauty'[9], should be maintained by being on guard and turning away evil thoughts without conversing with them.[10] *Apatheia* brings its own fruits because the people who find it have space to see the world in perspective, in proper relationship with God and each other. Self-regarding anxieties diminish, and Evagrius notes that the absence of disturbing passions leads to sleep untroubled by unpleasant dreams. This state, Simon Tugwell suggests, is likely to mean that the unconscious is no longer at great odds with the conscious.[11] There is, however, a danger that complacency will give a false peace when there should be a stimulus to change. Moreover, the emotions and instincts were

The Stoics aimed at avoiding all weakness and therefore sometimes advised against every feeling, even pity, which might disturb their journey towards detachment and freedom from passion - they remained aloof. Compassion, commitment and mercy were problematic, because like anger, they were felt to be the result of weakness and vulnerability. Some writers, however, drew a distinction between the passions which were to be avoided, such as distress, pleasure, fear and desire, and their more rational counterparts such as benevolence, caution and contentment. An interesting comparison can be made with Cognitive Therapy - a modern approach to dealing with tiresome feelings through reason- see below, pp. 234ff.

[6] He relied heavily on a Platonic concept of *Logos* as reason, as Lilla points out.
Lilla, S. R. C. (1971) Clement of Alexandria, OUP, p. 96.

[7] Brown, P, (1935:1989) Body and Society, Faber and Faber, pp. 130-131.

[8] *Agape* is a Greek word used in the New Testament for the love of God which is spontaneous and self-giving. Anders Nygren argues that all human love has an element of self-seeking and cannot therefore be *agape*. Nygren, A., trans. Watson, P.S. (1953:1982) *Agape and Eros*, SPCK. *Caritas*, which is Augustine's synthesis of *eros* and *agape*, used, for instance, in translating 1 Corinthians, 13, into Latin, allows for the possibility of human participation in divine *agape*.

[9] Evagrius in Kadloubovsky, E. and Palmer, G.E.H. eds. (1992) Early Fathers from the Philokalia 1, Faber and Faber, p.31.

[10] Spidlik, op. cit, p.243.

[11] Tugwell, S. (1984) Ways of Imperfection, DLT, p.29.

recognised as having their own value, and Evagrius indicates that his monks should purify rather than suppress them. He points out that 'the soul must operate according to its nature' and each instinct and emotion has a good and useful purpose as well as a perverted use.[12] For example, lust can be converted to a yearning desire for God, and the energy of anger can be used to combat whatever is wrong.[13]

The affective part of the soul is needed in life and, in particular, in the struggle with 'demons', because destructive passions and evil thoughts need active opposition, and Evagrius links *apatheia* with *agape* - as a parent to a child. Charity is the daughter of *apatheia* because, with it, the faculties are free from disturbing thoughts, and able to follow their tendency to virtue undisturbed.[14] Maximus, following the same tradition in the seventh century, reiterates many times that love is the basic virtue which enables control of the passions, and which flourishes when there is tranquillity. He talks about the fire of charity which is needed to turn 'the passionate part into divine *agape*'.[15] Three centuries later, Symeon, the New Theologian (949-1022), describes *apatheia* as a return to the soul's true nature of love, saying that 'for him whose mind is continually with God, even his desiring part is increased above measure into divine *eros*, and the entire passionate part changed into divine *agape*.'[16] *Apatheia* has no relation to our present understanding of apathy - indeed it is the very opposite, full of energy; the sin of *accidie* is nearer to our modern idea of apathy. The early Church recognised a balance of all the faculties, and developed an interpretation of *apatheia* which made it pivotal in transforming everyday life.

Cassian translates the Greek into Latin, avoiding the term with Stoic resonance, impassibility *(impassibilitas)*, but using alternative expressions such as purity of mind *(puritas mentis)* or tranquillity of mind *(tranquillitas mentis)*.[17] The concept of *apatheia* was still recognised as an inner force capable of resisting the passions and generating 'the consuming fire of divine love', but a different vocabulary with terms

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[12] Ibid, pp. 274-5.

[13] See below, pp. 142-3.

[14] Ibid, p.28.

[15] Maximus Confessor, trans. Berthold, G.C. (1985) Selected Writings: Four hundred Chapters on Love 1:10, p. 36.

[16] Jones, C., Wainwright, G. and Yarnold, E. eds. (1986) A Study of Spirituality, SPCK. p 193.

[17] Spidlik, op. cit, p. 273.

such as peace of mind, detachment, 'indifference' (as used in Ignatian spirituality), equanimity and similar expressions enabled the Western Church to shake off the misinterpretations that came from the Stoic legacy.[18] The essential meaning, that there should be no wasted energy in useless or destructive feelings, was not lost, but the stress was on the inner freedom and balance which allows someone to progress through the various problems of life, feeling their impact, but remaining tranquil, without anxiety or agitation.

The descriptions of monks who gained tranquillity and self-knowledge in the desert suggest that they were genuinely 'stripped of old behaviour'. John of Lycopolis in the fourth century is reported to have explained that cultivating stillness of heart in the desert involves hard work in removing unworthy inner desires so that the illusions of the false self can be stripped away - these could then be replaced by humility, love, courtesy, long-suffering and other marks of the self in true relation to the Creator.[19] The false self, fabricated by social compulsions and the opinions of 'the world', can be discarded so that the true self becomes evident and freedom to love without self-seeking or anxiety becomes possible. These monks came to resemble the people, described by Karen Horney,[20] who recognise their fragmented being and abandon their compulsive ideal-self to gain a new self, 'clothed in compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience'.[21] As true knowledge of the self developed, they gained freedom to live with the energy of love. They were marked by their gentle self-abasement, their joy and what Helen Waddell calls their 'heart-breaking courtesy', chiefly shown in their hospitality.[22] Ward also quotes those who point out that asceticism, far from making these men gloomy, made them 'bright and smiling', 'gentle and serene'.[23]

We can agree with Andrew Louth who describes Christian *apatheia* as 'an inner calm that makes possible a kind of acute attentiveness - to God, to the spiritual world,

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[18] Ibid. p. 277.

[19] Ward, B., in Russell,N. trans. (1980) Introduction to The Lives of the Desert Fathers, Mowbray, pp. 33 - 35, and Merton, T. (1960:1974) The Wisdom of the Desert, Sheldon Press, p. 23.

[20] Horney, K. (1950:1991) Neurosis and Human Growth, W.W. Norton, p. 377. See below, pp. 97ff.

[21] Colossians. 3:9-11 (JB).

[22] Waddell, H. (1936) The Desert Fathers, Constable, p. 29.

[23] Ward, op. cit, p. 35.

and so to the needs of others[24], and much of the thought of Evagrius' and his successors had, and still has, application to ordinary people. Our moods, if we heed the way they change in different circumstances, can lead us to recognise blocks and conflicts which are hindering us from making good choices.[25] When positive and appropriate use is made of our instinctual gifts we are likely to experience good moods (*consolation* as these were often called), but when these tendencies become destructive, angry, bitter or fearful moods (*desolation*) will warn us to make changes that may help our control of them.

1b. CONSOLATION AND DESOLATION - IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA (1491-1556)

These opposite movements of good and bad spirits can both be of value as a means of revealing our real desires, and are a means of making decisions when faced with choice in everyday life as well as in matters religious. The tensions which led St Ignatius of Loyola to devote his own life to prayer, and subsequently to act as a guide to others through the centuries, can be studied because of the large amount of autobiographical material and other work about him. For the purpose of describing his background, the psychological study by Meissner, a Jesuit, is an important contribution as it includes a Freudian analysis and highlights the contrary aspects of his personality.[26] Some of this work is retrospective and speculative, so Ignatius' own writings will be the primary source of reference here. The Spiritual Exercises are a lasting memorial to Ignatius' intuitive knowledge of human nature, and indisputably his own - as are his autobiography, some of the letters and his spiritual diary.[27]

Ignatius experienced many conflicts and tensions which arose partly from a lively and adventurous nature, and also as a result of early experiences - he was well aware of what he called 'disordered attachments'.[28] He realised that an inner journey has hazards similar to the demons described by the Desert Fathers, and he describes

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[24] Louth, A. (1992) Eros and Mysticism, Lecture No 241, Guild of Pastoral Psychology, p. 11.

[25] Spidlik, op. cit, pp. 272ff.

[26] Meissner W.W. (1992) Ignatius of Loyola, The Psychology of a Saint, Yale U.P. New Haven and London.

[27] Munitiz, J.A., and Endean, P., eds. (1996) St Ignatius of Loyola, Personal writings, Penguin.

[28] Ibid, preliminary note 1, to Spiritual Exercises, p.283.

safeguards to deal with these hazards by teaching 'discernment of spirits', referring primarily to the feelings which come during prayer but applying equally to the general state of mind, as in the traditions which preceded him.

Discernment in decision-making is a crucial element in the Spiritual Exercises which Ignatius wrote as a thirty day intensive guide through Scripture. The Exercises originate from his experiences during the transformative period of his long solitary stay at Manresa after he had left his home,[29] and have since proved relevant to generation after generation of Christians. Ignatius recognised a common human tendency for changes of mood to depend partly on circumstances (leading perhaps to feelings such as happiness, anger, resentment or hopelessness) but also at a more profound level on influences concerned with those deeper desires which have a spiritual content. The meditations and contemplations which Ignatius advises touch, at every point, on these desires, discerning mood through *consolation* and *desolation*. Discernment is aimed at discovering what factors in life or prayer lead to the different moods, and is used so as to avoid those circumstances which lead to desolation, encouraging those which lead to consolation. It is a personal process and never static.

i) *Consolation* is a guide to the state before God, and varies according to the degree of love, but always with an impetus towards more faith and interior happiness.[30] In general, consolations give feelings of peace, joy, love and hope which tend to give a calm and gentle impetus so that life becomes more creative, full, generous and effective.[31] They may include tears of sorrow and repentance, but without agitation, so that these too will lead to tranquillity.[32] There is a link between the concept of true consolation[33] and *apatheia*, but though they both lead to an increase of love, they are not identical in that consolation can include a wider range of feelings. Tranquillity in prayer, in most traditions, is thought to be helpful in tapping into reserves of energy which enable a good life - energy that might otherwise be locked up by conflicts. Just as there may be a false peace because there is no desire to do God's will, so Lonsdale

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[29] For biographical and autobiographical details see Munitiz and Endean, op. cit, pp. 2-62.

[30] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 315., p.348.

[31] Lonsdale, D. (1990) Eyes to See, Ears to Hear. DLT, pp. 71 & 88-9.

[32] Spiritual Exercises, 315, p. 348.

[33] There may be a consolation which is deceptive because the whole person is not wanting what God wants. Exercises 332. p.352.

points out, there may also be a 'serpent's tail' of deceptive enthusiasm which may wrongly directed.[34]

ii) *Desolation,* which Ignatius describes, in the terminology and metaphor of the time, as coming from the evil spirit, creates turmoil, agitation, confusion, doubt, bitterness, despair and rebellion - temptations in desolation 'move towards lack of faith and leave one without hope and without love.[35] In it 'one is completely listless, tepid, and unhappy and feels separated from our Creator and Lord'.[36] Ignatius discovered, for himself, that when there is conformity to the will of God, there will usually be consolation, but when there is no conformity or we feel the gulf between ourselves and God, there is desolation, a term that comes from the Latin *desolare,* to be forsaken - the 'good spirit' and the 'evil spirit', in the metaphors used at the time of Ignatius, lead us towards God or away from Him. Harvey Egan describes the state of the mystic who feels separated from God (though he is not so) as feeling 'justifiably abandoned.... emotionally bored, arid and near despair....impotence and incredible loneliness are common'.[37] Some desolations may be a time of waiting or testing, and others are more akin to *accidie,* despair or depression but, in either case, patience is counselled.

Desolations serve not only to awaken us when we are lazy, tepid or indifferent, or to test whether we will persevere patiently without rewarding feelings when God seems distant, but are also ways of breaking up our previous preconceptions, reminding us that all is not well, so that we can look for a new path. Desolations may have elements of guilt, anxiety, boredom, doubt, lack of feeling, lack of meaning and a host of other negativities which are also found in depression. They can serve to motivate us, but persistent desolation not endured with trust or used in order to progress is likely to lead to discouragement, alienation, *accidie* and depression. Lonsdale includes feelings of meaninglessness, purposelessness and persistent guilt in his account of desolation.[38] God is absent or denied and this condition leads to a state which is identical with Tillich's description of existential anxiety, or Lake's description of depression. Desolation does not, however, need to reach this stage. It highlights the *shadow* and is

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[34] Lonsdale, D. in Sheldrake, P. ed. (1991) The Way of Ignatius Loyola, SPCK, pp.65ff.

[35] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 317, p.349.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Egan, H. (1987) Ignatius Loyola, the Mystic, Michael Glazier, Wilmington, Delaware, p. 27.

[38] Lonsdale, D. (1992) Dance to the Music of the Spirit, DLT, pp. 58ff.

usually a warning sign to indicate that we could move forward into a greater reality and vitality. We feel the absence of God and do not like it, so we should be moved to search further, not by avoiding the pain but by facing it and accepting the cause, which is probably something to do with our poor discipleship, and unwillingness to follow whatever way our deepest values prompt. Ignatius advises us to oppose desolation by waiting with patience[39], continuing in prayer however difficult this may be, and trusting in God's love.[40] Discernment through the right response to consolation and desolation helps to recognise the nature of our deepest longing, enabling us to distinguish between choices driven by compulsion and unconscious drives, and those which are made in the freedom of self-forgetfulness. Reflection on moods and their origin helps to shape the desires that motivate our lives and help to create the moods, and discernment also reveals the basis of our hope.

According to Ignatius, consolation is the normative state of anyone trying to pray regularly, and 'it is characteristic of God and his angels, by the motions they cause, to give genuine happiness and spiritual joy, and thereby to banish any sadness and turmoil induced by the enemy'[41], whereas loss of faith and trust leads to the feelings of emptiness which Tillich describes so well. Ignatius' Spiritual Diary, written in 1544, is a sensitive record of his own moods at a time of decision making when he was writing constitutions and determining the direction in which his Society should go.[42] In this diary, Ignatius writes so sensitively and openly of his progress through the problems of decision-making, that the editors write that it might be entitled 'a Discernment Logbook'.[43]

W. W. Meissner notes that Ignatius suffered severe depression in 1522, and that this colours his description of desolation in the Exercises - it is 'darkness of soul, turmoil of spirit, inclination to what is low and earthly, restlessness rising from many disturbances and temptations which lead to lack of faith, want of hope, want of love. The soul is wholly slothful, tepid, sad, and separated, as it were from its Creator'.[44]

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[39] Ignatius, Personal Writings Letter 4, p. 133.

[40] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises, 319 & 320, p. 349.

[41] Ibid, 329, p. 351.

[42] Ignatius, Spiritual Diary, pp. 67ff.

[43] Munitiz and Endean, op. cit, p.69.

[44] Meissner, W.W. (1992) Ignatius of Loyola, UP Yale, p. 74.
Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 317, p. 349.

Ignatius himself describes the problems of his persistent scruples which brought him to the verge of suicide for a while, and which he tried to placate by excessive abstinence and self-punishment.[45] There were similar periods of conflict in his early adult life. When he went to Rouen seven years later, for instance, he again practised vengeful penances to punish his waywardness[46], but he knew this was not the right way to come to a loving forgiving God. Meissner analyses these experiences in terms of an exceedingly harsh and scrupulous *superego*, based on an *ego-ideal* which gave obsessional anxieties.[47] He makes much of Ignatius' early upbringing with the loss of an idealised mother and masculine identification with his father as significant factors, causing unconscious conflicts and liability to affective problems.[48] There is no way of verifying such speculations, but we can note that even the most saintly people are vulnerable to depression. Consolation was, however, the predominant feature of Ignatius' later experiences.

The feelings of consolation and desolation are not always what we expect and are not to be equated with feeling good or feeling unhappy - consolation may be tearful, as it often was for Ignatius, and more particularly for someone in touch with their own sin or the evil and pain of the world. The feelings and moods are not, in themselves, a prime consideration, but a means of directing the insights of prayer so that they can order the whole of life in the light of faith and hope and love. Jules Toner writes of different movements in the 'discernment of spirits' saying that 'they include cognitive acts such as thoughts, fantasies and memories, affective acts such as love, desire, hate, aversion, hope and fear, and affective feelings such as lightheartedness, depression, gloominess, sweetness, bitterness - in short all that goes on in our minds and hearts.[49] He also extracts three elements which should be acquired in discernment: the sincere intention to do God's will whatever the cost, a prayerful desire that it should be known, and a freedom that enables indifference to alternative choices.[50] In other traditions,

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[45] Ignatius realised the destructive effect of his scruples which had, at first seemed pious, when his faith was threatened by them. Munitiz and Endean, op. cit, note 30. p. 363.

[46] Ignatius, Reminiscences 21-25, pp. 22-24.

[47] Meissner, op. cit, p. 145.

[48] Meissner, op. cit, p. 363..

[49] Toner, J.J. (1991) Discerning God's Will, Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis, p.69.

[50] Ibid, p.65.

'indifference' is called 'detachment', and Ignatius emphasises its importance in allowing openness to the Holy Spirit in making a decision. In darkness and desolation there is preoccupation with anxieties and temptations so that 'indifference' to the outcome becomes impossible, and therefore Ignatius says that no major decisions should be over-turned while in a state of desolation.[51]

1c) THE FOUR WEEKS OF IGNATIAN EXERCISES

The Spiritual Exercises form the background for the process of Ignatian discernment, and provide a wide variety of experiences in which the faculties used can be more finely tuned. At their head is the 'Principle and Foundation'. The first sentence states that 'human beings are created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by this means save their souls'.[52] This principle, in the light of which spiritual, emotional and rational judgements are made, may sound self-centred, but the need to look to our own souls stems from our value as individuals created in God's love for Him, and able to give Him praise and service. There is no false modesty, no failure to take responsibility for ourselves - we are created with gifts which need stewardship. The idea of 'saving our souls' is a short-hand way of saying that life should be lived in freedom, with detachment or 'indifference' to our state of life, so that our desires may conform to the will of God. Ignatius says that 'we should not want health more than illness, wealth more than poverty, fame more than disgrace, a long life more than a short one, and similarly for all the rest, but we should desire and choose only what helps us more towards the end for which we are created.'[53] If we are facing in the right direction and living in harmony with this principle, consolation is likely; when we lose sight of our ultimate goal, we either live with superficiality or plunge into desolation.

The Exercises are divided into four 'weeks' or themes (however long it takes to complete them) after a period of preparation during which the person's image of God and self-image is considered. Few people have undistorted images, and it is common to think of God as a distant, tyrannical, judgmental and condemning taskmaster who cannot be satisfied. A harsh self-image often supplements this so that people feel

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[51] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 318, p. 349.

[52] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 23, p. 289.

[53] Ibid.

neglected, flawed, incapable, uninteresting and rejected; they then plunge into despair and depression.   Only when the falseness of such images becomes apparent and someone can accept that they are loved and cared for by God, are they are ready to consider the problem of sin, for as it is rightly said, 'the only healthy place for scrutinising one's sins and sinfulness is 'within the loving embrace of a loving God who accepts me as I am'.[54] When trust in God is established the process of 'increasing self-awareness' can continue. The *shadow* side of life can then be explored without feelings of insecurity in the first full 'week' which looks at sin, that of the individual and at our involvement in corporate evil. There is no doubt that in many of those who have pursued the Exercises unconscious matter is disclosed, but it is far from morbid because trust in the forgiving God who knows human weakness and suffers in the struggle leads to 'gratitude, wonder, joy and freedom from paralysing guilt'.[55]

The second week is concerned with love and commitment, as Christ's life is seen in sharp contrast to the standards that are usually accepted in the world. There is the opportunity to progress in self-awareness as Jesus becomes more real, enabling a response of deeper love and therefore consolation. William Broderick writes that, though Ignatius does not use the Pauline language of dwelling 'in' or 'through' or 'with' Christ, these ideas of mutual indwelling are implicit, as in St Paul's phrase, 'in Him we live and move and have our being'.[56] Broderick adds that when someone tries to be united with Christ, even in His vulnerability and painful limitations, 'as he contemplates Christ, he discovers his own deepest self, his truest identity' because the creative realities that are in the depths are revealed in the light of Christ.[57] R.S. Thomas writes, similarly, that prayer is not wrestling with our 'unfitness', saying that 'it begins to appear that this is not what prayer is about.   It is the annihilation of difference,   the consciousness of myself in you, of you in me'.[58] This closeness and interpenetration is strongly emphasised in the Ignatian tradition, and as in any relationship there is bound to be an element of autosuggestion and projection, but the process is safeguarded by

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[54] Clarke, T. E. (1995) Way Supplement 82, 'Ignatian Prayer and Individualism', p. 9.

[55] Hughes, G. (1993) West Midlands Spirituality Course, Birmingham, p.4.

[56] Acts 17:28.
Broderick, W. (1985) The Way Supplement 52, Way Publications, p. 83.

[57] Ibid, p. 86.

[58] Thomas, R.S.(1975) Laboratories of the Spirit , Macmillan, p.1.

the objectivity of standards in the Gospel narratives, and the scholarship which is constantly being applied in their interpretation.

The third and fourth weeks consider the Passion, culminating with Holy Saturday followed by the Resurrection.[59] Sheldrake interprets the third week in accordance with a belief in the vulnerability of God in both the Incarnation and on the Cross.[60] In response to this self-giving love, there has to be both self-surrender and self-preservation because in all *kenosis* there must be a complementary stability as a base for self-giving to be possible. We are constantly called to die to something in ourselves, and at the same time be receptive to whatever strength is available. In later chapters of this thesis, the theme that *kenosis* is a necessary pattern for progress in all aspects of life will be explored in the context of opposites which need to be ready both to give and receive from each other. In broad terms, we offer what we can to God, and He gives us Himself through His presence in all things. During the Exercises there is a progressive dynamic, enabling greater understanding of the Christian life and commitment to it so that the norms, against which consolation and desolation are felt, change, and aspirations are modified.

1d) USE OF FACULTIES AND SENSES TO ACCESS THE UNCONSCIOUS

Jung is right in noting the power of the Ignatian process, but he did not recognise that this power derives from contact with a revelation of God which impinges on deep unconscious desires. Ignatius draws on all the human faculties, and particularly on the senses.[61] The aim as Hugo Rahner writes is 'the uniting of understanding and heart, reason and imagination, thought and feeling'[62], working towards an integrated person relating to Christ. The immediacy, beauty and power of the Gospel is experienced with an affective resonance, so that desire begins to accord with the will of God as it is reflected in Christ. Ignatius advises an imaginative method which is similar to Jung's *active imagination,* so as to enhance the reality and relevance of Jesus and to contrast

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[59] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 190-228, pp. 321ff.

[60] Sheldrake, P. (1985) The Way Supplement 58, 'The Theology of the Cross and the Third Week', Way Publications, p. 31.

[61] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises 121 -124, p.307-8.

[62] Rahner, H., trans. Barry, M. (1968) Ignatius the Theologian, Geoffrey Chapman, p.207.

His teaching with our lives here and now. In the Jungian technique of *active imagination*, images are consciously fostered and then allowed to bring up associated ideas from the unconscious.[63] Jung commends Ignatius for his intention to train consciousness in 'a capacity for concentration, attention and clarity of thought'[64], because the symbols which come to mind are a source of revelation and new connections from the unconscious. It is a process which is like conscious dreaming in that it uses spontaneous images, but these can be examined and excluded. Jung says that, by this method, we can discover an archetype 'without sinking back into the instinctual sphere', because some censorship from the conscious mind is also retained.[65] Jung recognises, in Ignatius, the same process of discovering the *shadow* as his own, when Ignatius writes 'taste bitter things as tears, sadness, and the worms of conscience'.[66] The main difference between Ignatius and Jung lies in the Christian ethos which is focused on a loving, forgiving and transcendent God who is to be trusted, and who is revealed through the life and work of Christ, as compared with the immanent divinity of archetypes, and religious symbols in the *collective unconscious*. Jung dismisses the possibility of a 'God beyond this world' as irrelevant, and tends to distort the symbols he uses by giving them a rigid psychological interpretation.[67] Stenger, for instance, writes that Jung's Christ and Ignatius' Christ do not have the same meaning because the psychological paradigm fails to recognise the personal love which is offered.[68]

Throughout the history of the Christian Church, the relevance of prayer to our state of mind has been stressed. The early Fathers emphasise that, without prayer, the 'demons' of the *logismoi* cannot be transformed by the Spirit. The Doctrine

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[63] Jung, CW 9 :1, paras. 101ff., and CW 8, 166-175.

[64] Jung, CW 14, para. 285.

[65] Jung, CW 8, paras. 414ff.

[66] Jung, CW 14, para. 255, and CW 18, para. 1345.
see below pp.138ff. for fuller discussion of Jung's concept of *shadow*.

[67] Jung, CW 9:1, paras. 87ff.
Jung records that, when considering his lectures on Ignatius, he was happier when Christ appeared to him as a vision in greenish gold - which he recognised as an Alchemic symbol of opposites in transformation. Jung, MDR, p. 237.

[68] Stenger, H., trans Becker K.L. (1989) Carl Gustav Jung und Die Exertia Spiritualia des Ignatius von Loyola, University of Innsbruck.

Commission of the Church of England also likens the work of the Spirit to that of a therapist, transforming the whole person, including the unconscious, by bringing to light repressed feelings and false assumptions, and thus modifying obsessions and compulsions.[69] The Holy Spirit brings a transforming force that can enter the deepest realms of the psyche through repentance and the experience of forgiveness, through prayer and reflection, and in a variety of other ways.

In prayer there can be a controlled and directed ability to become open to the unconscious; the place to which it is leading cannot be predetermined, but we can discover good as well as bad in ourselves and discover, as Gerard Hughes puts it, the God of Surprises.[70] In the Exercises, *active imagination* is used in meditation in order to 'enter into' a Biblical situation using all the senses to imagine the setting and savour the experience - it is to be immersed in the mystery of Christ's life with every possible faculty. The scene or context of a saying is brought to mind in a way that makes it present, allowing a personal 'colloquy' with the people found there. In these conversations, intuition and feeling is allowed to enter so that relationship and commitment to Jesus can grow.[71]

Jung had considerable reserves about the type of colloquy which Ignatius advised because he felt that it was one-sided, and without 'proper' attention to the responses found in the unconscious - in other words, he thought that there would be mainly projections of fixed ideas from *ego-consciousness*.[72] Those who are familiar with the Exercises usually think otherwise.[73] Philippa Green, for instance, notes that, because the unconscious tends to be disturbed, a strong *ego* is needed to complete the Ignatian Exercises in the same way as it is needed in therapy - both are challenging experiences penetrating the weakest spots.[74] Green points out that insights from psychotherapy and

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[69] Doctrine Commission of the Church of England (1991) We Believe in the Holy Spirit, Church House Publishing, pp. 82ff, and 112ff.

[70] Hughes, G.W. (1985) The God of Surprises, DLT.

[71] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises, 54, p.296.

[72] Jung, CW 9:1, para. 236.

[73] Broderick, W., in Sheldrake, P. ed. (1991) The Way of Ignatius Loyola, SPCK, p.90.

[74] Green, E.M.P. (1995) Can Psychoanalysis Inform the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola? M.A Dissertation, University of Sheffield, pp. 1ff.
Neville Symington also links psychoanalysis with prayer. He aims to bring a range of psychoanalytic approaches into the orbit of religion so that there can be collaboration, but he is too critical of some attempts to enable rapprochement, abhoring the divisions which occur through religious creeds.
He tries to build his faith around the universally applicable ethical sytem which, he feels, is inherent in psychoanalysis. Symington, N. (1994) Emotion and Spirit, Cassell, pp.171ff.

prayer can be mutually helpful, for instance, psychotherapy can diminish the danger of projection and wishful thinking if there is a danger of trying 'to idolise God in order to manipulate Him at one's will, and thereby feel secure'.[75] Ignatius was well aware of the danger of projecting an image onto God, writing that some people will keep that to which they are attached, 'so that God will come to where they desire'.[76] This tendency is one of the reasons why Ignatius constantly reiterates that we should repeatedly look for our deepest desires with the intention of aligning our will with that of God.

Robert Doran's description of 'psychic conversion' includes affective, religious, moral and intellectual aspects of life which may have been converted, but it also involves transformation at deep levels of the unconscious.[77] It is, he says, 'Christian transformation relating to God's redemptive purpose' because it comes from a deep desire for the love of God, and looks towards His transcendence to determine the direction of change.[78] Interestingly, his concepts link with those of Karen Horney, in that he describes self-affirmation as a longing for the authentic self, whether one's habitual self matches it or not.[79] Doran also links the types of decision making before major changes in life which are mentioned by Ignatius[80] to the stages he describes in conversion. He considers that in the third and most profound type marked by tranquillity, the conscious and unconscious mind are in balance and provide the creative tension which enables the decision to be effective and peaceful - deep desires are not at war with each other.[81]

Victor White, a Dominican who was the earliest writer on this theme, had already observed that regular Christian practice in prayer gives rise to an openness that accesses the unconscious in a way very similar to that of Jungian therapy and that it therefore is

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Gerd Theissen also finds psychoanalytic insights in the writings of St Paul. Theissen, G., trans. Galvin, J.P. (1987) Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology, T.and T.Clarke Edinburgh, pp.59ff, 96ff. and 228.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ignatius, trans.Ganss, G.E.(1991) Ignatius of Loyola, The Spiritual Exercises, 154, CWS, Paulist Press, NY, p. 157.

[77] Doran, R. (1990) Theology and the Dialectics of History, UP, Toronto, pp. 42ff.

[78] Ibid. p.66.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Spiritual Exercises, 175, p.317.

[81] Doran, op. cit, p. 58.

of value in keeping the *ego* open to the *Self* and to the *shadow* that must be integrated.[82]
White calls the willingness of the conscious mind to undergo this kind of change 'a
courageous surrender of the *ego* to a mystery which transcends it'.[83] He comments that
Jung in his treatise about the transforming function of symbols and paradoxes in the
Mass, brings to light the psychological significance of the antitheses such as life and
death, human and divine, material and spiritual, *anima* and *animus* which are all
symbolically reconciled when the sacrifice of Christ is re-enacted.[84] White stresses the
abiding corporate significance of the symbol of death and resurrection, demonstrating
the fundamental truth that sacrifice is an inevitable component of transformation. By
entering into the real events of Christ's life, these events can heal the opposites of the
psyche, and so become a reality for the worshipping community within the everyday
world. He stresses, in particular, our inborn pattern of balance in relation to supreme
values and our need to be whole (integrating our weakness and *shadow*) rather than
perfect.[85] Although White, towards the end of his life, had profound differences with
Jung about the nature of evil, he firmly believed that the *shadow* is a latent problem in
the unconscious which needs acceptance.[86] He confesses that, like many of us, he has
difficulty in understanding 'just what Jung does understand by evil'[87] , and joins others
who, like Robert Doran, applaud Jung's psychology without being able to endorse his
view of evil.[88]

William Johnston recognises that much of the writing about temptations which
are apt to occur in prayer (such as the *logismoi*) refers to 'what we now call the
unconscious'.[89] He considers that all mysticism, with its paradoxes of pain and joy,

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[82] White, V. (1960) <u>Soul and Psyche</u>, Collins and Harvill, pp. 147ff.

[83] <u>Ibid.</u> p.80. See below pp. 143ff.

[84] White,V. (1952:1960) <u>God and the Unconscious</u>, Collins, Fontana, p. 243.
Jung, CW, 9:2, paras. 376ff.

[85] White, <u>Soul and Psyche</u>, pp. 100 and 189ff.

[86] White, <u>Soul and Psyche</u>, p.156ff.

[87] <u>Ibid.</u>

[88] Doran, R. M. (1990) , <u>Theology and the Dialectics of History</u>, U.P., Toronto, p. 334.
and Doran, R., in Spiegelman, J.M. ed. (1994) <u>Catholicism and Jungian Psychology</u>, New Falcon,
Tempe, Arizona, p.45.

[89] Johnston, W. (1995) <u>Mystical Theology</u>, Harper Collins, p. 214-215.

touches the unconscious and so liberates the soul. He also warns of the storms that may be unleashed which may be so severe that they may seem to threaten to engulf the whole personality, but which may be held at bay by a paradoxical inner peace, even in the difficult area of sexuality.[90] Kelsey emphasises that 'the spiritual reality is not a realm in which men can play as dilettantes; in it they find the very powers of heaven and hell,'[91] and Sandford also comments that 'to accept the unconscious as a partner in life is like letting in both God and the devil.' It brings not only the good 'numinous energy moving us towards wholeness', but also reveals horror and fear because in confronting the antitheses of the shadow (the personal, collective and archetypal) the revelations can be very frightening.[92] Some maturity is necessary if this exposure is undertaken, and there should be a spiritual guide who is equipped, as Bryant puts it, by 'his own personal struggle with the forces of darkness, and his effort to bring under the sway of the Spirit the untamed energies of his own being'.[93] It is even possible that St John of the Cross, who talks of the 'sufferings, horrors and fears' by which the Devil tries to agitate the soul[94], might have endured less pain in his 'dark nights' if he had had someone who understood his struggle to guide him.

5. SCHEMATIC MODEL FOR DEPRESSION.

In the previous section it has become apparent that experiences of consolation or desolation and hope or despair can hinge on the extent to which deepest desires can bear the scrutiny of the Spirit in reflection. Opposition between the unconscious and conscious mind, between strength and weakness and other polarities emerge to demonstrate the place that spiritual values have in determining our mood. Spiritual malaise must be included as one of the causes of depressed mood which leads, as do

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[90] Ibid, p. 228.

[91] Kelsey, M.T. (1972) Encounter with God, Paulist Press, NY, p. 160.

[92] Sandford, J.A. (1977) Healing and Wholeness, Paulist Press, NY, p. 86.

[93] Bryant, C. (1979) Self Awareness and Religious Belief, No.195 Guild of Pastoral Psychology, p. 6.
and Bryant, C. (1980:1994) The Heart in Pilgrimage, Mowbray, pp. 36ff.

[94] St John of the Cross (1979) trans. Kavanaugh, K. and Rodriguez, O. Ascent of Mount Carmel, 2:23:5, Institute of Carmelite Studies, Washington, p.383.

the other aetiological factors, to misery, guilt feelings, self-absorption, lethargy and poor self-esteem. This aspect needs consideration, together with those that are physical and psychological, so that treatment can be at a deeper level and more holistic.

There are many accepted criteria, used by psychiatrists or psychologists, for diagnosing and assessing the presence or severity of illness in depression[95], and some of these are used here to suggest a hypothetical model through which there can be understanding of the interactions between different factors in the aetiology - providing a simple way of evaluating, in any one patient, the balance of causative factors. Physical and psychological causes, past events and present circumstances, external environmental factors, distortions in cognitive assumptions and spiritual malaise are the main aspects included in this schema. It is essentially a dynamic and flexible model in which people are found to be at points along a series of spectra, in positions which may be constantly changing.

Depression can be explained through a number of different valid paradigms, none of which are mutually exclusive. There is good reason to believe that several factors, or all of them, contribute to most severe depressions, and no particular explanation should claim an exclusive right to be a fundamental or absolute cause. It is possible to extract factors which complement each other so that, by treating one aspect, it is often found that other factors can be overcome more readily. For instance, medication makes people accessible to psychotherapy, and cognitive or other psychotherapy reduces the need for medication. A spiritual problem may equally well make people resistant to other forms of treatment, and its resolution may help recovery.

2a) MIND AND BODY

For the medical profession, the clearest division in the aetiology of depression is between psychological and physical causes,[96] illustrated diagramatically in Figure 1.

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[95] See above, note 71 on p. 27.

[96] Thomas Szasz holds the view that mental illness is no more than a convenient way of stigmatising people who do not conform to the mores of society. He is exceptional in not believing that there are physical and chemical causes underlying the disorder. Szasz, T.S. (1962:1987) The Myth of Mental Illness, Penguin, p.103.
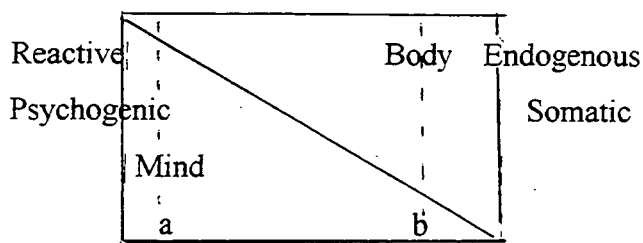
Fig. 1. Mind and Body

Two hypothetical people can be found in the position a. or b. along the bottom line of the model - a.'s depression will be mainly psychogenic, and b.'s depression will be almost entirely of physical (chemical and genetic) origin needing antidepressants. The balance   will be affected by the influence of body on the mind (somatopsychic effects) and the mind on the body (psychosomatic). There can be no lasting or fixed line which will give the proportion of each causal factor, as the balance is likely to change. The physical aspects of the illness often have a cyclical course with long or permanent remission, but if persistent they are likely to respond well to medical methods of treatment, leaving any psychological factors that may be entrenched.

There is a body of opinion which maintains that each paradigm can be complete in itself, and that treatment carried through in any one mode will prove effective in the symptoms as seen in another. This view has some justification in that effective psychotherapy has sometimes been found to minimise or remove the somatic symptoms of depression (while doing little to affect biological vulnerability). Similarly treatment by drugs transforms the immediate psychological problems in many patients though it can do nothing to deal with the long-standing psychological damage which may erupt with symptoms at a later date. The reciprocal effects of psyche and soma are felt in the common experience after a virus infection of not knowing if we are ill because we are depressed, or depressed because we are ill. In Tillich's words there is also a 'mutual within-each-otherness' of the dimensions (biological and non-biological) causing illness, which should call for cooperation of all those who help in the process of healing - including those with a religious message.[97]

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[97] Tillich, P., ed. Lee, P. (1981) The Meaning of Health, North Atlantic Books, Richmond, California,   p. 60.

2b) PAST AND PRESENT PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS.

The psychogenic aspects which may remain unaffected by a medical approach can be divided into those that have arisen from past experiences in childhood, and those which arise because of present circumstances. Previous traumas give rise to guilt feelings, anger, loss of self-esteem and the other long lasting emotions of depression. The confused, fearful, angry and guilty child bears the burden of this in later life when a psychodynamic or psychoanalytic approach is often helpful. An equilibrium is maintained between the aetiologies arising in the mind from past and present disturbances. The situation is never static so there is always a movement along the proportional range, as for example, in positions a. or b.. Painful memories, conscious and unconscious, affect the degree to which present problems impinge, just as the difficulties of the present determine the way in which the painfulness of the past gives rise to morbidity. In Figure 1., position 'a' suggests causes that are mainly from past traumas, and position 'b' mainly from present circumstances.

2c) EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FACTORS IN THE PRESENT.

The main factors coming from the present situation can be divided into those which are internal due to conflict in the psyche, and those which arise from outside from social, cultural or family situations.[98] The depressing effects of poverty, unemployment, unreasonable spouses, demanding relatives, and many other conditions causing isolation and misery have been well documented and found to lower self-esteem. The balance of internal and external factors will shift along a spectrum according to the degree to which the circumstances can be adjusted, and the ability of the depressed person to adjust their inner disposition to cope with their situation, and with their inner turmoil.

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[98] Brown, G, in Herbst, K.B. and Paykel, E.S., (1989) Depression an Integrative Approach, Heinemann, pp. 38ff.

2d) SPIRITUAL FACTORS

The immediate internal or psychological contributions to a state of depression can be divided into those that are cognitive, that is false intellectual beliefs in the mind, and those that are essentially the province of the soul and primarily spiritual. These too can be in variable proportion with each other. Cognitive therapy, which is based on a behavioural model of conditioning positive thoughts, is a well accepted and effective method of treatment for distorted thought patterns, such as those concerning guilt feelings and worthlessness[99]. A complementary approach is to note the spiritual aspects which may be a fundamental factor in an illness which is centred around guilt, worthlessness, emptiness and lack of meaning. Forgiveness is likely to be pivotal in recovery

The attempt to elucidate the relevance of spiritual values in the subsequent chapters will rely mainly on those Christian writers who affirm God's love for each of His creatures. This should not be understood as an exclusive approach, for there are many ways of healing our spiritual woes and many valid religious routes to God.. Figure 2 illustrates the different interacting aspects of psychogenic causation. The model proposed puts religion at the end of a hierarchy, not because it is the least important, but because the life of the spirit, whether overtly religious or not, lies hidden, permeating all the other aspects and fundamental in the recovery process.[100]

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[99] See below, pp. 234ff.

[100] See below, pp. 246ff., particularly figure 12 on p, 250. The same aetiological elements are incorporated into the left-hand side of the model, illustrating the balance of causative factors.
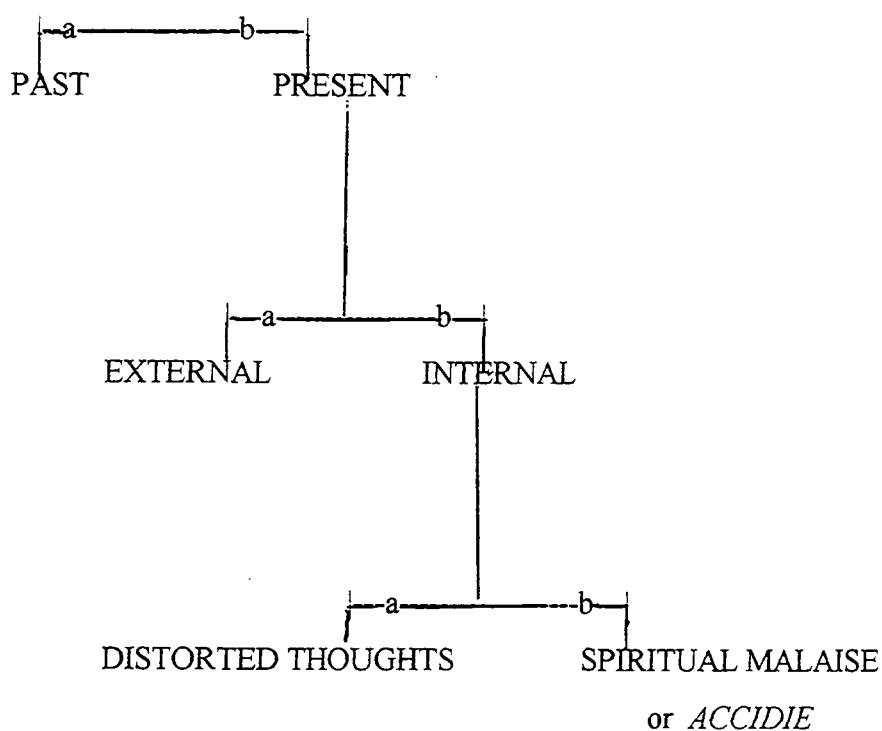
Figure 2.

3. CASE HISTORIES

Some of the factors within the model can be illustrated by vignettes from case histories:

1. Frank illustrates a physically determined illness where it can be assumed that psychogenic factors were minimal (in position b. in Fig. 1.). Any psychogenic factors were due more to present externally generated problems than to those of the past (to the right on Fig. 2) He was a boy with Down's syndrome and learning difficulties. His chromosome pattern was typical of the condition[101], and his intelligence was less than 50% of that normal for his age. Within these limitations he developed normally and was good at making social and affectionate relationships both in his home and at the special school which he attended. He could speak, sing, draw, mimic, dance and joke.

When he was 12 years old his character seemed to change. He became restless, excitable, easily agitated and more distractible. He started high pitched giggling, non-

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[101] Chromosomes 47XY+G.

stop repetitive and inconsequential speech, shouting in shops, pushing people and banging doors. He destroyed toys and other objects and put things in endless rows. He began to have toileting accidents, slept very little and seemed to have forgotten everything he had learnt at school. He played dangerously with electric switches and took little notice of what people said to him. He was generally thought to be displaying some of the challenging behaviour which may occur in adolescents with learning disabilities.

There was, however, another change when he was 14 years old. Frank became very withdrawn and quiet, and in every way the reverse of the changes during the previous two years. He was slow, mute, lethargic and frequently cried. He refused food and would keep a biscuit in his mouth for half an hour before swallowing it. There was incontinence and he smeared his faeces. When he was not sitting hunched up, he wandered aimlessly and he would not give attention to any activity. His sleep was disturbed with early waking. People tended to assume that he had become more retarded as an integral part of his Down's syndrome, and he was admitted to hospital for an indefinite period. He could not describe his feelings adequately to express guilt or worthlessness but there was more than enough evidence, with five of the diagnostic criteria, to diagnose a major depressive episode as described in DSM 4. It was then clear that he had been suffering from hypomania in the previous period. He was finally diagnosed as suffering from a bipolar manic-depressive psychosis.

Treatment with the appropriate medication had a rapid effect, and he again became continent, sociable and co-operative. He began to enjoy school and benefited from it, and he returned home. It later transpired that there was a family history of manic-depressive psychosis on his father's side and his mother had been in hospital with a severe depressive illness. The genetic background was presumed to be the main causative factor in an illness in which abnormal blood chemistry was the main determining factor.

2.   Mania and major depression also occur as unipolar disorders without a swing to the other extreme. David was typical case of severe endogenous (physical) depression, complicated by psychogenic features stemming from early disruption of family relationships. The family went abroad when he was 3 months and were frequently separated from each other. He was sent home to be cared for by his grandmother when he was two and a half years old and after that refused to look at his mother or relate to

her for many months. He appeared to be badly affected by the separation but he recovered enough to seem happy during the rest of his childhood. When he was 18 years old, however, he became very unhappy as a naval cadet for a number of reasons, not least of which was a sense of desolation as the ship sailed, bringing back a sense of the separation anxieties which he had suffered as a small child. Life seemed intolerable, and he made a suicide attempt in which he was badly injured. When he recovered he entered university but succumbed to a major depressive illness shortly afterwards. This responded well to medical treatment without any residual symptoms and he graduated, trained for ordination in the Church of England and became a parish priest - work in which he was reasonably happy for a few years. He married and had two children and there were no major problems in his family life.

He was a devout man who was meticulous in religious obligations, perhaps compulsively so, but the inner meaning of a faith in Christ never came alive for him, and he never felt the love of a caring Creator. When he was 46 years old, for no apparent reason, he started a depressive illness which only had short incomplete remissions for the next 25 years, and during which he attempted suicide on more than one occasion. He was treated unsuccessfully with an immense range of drugs with only slight temporary benefit. A variety of psychological therapies including some depth analysis were also attempted without making any impression and he spent most of his last ten years in hospital. He suffered from the main core symptoms of endogenous depression such as anhedonia, appetite and sleep disorder, slow movement, retarded thought and speech, loss of interest, lack of energy, fatigue, irritability, anger, self-hate and guilt which fed each other in a vicious circle. For instance, David attributed to himself moral blame, which could not be forgiven, so compounding his feelings of worthlessness - he had no trust.

He illustrates a very small group of organic depressive illnesses which are extremely resistant to all forms of medical and psychological treatment. This may well have been because of his sensitivity to severe emotional trauma in infancy, and his rigid self-sufficient approach to religion.

3. The case history of Edward, aged 57, who suffered from a severe depression, with features similar to those of *accidie* as well as a medical illness illustrates the need to consider cognitive and spiritual aspects as well as medical treatment. He was prominent in social work and counselling circles. He carried a great deal of

responsibility and his personality was slightly obsessional, with some introverted but no significant neurotic features. He came from a stable and loving background and was very happily married with four children, all of whom were loyal and loving, and doing well in the world. The family had no financial or social problems apart from an elderly dependent relative who tended to be miserable most of the time. Edward's Christian faith had always been a major influence, and he had artistic interests for recreation. There seemed to be no psychological reason why he should have developed a major depressive illness, but he moved to a more senior position and shortly afterwards started to become tired, lethargic, unable to sleep, uninterested in eating and lost all interest in his work and his pleasures. People thought that the stress inherent in his job was the reason and he was advised to rest. He was given some time off work but his condition worsened; he lost his usual competence and authority and it was clear that he was suffering from severe depression with all the physical concomitants of retarded functioning. He was referred to a psychiatrist who diagnosed him as having endogenous (inborn chemical and biological aetiology) depression and he was started on antidepressants. He needed however more physical treatment and had a short course of electro-convulsive therapy with very good effect. He returned to work with some anxiety because if he stopped taking medication some of the symptoms would return.

Meanwhile he started to look for the psychological roots of his condition - what it was in his personality and experience that made him more vulnerable to the chemical and physical illness. He discovered that in spite of all the ways in which his intelligence and orientation had helped him to cover it up, he had had in fact a very poor opinion of his intrinsic value, and he was full of guilt feelings. Cognitive therapy did not immediately probe into the early causes of his state but he soon came to realise that he had unreasonably poor self-esteem and one of the reasons for it was an unrealistic self-ideal. He noted that if he had been criticised once he made generalisations, assuming that everyone always held a similar negative opinion. He found that he personalised the world's problems and carried an unrealistic burden for them on his own shoulders, tending to expect catastrophe as a result of all his decisions. He saw himself as useless with an ideal for himself beyond anyone's capability, and he realised that he was driven by compulsions which urged him to attempt a perfection that was impossible.[102]

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[102] The compulsions and problems stemming from an inflated self-ideal are discussed in detail below, pp. 97ff.

Edward also uncovered a number of ways in which his life had predisposed him to dangerous suppressed emotions. His early upbringing was strict to the point of being unreasonable. It allowed for few if any misdemeanours as his emotions were manipulated to keep him in control; if he was bad he lost love, so bad feelings had to be hidden or denied; he was an excessively good child, gentle and helpful and this continued as an adult. This meant that inevitable anger was never allowed to surface, and undercover it festered and grew. His application to work and success grew out of the energy of this repressed anger. Activity and good works were at least in part a shield from the anxiety which was present, lest he became known for what he really was, full of anger and resentment. As he improved, he could forestall the feelings of depression and rob them of some of their power by recognising their origin, so that he was eventually able to discontinue medication. He also began to experience a sense of God's love, and freed from the subtle constricting and limiting influence of his fears, he could live in a more spontaneous and meaningful way. His understanding and compassion towards other people in trouble increased and his sensitivity made his counselling skills outstanding. He was 'a wounded healer' who recognised his vulnerability. He discovered that the humiliation of accepting the weakness and poverty of the 'real self' brought a release of energy, and paradoxically, the ability to discover a loveable 'true self' and potential.

The range of manifestations covered by depression is great and the causes varied, but in a high proportion of cases it is possible to find an element which has religious significance. Subsequent chapters look at some of the psychological, theological and spiritual factors which may be implicated, before suggesting a recovery model.

PART 2 - AUTHENTICITY AND THE FULFILMENT OF
INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL

'Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "surely the Lord was in this place and I did not know it"'. (Genesis 28:16)

'Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate are necessary to human existence.' William Blake [1]

The purpose of this section is to affirm that authenticity is a key concept as we become aware of our fragmentation and weakness - we must affirm life as vital and dynamic, accepting the negative and complementary aspects of our lives. Many of the destructive tendencies exert their influence from the unconscious, pushing us towards fear, insecurity, and depression. Increasing awareness of these problems brings us to realise the polarities in our nature, and helps us, as Tillich says, to gain a range of sensitivities 'towards the demands of our growth, toward the hidden hopes and disappointments within others'.[2] Lack of energy and feelings of guilt are major symptoms in every aspect of depressed mood; this section looks at some of the reasons for feeling guilt. and at the psychological conflicts which reduce available energy.

The first task is to distinguish between the various feelings through which we assess ourselves, and to accept ourselves without setting ourselves false self-ideals. Some of the difficulties in accepting the unconditional love of God and his forgiveness will be discussed. The work of two prominent depth psychologists, Carl Jung and Karen Horney, is basic in this search.

Horney provides some vivid descriptions of the compulsions which come from our impossible ideals, showing that the inflated ego is the source of conflict, preventing us from accepting the pain of failure. When we are driven by an ego-ideal, a 'false self', we inevitably fail, become hopeless, and then succumb to *accidie* or depression. Jung's concept of psychic energy is particularly relevant to the lethargy and stasis of depressive states. His constant emphasis is on the need to keep the polarities of our

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[1] Blake, W., ed. Keynes, G., (1966) The Complete Writings of William Blake. 'The Marriage of Heaven and Hell', OUP, Plate 3, p. 149.

[2] Tillich, ST 3, p.231.

psyche in balance, not denying the dark or neglected aspects. We must accept ourselves, forgiving our painful inadequacies, in order to integrate the *shadow* and all the energy it holds. When there is opposition and conflict in the psyche, all the dynamism that might otherwise be available is tied up. Only when opposites are reconciled in creative tension can there be vitality, for then there can be sufficient balance for them to be energising.

CHAPTER 4. TRUE SELF AND FALSE SELF '

'May your hidden self grow strong, so that Christ can live in your hearts .... until you are filled with the utter fullness of God'.[1]

'When I act against my own will, that means I have a self which acknowledges that the Law is good ...... when I act against my will it is not my true self doing it but the sin which lives in me..... in my inmost self I dearly love God's Law but my body follows a different law.'[2]

CONTENTS

1. ESCAPE INTO A FALSE SELF

The previous chapters highlighted the manifold aspects of depressed mood and some of the symptoms such as guilt, self-absorption, lack of energy and misery which occur both in clinical illness and in *accidie* - the source of which can sometimes be recognised through the discernment of mood in *consolation* and *desolation*. In the next three chapters psychological aspects relating to these symptoms are discussed. Karen Horney and Carl Jung are the main psychologists whose insights are used. They both examine the deceptive self-images that build up in order to escape the pain of reality, and show that they are closely related to feelings of guilt. Acceptance of the negative

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[1] Ephesians, 3:17-19 (JB).

[2] Romans, 7:17-22 (JB).

aspects of the self (the polarities of the *shadow*) is needed in order to live with vitality, and the compulsions generated by a false self, which ignores the *shadow*, can be linked to the compulsive persistence of the *logismoi* which probably have the same origin.

The psychologists say that we should love ourselves, and most affirmative experiences help to build a realistic self-image which has less need of self-deception. The confusion about avoiding self-love comes partly from the different aspects of the self, because if there is an inflated false self which ignores reality and feeds on illusion, then it is to be hated; whereas if the true self is thought of as our created potential, it is to be loved.[3] Fanatical religion tends to mask unresolved repressions and parades false-images of the ideal self, whereas healthy religion minimises inner conflict and the need for self-deception by acknowledging failure, and accepting both worth and worthlessness because one is loved and forgiven.[4] A recent 'translation' of Matthew 10:39 says 'he who seeks only himself brings himself to ruin, whereas he who brings himself to naught for me, discovers who he is.'[5] Hall also paraphrases this verse, saying that 'he who seeks only his illusory false self brings his true self to ruin, whereas he who brings his false self to naught for me discovers who he is - that is, the image of God, his true self'.[6] It is a matter of seeking the reality of our createdness and the freedom we have in spite of our dependence - the balance of gift and responsibility.

The polarities which occur within the psyche because of differences between the 'false self' and the 'true self' can be understood through a variety of paradigms. The role of 'basic trust' from a secure and loving environment in early life is psychologically an important prerequisite for the true self.[7] The gospel image is also dependent on the security of a good parental image of God, because without trust in a higher beneficence, it is almost impossible to take the risks which are inherent in

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[3] Hardy and Ford comment on the statement that 'almost all one's inner life when one is not absorbed in some active task is a traffic in images of self-worth', by pointing out that praise enables the 'space for the true self to grow'. Hardy, D.W. and Ford, D.F. (1984) Jubilate, DLT, p.159.

[4] Bringle, M.L. (1990) Despair - Sickness or Sin?, Abingdon, Nashville, pp. 16-21.

[5] Hall T. (1988) Too Deep for Words, Paulist Press, N.Y. p. 24.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Winnicott suggests that there is a true self of optimal development (without distorting defences) depending on the adequacy of an infant's nurturing environment. The false self occurs as a result of inadequate parenting and leads to nihilistic or defensive tendencies. The true self is facilitated by 'good enough mothering', through which there can be introjection of good qualities leading to an ability to be creative, loving and to adapt to circumstances. Transitions, pp. 23-24.

Christian living. Pain and darkness may be formative but they cannot be borne without a secure base. Rowan Williams highlights some of the paradoxes by saying that,

> costly self-knowledge comes through fear, inadequacy and failure .... we look into the darkness in which Christianity has its roots, the darkness of God being killed by His creatures .... he acts through vulnerability, failure and contradiction. Christian experience is drawn again and again to the fruitful darkness of the Cross. But in this constant movement outwards in affirmation and inwards to emptiness there is life and growth.... to want to escape the 'night' and the costly struggles with doubt and vacuity is to seek another God from the one who speaks in and as Jesus crucified.[8]

When the Gospel says 'be ye perfect' (*teleios*)[9], according to most scholars, it does not mean be flawless so much as 'whole' and complete.[10] Any aspirations towards perfection are doomed to failure, and it is only in accepting failure, weakness and vulnerability that we can grow towards the potential for which we are created.

2. CARL GUSTAV JUNG (1875-1961) AND THE FALSE SELF

Jung's description of the *persona* as the mask with which the world is confronted can, in one sense, be regarded as a false self belying the reality which it masks, but it acts as a shield and protection in social situations mediating between them and the *ego*. It is the role and appearance chosen when in contact with other people, and is not necessarily in harmony with the inner life nor need it be identical with the ideal which self would like to be. It is a natural and convenient fiction for communal intercourse and it is only when it is not balanced by an equally strong *ego* that it is likely to create excessive conflict or problem.[11] The artificial self which we present to ourselves, as well as to the world, is clothed in layers of protective deceptions which make us feel sufficiently independent and worthy to function as an individual with other people. As Peter Morea says, 'we like to create ourselves according to our own specifications'.[12]

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[8] Williams, R. (1979:1990) The Wound of Knowledge. 2nd edition, DLT, pp.178-9.

[9] Matthew 5:48 and Luke 6:36.

[10] Richardson, A. ed. (1957) A Theological Word Book of the Bible. SCM.

[11] Jung, CW 6. paras. 801ff.

[12] Morea, P. (1997) In Search of Personality, SCM, p. 42.

Jung also describes the *mana personality* based on an archetypal hero of god-like proportions whom, to some extent, we all tend to appropriate as our ideal self.[13] An *inflated ego* becomes out of touch with external realities and the limitations of the self, bringing about 'puffed-up-ness' and fanciful expectations. An ideal that is beyond our capabilities means that we have to face the legitimate pain of acknowledging that we fail to meet the standards we set ourselves. Instead of altering the expectations of glory, we persist in thinking more is demanded, and as the consequent compulsions increase so does the tendency to neurotic guilt. The ideal self can be both a cause and a result of guilt, in a vicious circle which spawns compulsions, and because these never attain their goal we become more guilty.

William Lynch stresses the danger of what he calls 'absolutising tendencies' which set unrealistic ideals, and flee from exaggerated ills.[14] He has an imaginative approach to our relativity and dependence in relationships, stressing that the tension which we feel between mutuality and alienation makes us exaggerate failures and slip into defensive 'perfection'.[15] Frank Lake means much the same when he talks of the 'hardening of the oughteries' to impress his view that ideals and perfectionism have dangerous consequences.[16] Illustrating this danger, a health care professional has written 'before my breakdown I was very pompous, overbearing and ruthlessly ambitious, all my qualifications had to be firsts'.[17] He explains that perfectionism ruled his life and helped to bring him to a major depression. The ideal self was pushing towards more and more achievement as proof of worthiness but it had the opposite effect of inculcating guilt because of the strain and impossibility of the goals he set himself. This was as much true for his inner standards of not failing himself morally as it was for public accomplishment. The addictive nature of striving after the unrealistic goals of an *ego-ideal*, in a never-ending struggle to boost self-esteem, causes compulsions to get out of control. Exaggerated expectations derived from habits, desires, impulses, prejudices, and resentments, leading to a drivenness that can take possession, and so limit our freedom, and determine our character.

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[13] Jung, CW 7, paras 374ff. and 389.

[14] Lynch, W.F. (1974) Images of Hope. Notre Dame UP, Indiana, pp. 105ff.

[15] Ibid, pp. 159ff.

[16] Lake, F. (1986) abridged by Yeomans, M.H., Clinical Theology. DLT, p.45.

[17] Rippere V. and Williams R. (1985) Wounded Healer. Wiley, Chichester, p. 59.

As an example we can consider a bored housewife with leisure. Vivien felt that she should be more public spirited so she joined a charitable organisation; she could not, for good reasons such as health, pull her weight as other people seemed to wish, and she felt that her image was tarnished. She had high standards and expectations of herself, so 'guilt' compelled her to do more and more, sacrificing family life and neglecting other things. One compulsion after another drove her to demand, of herself, the impossible in terms of time and energy, so that she ended up tired, angry and neurotic. The anger fed the 'guilt' because she knew such feelings were not good, then the 'guilt' led to more introverted anger, depression and ill-health: a number of vicious circles were set up and sent her spiralling downwards.

Paul Fleischman cites the case of an apparently successful, creative and energetic musician who had a constant struggle with guilt over his sexual problems, leading to hopelessness and an exaggeration of his urge to deviance. A double life eventually led to him being apprehended by the police as a voyeur. Though married with children he was sexually immature and frustrated, hating himself and on the verge of suicide because of his unruly instincts. There were two conflicting sides to his life - the fine artist with high ideals, and the despicable person with tendencies to perverse sexuality. In therapy, partly because he was accepted by the therapist as a whole person, he came to realise that there were remediable problems in his marriage. and gained a more realistic insight into his nature. He was able to integrate the extremes, and because he came to 'accept that he was acceptable', his lower nature ceased to dominate him. His very self-centred guilt was mollified, and his self-esteem became that of a whole person who recognised not only his responsibilities but also his vulnerability.[18]

Betty, now aged 51 years, is another person who illustrates the destructive nature of self-hate from an inflated ego-ideal. She comes from a secure home in a mining background and states that her problems started when she failed the eleven plus examination, though her brother and sister had both passed it and the family expectations were high. She then began to have doubts about her nature and acceptability and she has deep feelings of worthlessness which were probably deep-rooted from other earlier experiences. As an extrovert, she has always preferred talking

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[18] Fleischman, P.R. (1990) The Healing Spirit, SPCK, pp. 39ff.

to studying, enjoying her work in a shop, helping the neighbours, and life with her own family. Everyone around thought of her as having an exceptionally pleasant and helpful personality, but when there were changes in the parish, she felt abandoned, useless and with no sense of worth. Over the years she has put on more and more weight from 'comfort eating' and thinks her appearance makes her unacceptable to other people, and indeed, described herself as 'not a person any more'. This reached a point when she had so little self-esteem that she would not go out; then, hating herself and her life even more, she ate more and so set up a vicious circle of deterioration so that, at times, she is suicidal.

3. KAREN HORNEY (1885-1952)

a) COMPULSIONS ARISING FROM AN INFLATED *EGO*.

Karen Horney is of fundamental importance in revealing the nature of the inflated ego-ideal, and the compulsions that it generates. She was trained in Freudian analysis in Germany and later in 1932 moved to America where she became a prominent pioneer of new approaches to psychoanalysis, especially in the fields of self-understanding, self-realisation and feminine psychology.[19] She is greatly valued for her pioneer work on mothering which she greatly enjoyed with her three daughters. Horney herself had an unhappy childhood, and was reputed to be a complicated and contradictory character. She had a compulsive need for men, and suffered more than once from depression. Susan Quinn describes her 'restless life full of shifting passions and allegiances, but with a consistent independence of mind'.[20] Much of her most perspicacious writing stems from self-analysis in trying to understand the turmoil of her life.[21] She had much in common with Paul Tillich, with whom she was on intimate terms when they were both in New York, and who preached at her funeral.[22] With the Tillichs and other European intelligentsia, she enjoyed conversation in German, and a

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[19] Ingram D.H. ed. (1987:1991) <u>Karen Horney: Final Lectures,</u> W.W. Norton and Co, NY, p.9.

[20] Quinn, S. (1987) <u>A Mind of Her Own,</u> Summit Books, NY, p.15.

[21] Horney, K. (1942) <u>Self Analysis</u>. W.W. Norton, NY.

[22] Quinn, <u>op. cit</u>, p. 418.

somewhat outrageous night life which 'broke the bounds of conventional morality'.[23] Like Paulus, as Tillich was called by his friends, she gained great insight into the human condition, not necessarily by living, as they both did, on the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, but by being open to experience and humble in interpretation.

Horney replaces Freud's biological orientation with an emphasis on culture and interpersonal relationships, and his predominating concern with the past with an interest in the psychological defences of the present. Bernard Paris describes her as one of the most important, but undervalued, psychoanalytic thinkers of the twentieth century who, because of her iconoclastic ideas, was ostracised by the psychoanalytic establishment of her day.[24] He also says that she is not always popular because she speaks in clear jargon-free terms of 'too many things about ourselves that we do not want to know'.[25] She, like Jung, severed herself from a rigid interpretation of the *libido* theory, and was interested in the development of character through the resolution of inner conflicts.[26] Though she has a lot in common with Jung theoretically, she did not support him in his break with Freud as she thought Jung had left the psychoanalytic field in his methods of therapy and in his tendency towards 'moral education'.[27] She frequently quotes existentialists especially Kierkegaard who describes the despair of not being willing to be ourselves, and not realising our loss - 'a spiritless sense of security'.[28] Horney describes the real self as 'the central inner force common to all human beings and yet unique in each, which is the deep source of growth'[29] - a definition which could be equally well applied to the *Imago Dei* or the immanent God.

Horney traces many compulsions to early childhood when basic anxiety about isolation and helplessness leads to the 'tyranny of the should'.[30] Most people have

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[23] Ibid, p. 279.

[24] Paris, B.J.(1994) Karen Horney, Yale UP, New Haven, p.xv.

[25] Ibid, p. xxi.

[26] Horney, K. (1945:1992) Our Inner Conflicts, W.W. Norton and Co, NY, p. 17.
and Horney, K. (1970:1991) Neurosis and Human Growth. W.W. Norton and Co, NY, p.113.

[27] Quinn, op. cit, p.151.

[28] Kierkegaard, S., trans. Hannay A. (1989) The Sickness unto Death. Penguin, p. 74.
Kierkegaard stresses the despair which comes because we do not accept ourselves as we are but are always living throug a 'hypothetical self' who is 'building castles in the air and fencing them with imaginary opponents to maintain experimental virtues'. p. 100-101.

[29] Horney, Growth p.17.

[30] Ibid, pp. 64ff.

experienced insecurity in childhood and felt guilty about fighting for existence with aggression, withdrawal, deceit or greed. Memories of failure or sin disturb us by not fitting into our exalted self-image so that there is an attempt to compensate in a destructive conflict between pride and self-hate.[31] Spontaneity is lost if it is replaced by compulsions, and psychological maturity sabotaged because we are chasing a false identity.[32] Horney notes the close link with arrogance, saying that 'pride and self-hate belong inseparably together; they are two expressions of one process', and the constellation of compulsions are 'the pride system'.[33] There is inner conflict between this system which is disgusted with the self, and the reality of the inner self, which Horney says is 'fighting for its life', often in the face of a 'power and tenacity of self-hate that is astounding'.[34] A practical indication of hidden but inconsistent arrogance is the unconscious duplicity revealed when apologetic self-recrimination is followed by irritation and self-justification should the criticisms be upheld by other people. A patient in whom this conflict had passed the bounds of normality into clinical depression, described herself as 'not a person', unable to feel anything which was her own, 'every pore clogged with inward rage, self-pity, contempt, and despair.... all was negative, reactive, compulsive and imposed from without; inside there was absolutely nothing of mine'.[35]

The search for glory seems to have 'unlimited possibilities', and, therefore, energy is wasted in maintaining a self-image which is exalted in some way, despite 'disturbing evidence to the contrary'.[36] Horney often writes of neurotic reactions, but it is clear that everyone suffers to some extent from the problems she describes. She starts one of her books by saying that 'it is not neurotic to have conflicts' because we are in a world where we are bombarded by conflicting values which set up, in us, conflicting desires.

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[31] Ibid, p. 18.

[32] Ibid, p. 39.

[33] Horney's paradigm resembles that of Adler who was the first psychologist to recognise the significance of the 'search for glory' and the nature of our defences against feeling inferior. Horney, Growth, p. 372.

[34] Ibid, pp. 113-114.

[35] Ibid, p. 82.

[36] Ibid, p. 33.

Macbeth, have a compulsive wish for power, use dubious means to achieve their ambitions and then become frightened of their vulnerability, and finally suffer from destructive guilt. It has been said that, 'Macbeth has killed the king because he could not accept a Macbeth who would be afraid to kill a king. But Macbeth who has killed a king cannot accept the Macbeth who has killed.' [40]

Horney divides the defence reactions, which people use to protect themselves from difficult feelings, into three groups depending on whether they are detached, aggressive or compliant in personality. Firstly, there are those who are hopelessly resigned and who withdraw from interaction and conflict by isolating themselves. They no longer set themselves unrealistic ideals, nor do they strive towards a positive goals, so they tend to be detached, independent, timid, introverted, stoical and inactive. They are 'the narcissistic type or detached type' who do not relate well to other people.[41] Secondly there are those who are confrontational, open, aggressive and expansive as they blusteringly try to demonstrate their mastery, rationalising and justifying themselves - they are 'the hostile arrogant vindictive type'.[42] Thirdly, there are those who are compliant in following the demands that they think are made of them, but they whine and complain of their load, or bear the torment with apparent self-effacing martyrdom while harbouring 'vindictive resentment' - they are 'the directed or compliant type', guided by the expectations of other people and trying to please everyone.[43] There are also the perfectionists and a number of other subgroups.[44] People in each group may have compensatory episodes in which they display behaviour which betrays them by revealing some of the tendencies that have been repressed - a detached person may, for instance, indulge in improbable sexual adventure, as in the case above, quoted by Fleischman.

Horney's mature work is greatly valued in literary criticism. For instance Bernard Paris, himself a Professor of English, points out that her work helps us to understand the 'thematic contradictions' and conflicts in William Thackeray's <u>Vanity</u>

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[40] Anonymous comment on programme for a performance of Macbeth in Durham University (1994).

[41] Horney, <u>Growth</u> pp.193ff.; and Horney, <u>Conflicts</u>, pp.73.

[42] Horney, <u>Growth</u> pp. 197 and 204ff., and Horney, <u>Conflicts</u>, pp. 64ff.

[43] Horney, <u>Growth</u> pp. 197ff., and Horney, <u>Conflicts</u>, pp. 49ff.

[44] Horney, <u>Growth</u>, p.196.

Fair.[45] Becky's success is satirised, while Amelia and Dobbin are 'glorified' because they live for love and friendship, but their 'niceness' and compliance hides a 'powerful submerged aggressiveness', which Thackeray's intuition knows will wreck their chances. There is irony in that the title also fits Horney's 'pride system'.

There are very few good novels or plays in which Karen Horney's insights have not already been intuitively recognised. Ibsen's character of Peer Gynt is an example of defensive narcissistic aggrandisement, in a play which John Northam calls 'social satire'.[46] Peer is a man who is successful but so self-absorbed that he has no inner life. He personifies a man with a false ego-ideal who is trying to be self-sufficient but relies on other people's opinions for feelings of self-worth. He has no real self-esteem and is therefore very vulnerable to humiliating remarks. He does not, as Horney points out, 'make much of his existing assets, his intelligence, his spirit of adventure or his vitality' because he only thinks in terms of his ideal of independence.[47] His search for glory is neurotic pride closely bound to, and compensating for, emptiness and self-hate.

After running off with the bride at a wedding he was forced to wander, and subsequently met the trolls whose motto is 'be thyself and thyself alone'. He comes to realise that this was what he had tried to be - master of himself without care or commitment or relationship, and that this was what had brought his downfall. His emotions are shallow and changeable, and as his experiences cause layers to be stripped from him, like an onion, he finds that there is nothing of substance in the centre.[48] Arriving at a mental hospital he finds that the patients are not relating to other people but are 'themselves alone' and he has the insight to realise that they mirror his own state which is a fake and a lie. Despairing because of his emptiness he would like to give money to poor sailors but is overcome with spite and envy because they are more fortunate than him in having wives and children waiting at home. This is possibly his first genuine emotion and it opens the way to more positive feelings such as concern for people in a shipwreck.[49]

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[45] Paris, op. cit. p. 224.

[46] Ibsen, H., trans. Northam, J. (1993) Peer Gynt. 'introduction', Scandinavian UP, pp. ixff.

[47] Horney, Growth, pp.90ff.

[48] Ibsen, Peer Gynt 5: 530-575, pp. 144-146.

[49] Ibid. 5:100f, p.128.

As Peer Gynt's past life is reassessed, various symbols are used. The Button Moulder wanted to melt him down but Peer shouts that he does not deserve that for he has never been a real sinner. 'That's just the trouble' the Button Moulder replies; he had not the personality even for that, because 'a man needs strength and purpose to be a sinner'. His isolation is extreme and his egocentricity has been leading him to self-destruction. At one point he calls himself,

> '--- an empty hut,
> There was no one at home to warm and comfort
> The owner I know now was never at home,
> Then let the snow pile over me,
> and let them write above: 'Here lies no one'.[50]

His fruitless efforts to find some basis for self-esteem and meaning in his life fail, and he is described as a negative image as in a photograph, but the original is still there. Eventually, he finds himself through the love of Solveig, a faithful girl who has been willing to wait for him to mature sufficiently to have some genuine feeling. When Peer asks 'where was that self that bore God's stamp upon its brow?' Solveig replies 'In my faith, in my hope and in my love.'[51] Only Solveig's love kept Peer from being totally lost and frozen as he drifted further away from the source and centre of any love, and without her, he would have been nothing.

Erich Fromm (1889-1957), whose psychology came to have many features in common with that of Horney, considered that the title of the play might equally well have been 'Modern Man in Search of His Self'.[52]   He relates it to   successful

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[50] Ibid. 5:1183-1193, p. 167-8.

[51] Ibid. 5:1241, p. 170.

[52] Fromm, E. (1949:1986) Man For Himself, Ark, p. 94.

A complementary example of disastrous arrogance and self-deception is found in Marlowe's Dr. Faustus, written in the sixteenth century. Faustus has obsessional inflated ideas about gaining power through magical knowledge and so made a pact with the devil. His self-conceit, pride and greed can be likened to those of Icarus who also sought omnipotence. Faustus knows he is doomed because of his arrogance, but his compulsion is such that he says, 'my heart is hardened; I cannot repent'. He goes on, despite warnings and efforts to save him, into despair and death. Marlowe, C. (1974) The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, Norton, NY, pp. 769ff.

In Goethe's version of the same story, at the time of the Enlightenment, there was not the medieval need for catharsis through myth, so the story ends with redemption. Faust complains that 'each morning I wake in desperation ... existence seems a burden to detest', but eventually his love for a woman who intercedes for him, as Beatrice did for Dante, redeems the situation and good comes of evil. May, R. (1991) The Cry for Myth, Norton, NY, p.208. Rollo May is of the opinion that the Enlightenment lacked a devil, so that evil was not feared enough and therefore, whereas Marlowe's ending is one-sided in its hopelessness, Goethe's ending is facile and equally incomplete.

narcissistic modern people who are busy revolving in their own orbit but interacting with no one else. Serving an ideal and materialistic self is an aim which is self-defeating but exceedingly prevalent.

3b) THE ENNEAGRAM

Horney's writings have an affinity with Christian teaching about pride, self-sufficiency and imaginary glory. Each person has an unacceptable side lurking in the unconscious, and this may become evident when they 'act out of character' - a person who is normally open and expansive may indulge in gross deceit, or a willing slave may turn vengeful and destructive. Horney looks at the processes by which it happens and relates it to personality types. Her system also fits 'The Enneagram', a recently acclaimed ancient Sufi analysis of personality differences.[53] It is a tool for increasing self-awareness which has been handed down by oral tradition alone for at least two thousand years. During the last twenty years it been documented in the West from information gathered from Sufi practice, and is becoming ever more popular in sections of the Christian church as an aid to realism in prayer.[54] In it there are nine types of personality which portray, with remarkable and lasting accuracy, the different ways in which the human race 'searches for individual glory'.

The nine points representing nine characteristic personality types are placed diagramatically round a circle. (see Fig 3) They are grouped into three basic reasons for compulsions and weaknesses which may be unconscious, but which nevertheless tend to drive people - self-deception, fear, and anger. Everyone is found to fit predominantly into one type, and to have some characteristics in common with neighbouring types; also there are tendencies drawing each person towards other types. The Enneagram is based on a set of observations which bear no relation to the Jungian personality types, but which fit Horney's analysis. It can be interpreted in the light of the fourth century *logismoi* on the negative side, with St Paul's fruits of the Spirit on the positive side, and is also said to have affinities with the Kabalistic doctrine of the tree of life.[55] It is

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[53] Palmer, H. (1975) The Enneagram, Harper and Row, San Francisco., p. 10.

[54] Ibid, p. 36.

Rohr, R. (1990) Discovering the Enneagram, Harper Collins, Australia, p.7.

[55] Ibid, p.229.

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equally well adapted to fit modern psychological insights; for instance, Naranjo, a Chilean psychiatrist, has worked out the relationship of the nine points to the use of Freud's defence mechanisms, and also to the most likely pathology should there be mental illness.[56]

The negative effects of compulsions identify the three groups, each with three types, which are:

A. The first group includes three types who are driven by deceit and the need to preserve a good image; they want to persuade themselves and others that they are indispensable, successful and different from other people. They are called the 'heart group' because they are driven by a need to be needed, a need to succeed and a need to be emotionally 'special' - they want to be recognised for their gifts. They are frightened of loneliness, active and responsible in good works, but their concern about a good image hides their main problems which are self-deceit, pride and envy. Rohr notes the similarity with Horney's 'directed types' who are also driven by concern about their social image - though they may seem self-confident and capable, they feel inwardly incapable, sad and ashamed.[57] The three types in this group are numbered 2-5 (Type 1 is in group C.)

Type 2 people are anxious to be helpful, can be manipulative and are never happy unless demonstrating their niceness and usefulness. It can be tiresome for those they are 'helping'.

Type 3 people are efficient high-achievers; their self-image is one of success and they are obsessional about work.

Type 4 feels unique, elite and misunderstood, often subject to mood swings.

B. The second group contains three types who are driven, in different directions, by fear and insecurity. One type withdraws into an ivory tower, another finds security by conforming within a crowd, and the other type escapes by distracting activities or even irresponsible triviality. These three types constitute the 'mind' group because they think

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[56] Palmer, op. cit, p. 51.

Rohr, op. cit. p.194.

[57] Ibid. p. 27.

of ways of compensating for feelings of emptiness and insecurity. Fear, doubt, and meaninglessness are their main problems and they are particularly likely to feel a lack of self-worth. Rohr aligns them with Karen Horney's 'aversion types' who use different techniques to withdraw from other people.[58]

Type 5 are observers who withdraw into their own space to avoid problems and compensate by acquiring knowledge or collections of things. They can be very perspicacious about human nature in a detached way.

Type 6 are people who want security and certainty, following a leader or a group with loyalty. They project, onto others, unwanted or cowardly tendencies and can be paranoid about outsiders.

Type 7 are people who seek distraction, avoiding pain and difficulty. They are always starting something new and tend to be unrealistically optimistic.

C. The third group are driven by anger which they deal with in different ways. They may feel compelled to confront what they think is wrong irrespective of other peoples' feelings, or to avoid it and hide it by looking the other way, or they may compensate by working excessively hard to try and be perfect in some respects themselves. They are called the 'gut' group because they are dealing predominantly with difficult instinctual and emotional tendencies. They have powerful temperaments and Rohr associates them with Horney's hostile or expansive types who are always battling for or against something.[59]

Type 8 are people who feel a need to confront in a direct, seemingly arrogant and unself-conscious way in order to uphold justice. They are never afraid to speak out.

Type 9 people are easy going on the surface and slow to rouse, but avoid conflict because of the danger of the underlying anger.

Type 1 people are perfectionist, compulsive workers, prone to resentment and always working harder to be the best in whatever they undertake.

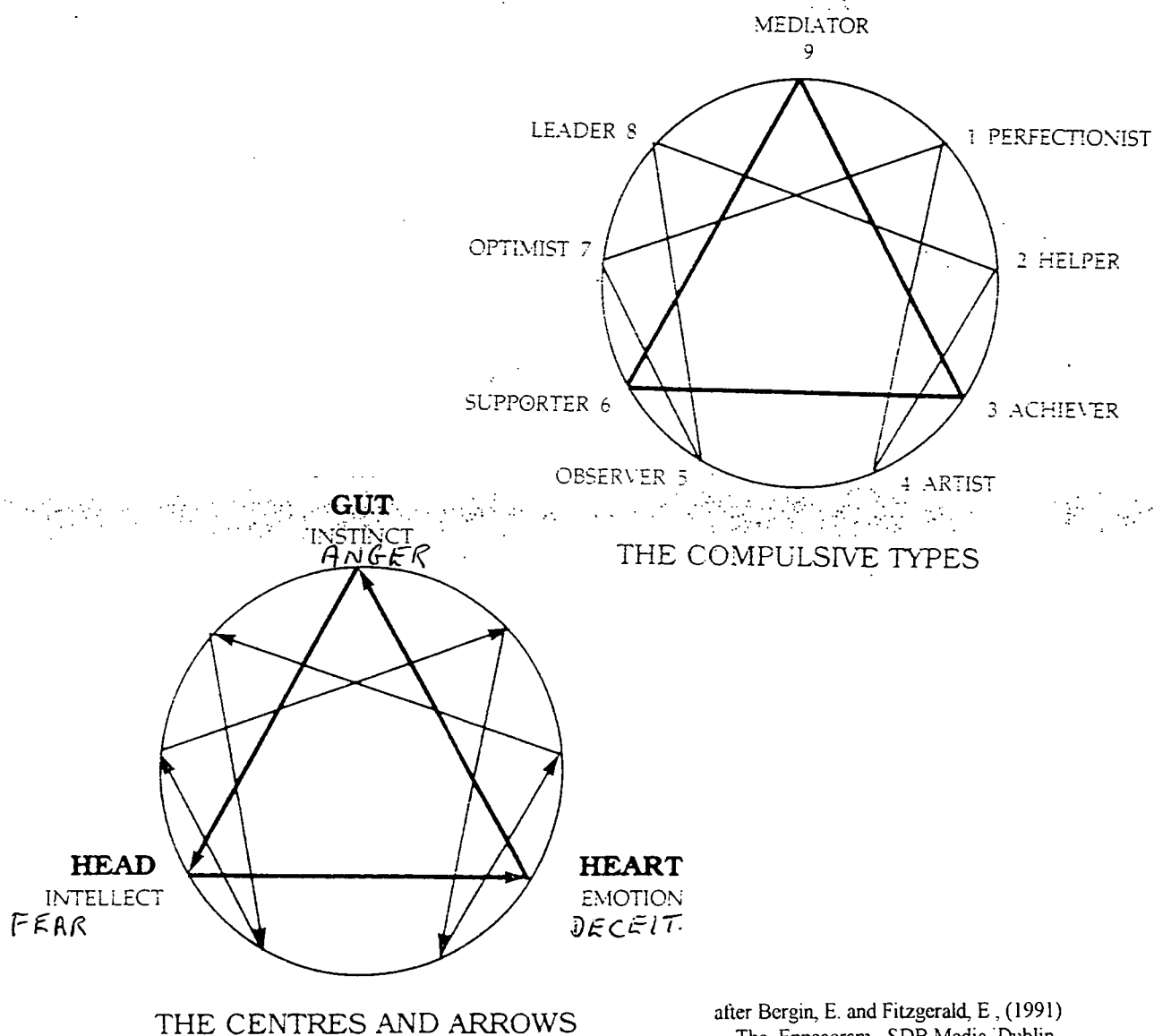
[58] Ibid, p. 28.

[59] Ibid, p. 27.

Each of these types has corresponding virtues which can be developed and deepened during life. The arrows in the diagram indicate the natural way each type will go when under stress but, though this is the easiest way, it is better to go along the other line against the direction of the arrow, in order to build strength in the weak parts of the personality - the direction which is not congenial compensates for deficiencies.

Everyone has something of each of the nine types but can discover the main source of their motivation and energy located in only one space. There is no one type which is better or worse than another, and, although they are more recognisable by the pitfalls, each has equal worth and potential and each person is unique.[60] The energy which is characteristically directed towards self-interest (through the compulsion) can be used to serve others so that the type can be 'redeemed'. In the lifelong process of transformation, all the types complement each other and gather to themselves necessary aspects of other types in order to fulfil their calling within their own personality and type. For example, a Type 1 person can become more relaxed while remaining critically aware, reliable in standards and ethically sound. A Type 2 person can become less self-concerned and more empathetic, caring and friendly. Type 3 can become more community orientated while remaining competent, effective and sure to achieve. Type 4 can become calmer and creative, accepting their sensitivity and transforming it. Type 5 can become more involved, using their wisdom and observations. Type 6 can become more confident, loyal, and courageous while working for a cause. Type 7 can become more persevering using versatility and imagination more constructively. Type 8 can become a generous leader, protective and open in their search for justice. Type 9 can become more willing to accept difficult situations, careful in choosing worthwhile objectives, and become involved in them often, as a negotiator.

Failure to progress in the right direction by using the faculties that counteract weakness and compulsion allows conflict to remain in the unconscious, and then the mental defences may lose their ability to protect an individual from

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[60] Ibid, p. 73.

depression or other mental illness. The Enneagram, like Horney's work, is concerned with the way in which an individual functions in relationships with other people. We all contrive to use some defensive measures, but the freer we are to be our real selves, the fewer compulsions there will be leading us into maladaptive behaviour. The diagramatic schematisation of the Enneagram in Figure 3 has been annotated so as to show polarities in one of the paradigms through which it can be understood. The arrows show the lines of least resistance towards negative qualities when under stress; for instance, an 'achiever' becomes lazy, and a supporter of others becomes deceitful. The way for personal growth is in the opposite direction, so that someone who wants achieve gains courage, and a loyal supporter becomes more diligent in their own work. The full implications are said to take a lifetime to unravel.

MEDIATOR
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LEADER 8   1 PERFECTIONIST

OPTIMIST 7   2 HELPER

SUPPORTER 6   3 ACHIEVER

OBSERVER 5   4 ARTIST

GUT
INSTINCT
ANGER   THE COMPULSIVE TYPES

HEAD   HEART
INTELLECT   EMOTION
FEAR   DECEIT

THE CENTRES AND ARROWS

after Bergin, E. and Fitzgerald, E., (1991)
The Enneagram, SDB Media, Dublin.

Figure 3.   The Enneagram.

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4. CHRISTIAN SEARCH FOR THE TRUE SELF

Thomas Keating defines the true self as 'the Image of God in which every human being is created, which is participation in the divine life, and is manifested in individual uniqueness'.[61]   Two people who exemplify a search for this reality are Harry Williams and Thomas Merton. Both describe an inner emptiness, dread, and despair which fuelled their search for greater reality. Both found their ultimate worth in the centre within themselves in a life of prayer which enabled them to complement their natural leanings, and so gain deeper and more effective relationships with other people.

a) THOMAS MERTON (1915 - 1968)

Merton had roots in New Zealand, France, England and America but when his mother died when he was six years old he lived a wandering life with his father until he also died when Thomas was sixteen. He discarded religion as a young man and gave himself to the pleasures of women and drink as an undergraduate in Cambridge. He did not get satisfaction from his way of life and suffered from intermittent depression as an adolescent and young adult.

After fathering a child by a woman who was no more than a casual acquaintance, his disgust at this kind of life grew. He was dispatched to American relatives by his guardian where he sampled communism and read extensively, studying literature, philosophy and different religions. A study of Blake impressed on him the need to sacrifice an assumed identity, and turn to a faith which believes there will be regeneration of life after tragic conflict.[62]

Brought up as an Anglican, he was also so impressed by Gerard Manley Hopkins that he could see no alternative but to follow him into the Catholic faith. He was baptised in 1938 and a year later decided he must become a priest. He attempted to join a Franciscan Order but was rejected because of his previous life. Deeply hurt by this rejection he denied himself some habitual pleasures and went into retreat at Gethsemani, a strict Cistercian monastery in Kentucky. He was eventually received as a postulant there in 1941 and entered into the life with single minded enthusiasm.

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[61] Keating, T. (1991) Open Mind, Open Heart, Element, Rockport, p. 147.

[62] Merton, T. (1948:1990) The Seven Story Mountain, SPCK, pp. 190ff.

In an effort to expiate the guilt from his previous life-style he plunged with typical wholeheartedness into the silent world of the Trappists. He had chosen withdrawal from the world and monastic asceticism as a desert, away from the clamour of the world and its temptations, and he found much delight in his quest for a spiritual ideal despite the hard silent life and physical problems arising from this. There was poor food, little sleep and a variety of painful experiences, but what he himself describes as 'spiritual gluttony' amply compensated for these. He discovered and used his gift for writing and during his first five years at Gethsemani he wrote an autobiographical work The Seven Story Mountain which soon received public recognition. There was frank self-criticism and, amongst other things, he reflected his contempt for the fanaticism of young monks including himself who were following their own concept of an ideal instead of seeking a more real inner self in relation to God. One of Merton's abiding guidelines was that solitude and prayer should not make people more religious but more human.[63]

From time to time there were notes of despondency and depression in his writings, as for instance in 'The Vine', a poem written in 1943 which echoes some of his early fear and desolation when he felt the anguish of abandonment. Depressed feelings were more obvious in 1949 when he was struggling with overwork, boredom with the sung offices and resentment about silly regulations. He described his state as 'dead rot - -- that eats out your substance with discouragement and fear' - certainly he was afflicted with *accidie* at this time. Much later he wrote, 'do not forbid me (once again) to be angry, bitter, disillusioned, wishing I could die.'[64] He also recognised that despair can be a turning point if it brings with it a helpless plea for grace and the humility of ceasing to rely on the self's resources, and he realised that to despair of the self is a form of pride. Merton calls the despair that he felt when he failed to reach his self-imposed standards the 'extreme of self-love' - with elements of self-pity and lack of trust which only humility could overcome.[65] He adds that there is always enough strength to make a choice between hope and self-destruction.

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[63] Ibid, pp. 415ff. Peter Morea describes Merton's search in terms of Maslow's theory of self-actualisation, that is, making the hidden potential which is already present, real and actual. Morea, P. op. cit. pp. 63-92, Maslow, A.H. (1987) Motivation and Personality, Harper and Row, pp. 72-75 & 164-5,

[64] Merton, T. (1957) The Strange Islands, New Directions, NY, p. 39.

[65] Merton, T. (1949) Seeds of Contemplation, Burns and Oates, p. 63.

Mostly Merton's search for authenticity gave him a spontaneity and merry attitude with an infectious faith which carried him through many struggles without succumbing to listless despair. He frequently felt frustrated when he had to obey edicts preventing him initially from having the solitude for which he craved, and later from making useful contacts outside the monastery. Nevertheless, he became a much valued novice master with a great deal to offer his charges, not least his concern, his earthiness and a ready sense of humour. Many things continued to irk him and he eventually gained permission to live a semi-eremitical life in the woods nearby where he continued his writing, including lively correspondence with a large number of people in different walks of life. This brought him many visitors, and he changed from a desire for a Carthusian solitary life to a recognition that his vocation was to be more in contact with the world, learning from it, as well as praying about it. After a number of years the despondency which had been a problem in earlier years returned and he realised that, for him, there was an artificiality in being segregated at Gethsemani.[66]

He emerged into the wider world and was particularly interested in Eastern religions, and in particular, the parallels between a contemplative Christian life and the Buddhist mystical experience of 'no-self' (*satori*). He postulated that the Christian concept of *kenosis* was equivalent to the Buddhist seeking *Nirvana*, in that self-loss is, in a real but mystical and paradoxical way, necessary for awareness and for completeness of the self - emptying the self and losing the soul in order to gain it.[67] Anne Carr considers that one of the reasons why Merton was drawn towards Zen and Eastern mysticism was because American society had developed such an 'overemphasis on cerebral, competitive, acquisitive forms of ego-affirmation' that it hinders spiritual growth and humane or creative dissent.[68] She applauds the 'new freedom and humour in his writing, perhaps inspired by the wonderful humour, impudence, and comic iconoclasm of some Zen sayings[69], all of which help in the search for self-forgetfulness which paradoxically is as necessary as self-discovery. He was eventually able to travel in the East where he died, in Bangkok, in a tragic accident.[70]

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[66] Carr, A. (1988) A Search for Wisdom and Spirit, Notre Dame, Indiana, pp. 56-57.

[67] Merton, T. (1968) Zen and the Birds of Appetite, New Directions, NY, pp. 42ff.

[68] Carr, op. cit, p. 81.

[69] Ibid. p. 104.

[70] Shannon, W.H. (1992) Silent Lamp, Crossroad, NY, p. 207.

Much of Merton's work centres round the contrast between the false self and the true self.[71] He had read Karen Horney's works and decided that he had been seeking an ideal which he had tailored for himself, rather than accepting the inadequacies and weakness of his condition. There are also parallels between Merton's thought and that of Jung, in that the process of finding the true self is an exploration and acceptance of the *shadow* - not being overcome by the defects.[72] All the time, however, he recognised 'the hidden Ground of Love', the ground of Being which unites us to each other and to God[73], and which William Shannon calls 'original blessing'.[74] Shannon points out that the false self keeps us on the surface of reality, whereas the true self, coming from the ground of being eliminates all duality, and enables a life in God.[75]

The false self is something we are born with (as part of 'original sin') and we have to recognise this as a basic fact. The false self needs 'power, knowledge, honour and so on to clothe itself in order to make it appear real'.[76] Religion helps people to shed these trappings, but Merton was also aware of the false ideals set by religious aspirations in his work with novices. He describes the neurotic or narcissistic trends which led to religiosity, fanaticism, compulsions, obsessions and other features likely to cause psychological breakdown. He points out that the self cannot be given to God until it is owned by an individual, and part of monastic training is a means of establishing a true identity before embarking on a profound search for God.[77] Contemplation is a 'statement on behalf of life, since it gives witness to the reality of God, who alone gives relevance and meaning'.[78]

Merton brings out the difference between selfish loving of oneself, which brings hate, exploitation, possessiveness and despair contrasted with real love of self which

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[71] He originally took Maritain's distinction between the 'person' and the 'individual', the former being the spiritual pole in relation to God or personality and the latter the material pole of individuality. Maritain also stresses that well-being and mental health is dependent on the expression of the spiritual life in social involvement not in isolation. Maritain, J. (1966) trans. Fitzgerald J.J. The Person and the Common Good Notre Dame U.P. Rome. p. 77.

[72] Carr, op.cit. p. 128.

[73] Merton, T., ed. Shannon, W.H. (1990), The Hidden Ground of Love, Collins, Flame, p. 115.

[74] Shannon. W. (1990) The Way, 30:1, 'Original Blessing: the Gift of the True Self', p. 37.

[75] Ibid, p. 43-46.

[76] Merton T. (1961) New Seeds of Contemplation, New Directions, pp. 5 and 34.

[77] Merton, T. (1977) The Monastic Journey, Sheldon, pp. 170ff.

[78] Morea, op. cit, p.90.

will suffer loss and pain gladly because consecrated suffering is sacramental and is transformed. He writes of finding the authentic 'I' uncontaminated by what 'they think', an inner self equally well sought 'through natural or psychological purification'.[79] The stillness and balance at the centre is the place where God is found, and where each person exists as their true self. He writes that

> participation in the being of God is the only true vision of the self ... it destroys the sight and feeling of a false self in order to find that true self that is no more than the image of God ... the true fact is that it has nothing of its own but is filled through and through with God ... averting the error that we are our own being - which is ultimately to make self into God - an error at the root of inordinate self-love ... our true self is not easy to find. It is hidden in obscurity at the centre where we are in direct dependence on God.[80]

The true self is often discovered in a desert experience with dread, anguish, trouble and fear as someone passes through the processes of surrendering autonomy.[81] Merton had no illusions about the cost of abandoning the false self and giving up a cherished self-image. He frequently talked of despair and 'monastic dread' because he had not lived up to his 'inner truth', but this, at times, could be a saving grace leading to humility. In a life devoted to prayer there has to be self-forgetfulness and concern for others, but he also found that the 'inner waste' has to be confronted[82] - a place where there is nothing but emptiness and loss, with a death of a self which had previously been a 'living lie'.[83] Standing alone before God, becoming more aware of nothingness and helplessness is not alienation but an opportunity for God to be received at the centre of the true self when the false self had vacated that position.[84] The true self is found when all the self-sufficiency of the false self has to be abandoned in a dependence on God that enables us to serve others. Christopher Nugent points out Merton's life was composed of many contrary aspects which were reconciled only in God[85], and that Merton described this as, 'at a centre which is everywhere and nowhere'.[86]

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[79] Merton, New Seeds, pp. 17ff.

[80] Ibid, pp.28ff.

[81] Merton, T. (1973) Contemplative Prayer, DLT, p.26.

[82] Merton, T. (1957) The Silent Life, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, NY, pp. 11ff.

[83] Merton, Contemplative Prayer, p. 26.

[84] Carr, op. cit, p. 113ff.

[85] Nugent, C. (1991) Cistercian Studies Quarterly 26:3 'Merton, the coincidence of opposites', pp. 270.

[86] Merton, T. (1966:1989) Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, Garden City, NY, pp. 21, 194, and 177.

Prayer and action were complementary in Merton's life, and he constantly points out, quoting John Donne, that 'no man is an island', and 'love can be kept only by being given away', and 'in the economy of divine charity we have only as much as we give'.[87] The development of the true self means growth in love to be give away. We are called upon to give as much as we have, which is theoretically without limit because God replenishes the true self as the false self is abandoned.[88] In depression the process is likely to be reversed as we become more self-absorbed.

b) H. A. WILLIAMS (1919 -)

Harry Williams also discovered from experience that there is an illusion in the social or false self. He attempted to formulate a theology of the self, stating that there is a need to die to the artificiality of immature personality and to enter a wilderness of the spirit in order to learn about the self. It is in this desert that treasured illusions can be discarded in order to gain release from the damaging fears and compulsions which cause so much pain.[89] The way in which his own life illustrates this can be found in his writings, in particular in his autobiography.[90]

He was the youngest of three children in a naval family. His mother suffered a mental breakdown with depression after his birth and remained psychologically unstable throughout his youth. He wrote that, when she was well, she was attractive, vivacious, imaginative and naive, but unfortunately deeply in love with a neighbour's son. This gave rise to a guilt ridden atmosphere in the house which was made much more difficult when his mother became attached to a fundamentalist group of evangelical Christians. They were strict sabbatarians and fanatical about many other prohibitions so that the rest of the family invented ways of escaping what they called the 'religious vultures'.

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[87] Merton, T. (1955:1967) <u>No Man is an Island.</u> Garden City, NY, pp. 1 and 145.

[88] Merton, <u>Conjectures.</u> pp. 120ff.

[89] Williams, H. A. (1965) <u>The True Wilderness.</u> Constable.

[90] Williams, H.A. (1982) **Some Day I'll Find You.** Beazley.

Williams, H. A. (1977) **Becoming What I Am.** DLT.

There was little warmth of feeling in the household because of the many conflicting emotions that became dominant. His father appears to have been conventional, tolerant and kind but emotionally detached. Harry's most formative experiences of religion were at Cranleigh, his public school, where they were sufficiently constructive and personal for him to feel that he should be ordained. He therefore followed the conventional training necessary for this. He leaned towards the 'theatre' of Anglo-Catholic practice, but when urged to 'go to confession' he realised later that he had created an inflated standard with an 'artificial ideal self which excluded over three quarters of what I was'.[91] He was prone to pick up guilt-producing aspects of the instruction at his theological college, so he decided that it was a 'small-minded and dehumanising' institution.[92]

As a curate in London he confirmed his feeling that 'religion is what people do with their lunacy' as he dealt with power struggles, sexual frustrations, and a variety of phobias, noticing that religiosity was a way of avoiding the main issues.[93] The keynote of his autobiography is that nothing is apt to mask the face of God so much as religion. As he developed an extensive pastoral ministry punctuated by what he called 'Sunday theatre', he increased his abhorrence of bogus piety and veered towards Bonhoeffer's religionless Christianity. At the same time his own homosexuality was becoming more evident and problematic, and his mood increasingly depressed. He moved to academic work in Cambridge when he was thirty two and for several years suffered agonising conflict as he battled with the various ideals which he had introjected. He suffered from the pangs of unrequited love, and was constantly beset by guilt feelings of alarming proportions which he felt were similar to those of his mother.

His depression deepened with agonising rage and terror as he found himself hating the God of prohibitions who forbade the satisfaction of natural urges. Religious practices became intolerable but he gradually learnt more about himself and about 'the God who was prepared to suffer anything in order to create His universe and give Himself to it'.[94] This replaced what he called 'the Idol God' who he thought had asked for perfection and caused so many bogus ideal selves. Harry felt that he was escaping

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[91] Williams, Some Day, p. 94.

[92] Ibid, p. 96.

[93] Ibid, p. 109.

[94] Ibid, p. 187.

from a tyrannical religion with 'a sadistic monster' for its god and gaining the integrity to be himself.[95] For him, this meant the freedom to become a practising homosexual, something which he had previously eschewed, and which had to stop when eventually he entered a religious order at Mirfield. He felt that he had escaped from a narrow and constricting moralism, and could be himself, sinful, but real and forgiven, and relating to the real God. Fourteen years of psychoanalysis had previously dealt with a great deal of irrational guilt and perhaps been liberating in an unexpected way. His later years at Cambridge had been on the whole happy but he still felt an emptiness which he identified as a longing for the mystery of the Godhead and the hope of finding the glory of God in everything. At Mirfield this began to be a reality through prayer which he defines as 'anything that can put me in touch with the final me', and which will therefore have a transforming effect, bringing joy and peace, and an appreciation of infinity in the finite.[96]

Williams describes the process by which he was broken on the anvil of hard experience and how he found that his true self (the 'final me', as he called it) was indestructible.[97] He quotes St Catherine of Genoa to explain what he means by this: 'I do not find my selfhood save in Him', and St Paul who said 'it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me' (Gal. 2:20).[98] This is a personal identity, not yet fully realised which can become increasingly active as the 'superficial me' or false self is recognised and discarded. When he was dominated by the false self Williams felt alienated from the whole of creation and quoted an Indian poet of the sixteenth century to summarise this, saying that 'if thy soul is a stranger to thee, the whole world becomes unfriendly'. He rejoices in his growing awareness of selfhood in God, with concomitant relationship to the external world.[99] He also found a lightness of heart growing and says that laughter at oneself is a clue to self-acceptance.[100]

He felt no isolation from the world in the monastic institution because he had the community of equally fallible and irritating brethren amongst whom love had to be shown - also a company of friends, relatives and others for whom to pray. The major

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[95] Ibid. p. 347.

[96] Ibid. p. 354.

[97] Ibid. p. 355.

[98] Ibid. p. 359.

[99] Ibid. p. 361.

[100] Williams H.A. (1976) Tensions, Mitchell Beazley, p.111.

work was one of intercession and he describes all these people as having a place in his final self, so that he identified his desires with their needs and, because of this, there would be more suffering to be transformed. Williams felt that his life had taught him that suffering and glory are two aspects of the same thing.[101] He summarises his belief as, 'the Christ Reality recognised as the presence within people and around them of God's costly self-giving love, the love by which people can become fully themselves and the world the place where God reigns'.[102] Williams described people of prayer as those most able to be vulnerable, to love, suffer, laugh and enjoy life because they can leave behind their anxieties in becoming what they most truly are.[103]

Both Merton and Williams went through 'desert experiences', desolation and depression as they struggled to gain authenticity. Both of them tried to acknowledge their true selves and found, in forgiveness, a gateway to participation in the life of God. The reconciliation of the ideal and the reality, and the difference between neurotic guilt and sins which need forgiveness, are subjects for the next chapter.

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[101] see below, pp. 227ff, and Williams, Some Day, p. 366.

[102] Ibid. p. 379.

[103] Williams, Becoming, p. 74.

CHAPTER 5.   GUILT AND DEPRESSION.

'But who can discern his errors? Clear Thou me from hidden faults' (Psalm 19:12)

CONTENTS.

1. GUILT AND SELF-ASSESSMENT - DEBT AND DESIRE.

The previous chapter demonstrated the source of some guilt feelings which are due to unrealistic expectations and which therefore lead to destructive compulsions. This chapter looks in more detail at the different aspects of guilt, guilt feelings, remorse and shame in order to determine what is relevant to finding our true integrity, and to explore the nature of the contrary tendencies in our psyche which cause feelings of guilt in depression.

Guilt and shame are necessary to remind us of our responsibilities, pointing to the discrepancy between our calling and our behaviour. Shame, guilt and pride are classed as feelings of self-assessment by Gabriele Taylor, because they bring judgements about our status, in our own eyes, to consciousness.[1] Guilt concerns 'what we have done' or 'what we have not done', and shame concerns 'who we are' - that we shall not be disgraced and outcast.[2] Both shame and guilt can act as useful warning signals, but as we have noted in the last chapter, pride complicates our self-assessment by inducing shame or guilt when we set ourselves standards that are unrealistic and personal ideals that are unattainable. Freedom from the constricting and damaging aspects of the self-judging emotions will be considered in the context of their fundamental value, and their relationship to discernment of mood.

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[1] Taylor, G. (1985) Pride. Shame. and Guilt, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p.1.

[2] Whitehead, J.D. and Whitehead, E.E. (1994) Shadows of the Heart, Crossroad, NY., p. 111.

Guilt and shame help to form conscience (defined as a sense of right and wrong which alters thought and action), and conscience is a response to three interdependent sources: 1) Innate moral sense which reflects the mores of the community. 2) Past authority especially through childhood experience. 3) Interactive experience within a community. There is a considerable potential for confusion and anxiety, arising from the conflicting signals of these various factors.[3] On the whole, the innate moral sense (which is called by Fromm the *humanistic conscience*[4]) plays the greatest part in giving an awareness of sin, whereas experiences of moral authority in childhood play a major role in instigating the neurotic guilt feelings of depression. The effects of community mores are most likely to cause shame.[5]

The potentially harmful 'conscience' comes as soon as children begin to feel responsible, very often in infancy for situations which are not in their control. Freud's hypothetical *superego* is a widely accepted paradigm for understanding the internalised parental or cultural standards which tend to be exaggerated by the child during the formation of what Fromm calls the *authoritarian conscience*.[6] The child both idealises his parents and also resents their authority. He or she does not want to lose the parent's love and is ambivalent about the anger which is felt when he or she is corrected or when there is anxiety about separation. This anger is projected onto the parents creating a caricature which then becomes internalised as the *superego*.[7] The child often distorts the parent's attitudes and causes the consequent conscience to be excessively punitive. Similar introjected values also arise from other meaningful people and from situations

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[3] There may, for instance, be objective guilt, even though there has been no intention to transgress or even no appreciation that some law has been broken; or there may be no misdeed, but a sense of guilt from the misdeeds and omissions of forbears or compatriots.

[4] Fromm E. (1949:1986) Man for Himself Ark , RKP p.158.
Karl Rahner postulates an inner seminal part in everyone (in relationship with God) enabling value judgements which are not affected by the influences of the past or the traumas of the present. It is in this inner core of our being that we have freedom to respond. Rahner, K., Trans Kruger K.H. (1963) Theological Investigations 2:9, 'Guilt and its Remission: the Borderland between Theology and Psychotherapy'. pp. 265ff.

[5] Kaufman, G. and Raphael, L. (1987) J. Pschology and Judaism, vol.11, p.30.
Kaufman, G. (1980:1982) Shame: The Power of Caring, Schenkman Books, Rochester, Vermont, pp. 6ff.

[6] Fromm, op. cit. pp. 144-148.

[7] Freud describes both a conscious sense of guilt and also unconscious guilt feelings. The latter as a result of the superego are felt as persistent but unfocussed anxieties which can be exceedingly energy consuming. Freud, SE. 14, pp. 311ff.

outside the family. The earlier the experience of such authority the more deeply embedded the moral view will be and the more likely it is to cause irrational guilt feelings which may be persistent and damaging. A 'legalistic' conscience will result if the *superego* becomes too rigid at an early stage of development. The introjections which form the *superego* never lead to a forgiving conscience - as Zilboorg points out, they always tend to be censorious and persecutory.[8] They also affect our view of God, on whom we project our experiences, so that we can turn Him into a demanding tyrant who can never be satisfied.[9]

Antoine Vergote gives many examples of a *superego* projected onto God, inducing excessive and irrational guilt.[10] He notes, as an example of someone who overcame these tendencies, that St Teresa of Avila had an authentic healthy realism and a harmonious inner life in which energy was not wasted but sublimated, despite the occasional compulsive extremes of her religion.[11] Teresa had the insight to track down, and attribute to her own imagination, bad humour or melancholy; she did not project them so as to blame others, nor turn inwards in self-persecution. Vergote cites her 'constructive dynamism', her 'lucid judgement', and the way in which she belittled her unusually privileged supernatural experiences, among other evidence pointing to her authenticity and lack of neurosis.[12] As she became ever more stable as her religious life progressed, Vergote concludes that although 'debased religion can confirm a sick man in his neurotic self-destruction', it can also promote his integrity, and 'provide vital forces necessary to sustain a collapsing psyche'.[13]

The child psychoanalysts describe the bonding which an infant feels for a mother (or father or other person) which gives him or her values of love.[14] From this

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[8] Zilboorg, G. (1967) Psychoanalysis and Religion. Allen and Unwin, p.187.

[9] Brendan Callaghan analyses this tendency through the understanding of power in early life, and the consequent distortion of conscience. He concludes on a note of *kenosis* saying that, 'our God is not a God of power in the sense of power over us, but a God who shared our experience of powerlessness in order to empower us'. Callaghan, B. (1988) The Month, 'The Psychology of Power', November, pp. 950ff.

[10] Ibid. p. 82.

[11] Ibid. p. 229.

[12] Ibid. p. 157.

[13] Ibid. p. 233.

[14] The effects of bonding are explored particularly well by the 'Object Relations' school of psychoanalysis, exemplified, for instance, by Melanie Klein, Donald Winnicott, and Harry Stack Sullivan.

exchange, there develops trust and a fundamental sense of debt which remains throughout the stages of development as a basis of inner morality. Medard Boss describes existential guilt as a debt to our very being - there is so much potential given which is never fulfilled so we each inevitably remain a 'being-in-debt'.[15] The main thrust of Vergote's work studies the problem of guilt using, as his yardstick, the conflict between this debt and our desires, and its effect on religious attitudes. We all have a heritage of indebtedness and therefore of obligation, so that 'each and every individual must come to terms with this debt, or, in one way or another, guilt will in turn dictate its terms to him'.[16] Guilt may reach neurotic proportions when desires overrule the sense of debt. Vergote follows insights from Freudian psychoanalysis, holding that the basic dynamic caused by the conflict of debt and desire is common to both religion and psychology, so that healing only occurs when both dimensions are addressed.[17] Vergote's message is that there needs to be a balance between 'autonomy and integration'.[18] We should attempt to repay the debt which we feel we owe to society, but also we should feel able to receive for ourselves whatever is reasonable and necessary without guilt, rejoicing in our interdependence with other people. Reparation redresses damage caused by an imbalance of debt over desire, and psychotherapists, particularly those in the Kleinian tradition, recognise that it is central to the healing process from infancy onwards.[19] Charles Williams' concepts of exchange and substitution illustrate well the power of reparation, even through apparently insignificant gestures.[20]

A case vignette illustrates some aspects of 'debt and desire' and some of the paradoxical elements of guilt that can occur because of distortions from the *superego*:

Greenberg, J.R. and Mitchell, S.A. (1983) Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Theory, Harvard UP, Massachusetts.

[15] Boss, M (1963) Psychoanalysis and Dasein -analysis, Basic Books, NY, pp. 270-271.

[16] Vergote, A., trans. Wood, M.H. (1978:1988) Guilt and Desire. Yale UP., New Haven, p. vii.

[17] Vergote adds that, 'religion is so intimately enmeshed in the web of psychological circumstance that religious pathology is always an effect of psychic causality', ibid, p. 31.

[18] The polarities of 'integration and autonomy' occur in problems related to power and possession in society. They are polarities that are very similar to those of Tillich, 'participation and individualisation'.

[19] Klein, M. (1975:1988) Love, Guilt and Reparation, Virago.

[20] See below, pp. 218ff.

Peter was abused physically as a child and suffered a number of early deprivations which left him with a sense of unworthiness (his *superego* told him that he deserved such treatment)- he could never feel adequate to justify his existence, or repay the debt he felt for life. He was a confused, frightened, guilt-ridden, angry and lonely child. He nevertheless gained a good education and established himself in academic work by dint of an obsessional approach to it - he was driven by a sense of debt because of his poor self-image. He was determined to prove himself intellectually, though in every other respect, he felt hopeless and had very poor self-esteem. He could be dogmatic, sarcastic and exceedingly critical so that, paradoxically, people thought he was over-sure of himself. Relationships were always difficult especially with figures of authority who seemed to him to be threatening further hurt and adding to his feelings of guilt. He avoided unnecessary contact with other people, and did little which might expose him to personal problems until he married. His marriage resulted in two children and then could be sustained no longer, so he returned to a solitary brooding condition.

He had a considerable degree of clinical depression, his anger and guilt made him constantly wish to punish himself, and suicide was an ever present risk. He attempted analytic psychotherapy and at the same time started to attend a spiritual counsellor. In both of these situations he presented himself in the worst possible light, as he could not feel that he had any worth and was seeking punishment. His self-hatred and distorted feelings of guilt and debt swamped any normal desire, and he would come to a therapy situation provocatively the worse for drink, behaving without normal courtesies.

Year after year his counsellors stayed with him against the odds, and saw little change. Eventually someone tackled the problem directly and said in exasperation, 'However much you go on like this I will not abandon you, nor cease to believe in you. You have worth in God's eyes and in mine'. This was the trigger for a turning point, and from that time onwards he was open to a healing process. He gradually came to acknowledge that there could be something in him which was loveable and something in the world which he could love and desire. A new freedom from obsessive preoccupation with irrational guilt allowed this to be replaced by a realisation of his true weakness so that he could experience contrition and forgiveness. At the same time the other obsessional and compulsive features diminished so that he no longer had to justify himself by excessive and unbalanced work, and the self-destructive use of alcohol ceased. He also became more sociable and anxious to be of use to other people, and he became deeply involved in an obscure but valuable academic charity.

Illogical guilt as a result of traumatic early experiences had resulted in neurotic depression, self-hate and consequent self-injurious behaviour. He could not 'accept acceptance', but patient love overcame the inwardly directed anger by replacing his negative view of life with a more realistic conception of himself and healthier desires. Peter had a chronically distorted self-image, but he responded to caring people who patiently waited until there dawned some realisation of his loveable and hopeful side. His intropunitive anger shows the human tendency to stick in a depressed state for fear of the possible demands and painfulness of recovery. There is fear of the unknown, a preference for petty constricting securities, miserable though they are, because change involves risk and therefore anxiety.

2. EXISTENTIAL AND NEUROTIC GUILT - REMORSE.

The irrationality of much feeling of guilt is illustrated by Gerald Priestland in his autobiography. He describes his own intermittent depressive illness and the persistent guilt which accompanied it throughout his successful career and happy family life.[21] He was convinced he was unlovable, full of self-loathing and quite sure that he had committed a crime for which there could be no forgiveness and for which the punishment had to be death. He did not know precisely what the crime could be but it seemed in some way related to fraudulent success and letting his parents down. When he was told that his sense of rottenness was based on unreality, he felt people were saying he was himself unreal, and he became increasingly withdrawn. The importance of guilt feelings in maintaining his depression can not be overstated. Moreover the Church, with its constant talk about sin, and its insistence that we all play a part in nailing Christ to the cross, aggravated the situation.

Priestland describes his recovery as a Damascus Road experience mediated by three agencies: his wife, a Jewish psychiatrist and the Friends' meeting house, all of whom gave the same message of forgiveness and self-worth. Through them he discovered the truth of the Quaker message that there is 'that of God in everyone which could speak directly to each'.[22] In therapy it became clear to him that this fundamental belief in the goodness of each individual, including himself, had been obscured by

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[21] Priestland, G. (1986) Something Understood, Andre Deutsch, pp. 241-248.

[22] Ibid. p. 244.

negative feelings of unworthiness. He had hated his parents for sending him to boarding school from the age of eight and he had felt this as a punishment for wickedness. When he grew up he paid them back by being away from home as much as possible. When depressed he was sure he had been a bad son; when recovered he recognised that in spite of his distress and anger at being sent away he had been a good son and brought his parents pride and pleasure. He found himself able to accept and respond to the love of God finding help in the teaching of a Quaker counsellor whom he quotes as saying that 'I spend a lot of time de-guilting people who have been smashed and torn by their sense of sin ... life is good, valuable and loving ... In loving and accepting other people you are beginning to love yourself. For the truth about life is love; and the truth about love is that it is God.'[23]

Priestland points out the double guilt of those religious people who feel that their faith should have removed their depression; they feel that it is their fault that they don't feel saved and whole. This problem is a common experience in churches where original sin receives much more attention than original blessing. He once wrote strongly to Dorothy Rowe, saying, 'the experience of damnation can be as compelling as the experience of salvation. You must figure that out for yourself, but unless you understand it your work among depressives is in vain.'[24] He was stressing the all-encompassing guilt which overwhelms a depressed person and the horror it arouses.

The question arises 'is guilt a symptom or a cause of depression'? Barbara Fowles considers that persistent or irrational guilt is primary, saying that 'the most prevalent and immediate symptom of guilt of which we become aware is depression'.[25] The Christian message declares that we do not need to continue with guilt or self-hate when loving acceptance is available through repentance. If, on the other hand, guilt is allowed to grow, it is destructive and constricts life, whether the feelings it generates are directed inwards, or projected onto other people wasting energy in prejudice, distrust of others and aggressiveness. Unresolved guilt traps psychic energy into conflicts, and diverts energy into neuroses, obsessions and addictions. In the vicious circles which result from compulsions and psychological conflict there is little doubt that Fowles is right in giving guilt a primary role.

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[23] Ibid. p. 248.

[24] Ibid. p. 250.

[25] Fowles, B.K. (1972) Guilt. Guild of Pastoral Psychology, Lecture 167, p. 6.

Herbert Fingarette, a psychotherapist, describes the role of the psychotherapist in dealing with genuine and neurotic guilt.[26] Neurotic guilt is, in Fingarette's opinion, displacement of deeper guilt onto petty misdemeanours; it is, therefore, equally a moral problem.[27] The insights that therapy gives into the causes of irrational guilt may be as painful as those of a religious probe into true guilt, as in both cases greater reality about vulnerability and weakness is being faced. Fingarette believes that therapy of guilt can be undertaken in the same spirit as a religious approach though with a different theoretical framework.[28] It is a discovery of the truth about the self in relationship, and aims to heal guilt about injuries to other people - an impossibility unless there is a will to change.

Jenny's case history illustrates Fingarette's point, and the degree to which feelings of guilt in depression can be irrational and distorted. Jenny had a neurotic tendency to scruples which were magnified into psychotic delusions when associated with a severe depressive illness. She was 54 years old when she started to attend the psychiatric clinic because of depression and suicidal ideation. Her main symptom, apart from misery and some of the physical concomitants such as failure to eat or sleep, was guilt - a deep pathological guilt not justified by any real events and not amenable to any form of reasoning. She was convinced that she had been unfaithful to her husband and that she could never be forgiven for this and that she would also be damned for serious dishonesty. She lived in a mining village with her husband and they had a stable family background with the extended family support typical of the area. There was no significant social, medical or psychiatric history and there had been no recent changes in their lives.

The diagnosis was endogenous depression as defined in ICD 9, and she was accordingly treated with antidepressants. These did not have any significant effect, and psychotherapy and counselling also proved to be impossible as she was too obsessed with her delusions of guilt to be amenable to reason. There was total lack of insight and a psychotic inability to grasp reality. She continued to assert her need of punishment for non-existent or grossly exaggerated sins with monotonous repetition. Eventually

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[26] Fingarette, H., in Morris, H., ed. (1971) Guilt and Shame, Wadsworth, Belmont, California, p.82.

[27] Ibid, p.92.

[28] Ibid, p.94.

after several months in hospital it was decided that Electric Convulsive Therapy was the only option. The effect was a dramatic improvement in her mental condition. She started to eat and sleep well and began to talk about her symptoms rationally. It now became apparent that the pathological guilt was based in real problems of a much less serious nature. Some thoughts of infidelity had passed through her mind, and she had taken some money because someone had collected up the tea money at a Church bazaar before she had put her cache in. She could now see it in proportion, finding that she had previously tried to ignore these peccadilloes and had repressed them. They had festered into an uncontrollable psychotic illness, but she learnt to face them and other misdeeds, recognised her sins, confessed them and felt forgiven.

After years of failing to function for fear of facing her *shadow*, she was now able to take her full part in the community. Jenny suffered from a severe psychotic illness that needed exceptional physical treatment before the moral and spiritual problems could be addressed.

Obsessional concern about peccadilloes and trivia is neurotic, unconsciously trying to hide a fear of discovering greater sins. The first conscious sign is likely to be depression. Fowles describes other cases in which a perverted sense of guilt makes people profess profound worthlessness and remorse without making an effort to change, professing helplessness and beating the breast, but remaining irresponsible about major faults.[29] This diversion of guilt and anger is usually associated with a punitive *superego* which distorts moral values, and with an unattainable *ego-ideal*.

The experience of being freed from guilt is liberating and energising, but remorse is a state of despair from unresolved guilt, a term reserved here to describe regret without reconciliation. Judas killed himself when the full impact of his guilt became apparent, and he suffered from remorse rather than repentance. In remorse there is none of the contrition which accepts full responsibility or says 'I really am like that - a person capable of such degradation and helpless without God'.

Martin Buber's critique of guilt in Dostoyevsky's story, The Possessed, throws some light on the inadequacy of some responses to guilt.[30] In this story, Dostoyevsky describes Stavrogin's confession of rape, written for the benefit of representatives of

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[29] Fowles, op. cit, p. 5.

[30] Buber, M., in Morris, H., ed. (1971) Guilt and Shame, Wadsworth, Belmont, California, p. 58.

society. The sin is described in self-chastising, horrible detail apart from important aspects of the rape itself. It is too objective and avoids the crux of the matter so that it does not resonate with the man's deepest self, nor is there true contrition. Buber calls it 'legal confession without substance in the inner life of the guilty man' as opposed to a 'religious confession which means a dialogue with the absolute divine person, who replies in mysterious fashion out of his mystery'.[31] There are feelings of guilt, but repentance is too difficult and Stavrogin, unable to live with his authentic self, eventually opts for despair and suicide. Unresolved guilt is present, and is not faced in a way that could be open to self-alteration - instead, energy is diverted in obsessional efforts to escape from remorse while indulging in compulsive thoughts about guilt or guiltlessness. To despair without repentance is to compound the situation by sinning further as Kierkegaard points out.[32] He regards existential anxiety as hereditary sin leading to a melancholy which can only be reversed by faith and repentance.[33] It takes humility and courage to recognise weakness, own it as part of oneself, confess failure and accept that God's love is unconditional. Remorse tends to be a persistence of guilt feelings from failure to accept forgiveness, and it is always associated with anxiety and despair.

3. CONTRITION AND FORGIVENESS

In The Trial, Kafka writes of Joseph K. who is accused of transgression but cannot discover the reason why he has been brought to court. Joseph K. cannot discover what the charge is, and again and again he protests his innocence, saying that he is 'entirely guiltless'. Buber comments that he is denying 'existential guilt' (original sin and original guilt) from which none of us escape, and he is not open to 'self-illumination'.[34] Buber stresses the importance of real guilt, present in us all, and finds it inappropriate to call in a psychotherapist to deal with a spiritual problem.[35]

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[31] Ibid. p. 72.

[32] Kierkegaard, S., Trans. Thomte, R. and Anderson, A.B. (1980) The Concept of Anxiety. Princeton N.J, p.61.

[33] Ibid. pp. 171-175.

[34] Buber, in Morris, op. cit. p. 58.

[35] Ibid. p.62.

We all fall short of our potential, and so, whatever its cause or magnitude, guilt is a universal experience. In Christian terminology, we have all sinned and need to repent. Karl Menninger starts a book on sin by describing a man who stood in the square solemnly pointing a finger at each person who passed saying the one word 'guilty'. It was embarrassing and some awkward feelings arose, not least from the man who said 'but how did he know?'.[36] Dr Menninger is concerned that, for the sake of mental health, both individual and collective guilt should be recognised for what it is and acknowledged. The appropriate response is to recognise whether feelings of failure are based on reality and to acknowledge responsibility whenever it is reasonable to do so. Having done so, the problem is how to return to the security and joy of feeling worthwhile with sufficient self-esteem to give and receive love. The Christian faith points the way through contrition and forgiveness.

One paradigm for sin is expressed as failure to love enough, 'missing the mark' and not reaching an ideal as it is expressed in Romans 3:23, - not a personal unrealistic fantasised ideal, but real potential so that our energies can be well used. It is guilt that helps us to be aware of ourselves and our potential, recognising our need of God's love and learning responsibility - repentance serves no purpose if there is no will to change. The centrality of the message of forgiveness is a constant reminder of the prime importance of dealing with guilt in order that there shall be reconciliation, healing and self-alteration. The polarities of 'good' and 'bad' in ourselves and in other people must be reconciled if we are not to waste energy in regrets, recrimination and remorse. We pray, 'forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us'[37] because forgiveness is basic in the give and take of relationships which helps us to grow together. Moreover, forgiveness is beyond morality because it is an experience of love, and it concerns grace not law. As Donald Baillie puts it, 'a moral law cannot forgive'.[38] It is a paradox that it is sin, not virtue, that brings us close to God in repentance, realising that we are loved for what we are, however weak.

The danger of minimising guilt is at least as great as that of harbouring and exaggerating it. Acceptance of the reality of weakness offends our *ego-ideal*, and we use defence mechanisms such as repression, projection and reaction formation to

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[36] Menninger, K. (1973) <u>Whatever Became of Sin?</u>, Hodder and Stoughton, p. 3.

[37] Matthew 6:9.

[38] Baillie, D.M. (1955) <u>God was in Christ</u>, Faber, pp. 167ff.

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reduce the pain of failure. Bruce Narramore thinks that these mechanisms are aided by our secularised vocabulary which has tended to replace the words good and bad with others such as mature and immature, adjusted and maladjusted or productive and unproductive.[39] Nevertheless, recognition that we use defence mechanisms will help, rather than hinder, constructive godly sorrow, because awareness can be at a deeper level, the more we understand our deviousness.[40] Freedom from shame and guilt through forgiveness, not only frees us from the conflicts created by sin, but also enables a freer use of instinctual energy by keeping polarities in creative tension. For instance, balance between our ambivalent feelings of love and hate, or the tension between destructive and constructive anger (or indeed, between the right use or the distortion of any instinct) vitalises and ensures healthy activity. The relevance of forgiveness to our mood changes is suggested even by The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary which emphasises resentment as something to be given up. It is commonly found that, if the anger from resentment is no longer harboured, a depressed mood will lift. Forgiveness is liberating, and in the Gospel stories, it is linked to energy, giving the power to walk, see and talk.

The psychological mechanisms by which we defend our conscious mind from the unacceptable facts (and thereby postpone contrition) are called 'concealment' by Stanley Leavey. We deny and distort experiences (albeit unconsciously) in an effort to maintain self-respect, but it is counter-productive and life is lived as a play of shadows - the real worth of the self whom God loves also remains hidden.[41] The 'unconcealing', whether it be through psychoanalysis or in prayer, is a way of sharing in the creative and redemptive process. Leavey holds that any psychotherapy which reveals the true nature of our behaviour and feelings, whether it be psychoanalytic or 'humanistic', can be as painful as religious confession, but only as constructive if it leads to greater respect and love for other people.[42] Therapy complements contrition in allowing greater realism and awareness of sin, but paradoxically, with awareness of sin, there is less guilt and a greater sense of self-worth.

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[39] Narramore S.B. (1984) No Condemnation, Academic Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 35.

[40] See above, pp. 72ff.

[41] Leavey, S. A. (1988) In the Image of God Yale UP, p. 53.

[42] Ibid, p. 107.

The connection between contrition and self-esteem is important in depressed mood, because forgiveness of sin puts a different value on our sense of self-worth. It is no longer based on inflated ideals but on the knowledge that we are receiving love. Irving Singer comments that there is a gulf between those who believe that human nature is inherently good and therefore capable of an ideal love, and those who do not. He also speculates about temperamental differences which draw people to different interpretations of the faith.[43] He is to be commended for pointing out that the emotional and ethical life of a church stems from its theology, and that susceptible temperaments may be injured by an excessive concentration on the depravity of unredeemed man. Singer is correct in saying that no love is possible without love of self, and that only by being accepted and loved by someone, usually in early life, can one continue to experience oneself as acceptable. Erikson's first stage of balancing trust against mistrust in early relationships either gives infants a sense of the goodness of themselves and others, or else 'a sense of evil and malevolence' and the latter type is more vulnerable to depression.[44] These two types are represented in the Christian church by those who relate most easily to God and have faith that the love they experience must overcome and transform sin, contrasted with those who have difficulty in believing that they can ever become acceptable to God. It is inevitable that early experiences play some part in determining whether relationship with God is fraught with fear, or is loving and secure. Forgiveness is, however, accessible to all and can be an experience which overcomes a shortfall of loving relationships in early life.

Martin Luther (1483-1546) is an example of one of those whose tendency was to emphasise the Fall and the discontinuity between God and man. Luther's early life and personality suggest some of the reasons why he struggled with a negative view of himself and with depression, finding it difficult to accept the assurance of forgiveness. He illustrates some of the difficulties in reconciling an acute sense of guilt with belief in a God who is loving. He had vivid fears of damnation as well as having great anger about the travesty of religion which the Church hierarchy represented in his time. To the end of his life, in spite of his strong belief in the Grace of God, he was prone to depression in which anger and guilt were interconnected. Tillich describes Luther's attacks of despair which were apparently due to fear of complete meaninglessness

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[43] Singer, I. (1966) The Nature of Love 1, Chicago, UP, p. 342.

[44] Erikson, E. (1959:1980) Identity and the Life Cycle, W.W.Norton, NY, p. 67.

(*anfechtung*).[45] Luther called this threat satanic, and was only saved from its destructiveness by holding on to his faith that 'God is God'.[46]

According to Erikson, Luther had a harsh upbringing dominated by an authoritarian but self-indulgent and ambitious peasant father, and a mother with high standards who cared for him, but once beat him 'till the blood flowed' for a minor theft.[47] Erikson claims that there was little if any warmth of feeling in the family, so Luther emerged with an uncompromising *superego*, a concept of a vengeful God with a ability to hate as much as to love.[48] He was cradled for a life of anger and guilt and was tuned to hear the voice of God in a thunderstorm, as indeed he did when prompted to become a monk.[49] Erikson summarises Luther's general mood as a young man as *tristitia*, excessive sadness and melancholy paralysis[50], and writes of Luther's swing between violent self-accusation and abuse of others, with life-long symptoms of guilt, anger and anxiety.[51] Meissner also indicates that continuing depression is evident in his letters to Melanchthon.[52] Luther writes, for instance in 1527, 'I was for more than a week in death and hell, so that I was sick all over, and my limbs still tremble. I almost lost Christ in the waves and blasts of despair'.[53] It is presumed by Erikson that most of his problem arose as a result of projecting a negative image of fatherhood (created by his punitive home life) onto the Creator. He misconstrued the nature of God, thinking of Him as avenging, and consequently he had excessive difficulty in finding his identity as a worthwhile adolescent.

Erikson follows his own scheme of psychological development[54], and applies it to the formation of Luther's emotional identity. He assumes that Martin must have had enough security and consistency from his mother in infancy to develop basic trust but

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[45] Tillich, Courage, p.165.

[46] Ibid, p. 166.

[47] Erikson, E. H. (1959) **Young Man Luther**, Faber and Faber, p. 11.

[48] Ibid, p. 60.

[49] Ibid, p. 88.

[50] Ibid, pp.11 &37.

[51] Erikson, Young Man, p.38.

[52] Meissner, W. in Johnson, R.A. ed (1977) **Psychohistory and Religion**, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, p.107.

[53] Quoted in Bringle, M.L. (1990) Despair - Sickness or Sin?, Abingdon, Nashville, p. 67.

[54] Erikson, Identity, pp.57-67.

that he had to leave this stage too early and was instilled with the shame and doubt which caused identity problems later on. Erikson makes much of the incident in the monastic choir when Luther repeatedly said 'I am not'.[55] He considers that Luther was very slow to reach maturity and that during his early sexual development he developed guilt feelings with conflict over his urges until eventually he married.[56] Erikson considers that Luther's family background, with its mixture of admiration, fear and rivalry of his father, was a breeding ground for a marked *Oedipus Complex* and guilt.[57], and that he slowly learnt to forgive God as Father.[58] For a time, he transferred his anger onto the Pope and his regime, so that he found himself unable to pray without appending, to every phrase, a curse on the papacy.[59]

Several authors have questioned the accuracy of Erikson's historical assumptions and do not paint such a negative picture of Luther's father and home life - Johnson calls it a caricature. Few, however, would deny that there were problems in his upbringing which had later repercussions.[60] Bainton and Spitz both feel that unusual religious sensitivity and his mother's moralistic attitudes played the greater part in conditioning Luther's vehement reactions and tendency to despair.[61] Donald Capps also considers that Luther's melancholia was based on a psychological loss of his mother, with guilt about his anger against her, and compensatory religious tendencies. He blames the mother's own depression, self-absorption and rage for this loss - she did not defend Luther against abuse by his father.[62]

There seems no doubt that Luther inherited a turbulent temper from his father and suffered considerable ambivalence towards him in later life. With his father, as with God, Luther had not only a compliant attitude but also a stubborn resistance which he had to fight. As Meissner writes, 'Luther's inner struggle resonated with the inner conflicts, doubts, ambivalences and suppressed hostilities.'[63] Meissner classes Luther's

[55] Erikson, Young Man, p. 95. See p.

[56] Ibid. p. 251.

[57] Ibid. p.118.

[58] Ibid. pp. 252ff.

[59] Ibid. p. 240.

[60] Johnson, R.A. in Psychohistory, p. 145.

[61] Ibid. p. 19.

[62] Capps, D. (1997) Men, Religion, and Melancholia, Yale UP, pp. 152.

[63] Meissner, W. in Psychohistory, p. 117.

original entry into the monastery as a rebellion, which gave him a false or ideal self in subjection to a 'tyrannical God'.[64] The second major rebellion in which anger was more obvious was his departure from Catholicism. These rebellions and those into which he entered throughout his life were necessary for him and enabled much of the energy of his anger to be turned into a very productive drive for reformation. Negative feelings can be a spur to action, and the world would be the poorer if Luther had not set in motion much needed reforms of a corrupt and secularised church.

As a young monk Luther could not trust his confessor's assurance that he was forgiven, nor could he believe Staupitz who told him that much of his concern was about trivial peccadilloes and not real sin.[65] When Staupitz, with great insight, told Luther that God was not angry with him, Luther understood this, responding by recognising God's mercy and graciousness.[66] As Robert Llewelyn quotes him, Luther realised that the image of an angry God was a projection of his own impatience with himself, and writes 'sometimes my confessor said to me when I repeatedly discussed silly sins with him, "you are a fool. God is not incensed against you, but you are incensed against God, God is not angry with you but you are angry with God"'.[67] Luther comments that 'this was magnificently said'.[68]

The danger that projection will distort our view of the world, and of God, cannot be over-emphasised and we can never be free from it. Luther wrote more than once, in his early writings, that he was angry with God for laying upon mankind the burden of the Ten Commandments as well as damnation because of Original Sin. Anger and guilt are frequently found intertwined in depression, feeding each other. They tend to be self-perpetuating in religious people, because being incompatible with the ideals of belief, there is a temptation to lose hope, thereby inducing greater guilt.

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[64] Ibid. p. 125.
Julian of Norwich, the English mystic a century earlier, has by contrast left us writings which radiate the warmth of her relationship with God and tell of her certainty that all God's creation is basically good. Her courteous God, who accepts and transforms our failings, is very different from the idea of an angry God who comes from projecting our *superego* and expects the impossible. She regards the all forgiving mercy of God is unconditional, saying that He looks on our terrible deeds 'more in pity than with blame'. Julian, Revelations 51, p.144. There is 'no wrath in God', for anger, in her view, 'it is contrary to the nature of his power, his wisdom and his goodness to be angry'. Ibid. 46, p.132.

[65] Watson, P.S. (1947) Let God Be God. Epworth Press, p. 18.

[66] Ibid. p. 19

[67] Llewelyn, R. (1982) With Pity not with Blame. DLT, p. 20.

[68] Ibid.

The anger felt as a child may be forgotten but it remains hidden in the unconscious and can be projected onto others or expressed in aggressive fantasies. In depression it is introverted and recognisable in self-hate, low self-esteem and guilt feelings. Luther suffered from these psychological disabilities, but he felt that his despair, which largely sprang from his feelings of guilt, signified a terrible depth of unrelatedness to God and separation from Him.[69] He called despair an aspect of 'blind pride' that refused to accept dependence on God but instead tried to cope with failure and death independently, and 'the very paradigm of sin itself'.[70]

Luther's view of despair was paradoxical because, though it is a state of hopeless inertia, it could also push him back to complete trust and dependency on God's mercy. He recognised that 'to renounce the possibility of grace is to foreclose on the divine mercy with a presumptuous assumption that our own assessment of a situation is superior to God's' and when it seemed that he could go no lower, grace pulled him up again.[71] Luther likens the suffering of doubt and despair to a mirroring of the sufferings of the Cross.[72] He seems to have had only brief periods of untroubled faith, and however much he believed in the graciousness of God and preached joy, he had to confess 'I haven't yet learned it'.[73] Bainton remarks there is a sense in which 'only faith can be a cure for lack of faith' just as the cry of desperation from the Cross, for fear of being forsaken, begins with an appeal to God.[74]

Despite his view of justification, melancholy dogged Luther and remained a predominant feature of his life. It is sad that after a very positive and productive period of work, and in spite of a happy marriage with the birth of his son, these relatively superficial remedies were not enough. He again succumbed to depression in his forties and was not free of some morbidity, including physical problems, up to the time of his death at the age of sixty three. He does, however, record that on occasions the Spirit brought him conviction of the gift of grace, at the moment when the turbulent chaos of

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[69] Rupp describes Luther's 'growing recognition of the depth and intensity of human sinfulness' from 'habitual innate knowledge of the primary principles of moral action'. Rupp, op. cit. p. 150.

[70] Luther, M., trans. Atkinson J. (1964) Early Theological Works. Library of Christian Classics, SCM, p.92.

[71] Luther quoted in Bringle, op. cit, p.71.

[72] Rupp, G. (1953) The Righteousness of God. Hodder and Stoughton', p.237.

[73] Luther quoted in Bringle, op. cit, p.71.

[74] Bainton, R. H. (1951) Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther. Hodder and Stoughton, p.370.

his feelings were on the brink of breaking him.[75] Only his unswerving faith in salvation through the mercy of God which was uncompromising for most of his life enabled him to live with his mental set of deep pessimism and his inherent legacy of guilt, anger and depression.[76]

Luther counsels defiance of the devil (who causes despair) through companionship, work and diversions, and he also suggests that rage could be a cure for depression saying 'get downright angry'. As Bringle comments 'rage shatters apathy', and it is a sign of caring[77], but it is a dangerous path because of the complex interaction of guilt and anger in depression - each can foster the other. Stanley Leavey observes that, though his depressed patients have much guilt, 'the real hater is too well protected from guilt to seek help for his unhappiness'.[78] In a more contemplative mode, Luther uses a useful image, saying that man is able to do nothing but explore 'the caverns of his own nothingness'.[79] This emptiness can be related to the agony of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane and on Golgotha.

Luther takes hope from Christ's descent into Hell saying:

> regard not hell and the eternity of torment in thyself, nor these things in themselves, nor yet in those who are damned. Look upon the face of Christ, who for thy sake descended into hell and was forsaken of God as one who is damned eternally, as He said on the Cross, 'My God why hast thou forsaken me?' See in Him thy hell is vanquished.[80]

Then hell is hell no longer because Christ is victorious and there can be an abiding hope. Luther struggled against tremendous odds and his life was full of paradox. Kierkegaard writes of him 'he is a patient of exceeding import for Christendom' with 'a

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[75] Luther, quoted in Bringle, op. cit, p. 73.

[76] Bainton, op. cit. pp. 82ff.
There are many in the Lutheran Church writing to counteract an impression that Luther regarded human nature as totally separate and depraved, suggesting that this was an accretion added by his followers. Ther potential to grow into God is sressed by Nathan Söderblom who writes of 'the Portals of Revelation' in the religious structures of heart and mind which give us an inborn urge towards God. Söderblom, N. trans. Pamp, F.E. (1933) The Nature of Revelation, OUP, pp.101ff. Pannenberg, in his work on anthropology, also writes extensively of the dignity of humanity created in God's image. Pannenburg, W., trans. Connell, M.J. (1985) Anthropology in Theological Perspective, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, pp. 243ff.

[77] Bringle, op. cit, p. 98.

[78] Leavey, S. A. (1988) In the Image of God, Yale UP, p. 53.

[79] Hartman, G., trans. Lamond (1913), Luther vol 2, Kegan, Paul, Trench and Trubner, p. 276.

[80] Luther, quoted in Moltmann, J., trans. Kohl, M.(1994) Jesus Christ for Today's World, SCM, p. 66.

passion for describing our suffering'.[81] William James also points out that in spite of Luther's failings and feelings of guilt, he could see beyond this human dimension to the greatness of God; in other words, though a 'sick soul' he had 'healthy minded' attitudes towards sin and repentance.[82]

It is difficult for someone with Luther's personality and experience to discern the cause of their mood, but if we search for authenticity in our hopes and fears, the real guilt which needs forgiveness will be distinguishable from the spurious neurotic guilt which pervades clinical depression. Julian of Norwich talks of 'glad penitence', because it is recognition of the reality of our condition in the presence of God which brings us close to Him, transforming desolation and giving us hope instead of despair.[83]

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[81] Kierkegaard, S., quoted in Erikson, Young man, p. 11.

[82] James W. (1902:1982) The Varieties of Religious Experience, Penguin, p. 382.
James describes ways in which people who are neurotic, as well as those who are healthy, can be helped to greater freedom by religious practices such as contemplation, meditation, confession and absolution, ibid. p.114. For 'sick souls' amongst whom he counted Luther, Tolstoi and Bunyan, he notes that the continuing struggle to have trust in God resembles to the 'mind cure' which was in vogue at the time, because it involves the acceptance of weakness in facing reality, ibid. pp. 94ff.

[83] Julian, Revelations, 81, p. 206.

CHAPTER 6. THE CONJUNCTION OF COMPLEMENTARY OPPOSITES AND PSYCHIC ENERGY

'All things go in pairs, by opposites, and He has made nothing defective.'[1]

CONTENTS

Self-deception is the cause of much depressed mood because, in order to protect a false image of the self and to avoid the pain of self-discovery, much is repressed. These repressed conflicts within the psyche tend to exacerbate two constant symptoms of depression, lethargy and low self-esteem, by keeping energy unavailable, and increasing guilt feelings and anger. In order to reduce inner conflict, it is advisable to seek means of discovering more about our true selves, revealing the polarities which cause the conflict - that is, the tendencies, thoughts and feelings which we are reluctant to acknowledge because they are the opposite of those we allow into consciousness.

The nature of repressed material in the unconscious can be explored through the work of Carl Jung on the *shadow* and the *collective unconscious;* the typology of temperament adds a further dimension. Jung's exploration into the dynamics of *psychic energy* is also a way of demonstrating that vigour and vitality depend on the integration of the polarities of the psyche, keeping opposites in creative tension. Though Jung is not concerned with metaphysical or religious categories, the psychological and the spiritual come very close together in this field.

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[1] Ecclesiasticus (Ben Sirach) 42:25 (JB).

1. INTEGRATING THE UNCONSCIOUS

A. INTEGRATION OF THE PERSONAL *SHADOW*

The *shadow*, as part of the unconscious, is a metaphor to describe everything which is opposite to the *persona* (the image we present to the world in order to communicate) or, more particularly, which is not part of our ideal-self. The social and rational consciousness of the *ego* tends to disclaim elements of the psyche such as discomforting primitive instinctual tendencies which are then relegated to the *shadow* without any conscious realisation of this process which is a defence mechanism. The feelings which are thus repressed are mainly impulsive and infantile reactions which have been unconsciously repudiated as expectations of behaviour have risen.

The *shadow* can be likened to a photographic negative with everything that should be light turning into dark but still with the potential to produce or enhance the bright positive image. Robert Hopcke aptly summarises the concept of the personal *shadow* as 'all our inferiorities, our unacceptable impulses, our shameful actions and wishes.... which challenge our egotistic sense of self, our autonomy and our uprightness' - the *shadow* is a threat and has to be 'suppressed to maintain the sanctimonious sweetness of our illusory perfection'!.[2] Because conflicting emotions are driven into the unconscious to protect our self-ideal, Jolande Jacobi says, 'fear and avoidance lead to neurosis'.[3]

The *shadow* contains repressed complexes which have accumulated as a result of reactions to our own experience, and also the rejected aspects of *archetypes* from the *collective unconscious*.[4] We consider it dark and negative, but according to Jung, the *shadow* is full of potential, and his assertion that it contains 'unlived life'[5] can be linked to the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 - if the talents buried in the unconscious are not used to advantage we are 'unprofitable servants'.[6] Jung describes

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[2] Hopcke, R.H. (1989) A Guided Tour of the Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Shambhala, Boston, p.81.

[3] Jacobi, J., trans. Begg, E. (1976) Masks of the Soul, DLT, p.94.

[4] Jung, CW 9:2, para. 261.

[5] Jung, CW 8, para. 400-401.

[6] Jung, himself, and many psychotherapists, maintain that the search for integration is essentially a religious quest, though not one which is concerned with any recognised creed. He is frequently quoted for his

the *shadow* as a moral problem which challenges the whole personality, because to become conscious of it involves recognising the rejected aspects of the personality as present and real. As a rule this kind of self-knowledge is only gained through effort, usually meeting with considerable resistance.[7]

The *shadow* contains those parts of the personality which are felt to be shameful, and unwillingness to recognise these unacceptable aspects leads to their *projection* onto other individuals in a critical or disruptive way in order to support an unrealistic ego-ideal. The distortions created by projecting aggression or deviousness to preserve our false-self, prevents us from seeing either ourselves or other people truly. A threatening world may be fantasised in a haze of anger or fear leading to persecutory ideas, resentment and self-pity. The failure to recognise opposites in the *shadow* is revealed by surprise when circumstances force us to discover hidden anger, deceit, fear, greed, arrogance and other failings - shocking discoveries if we have been living in the illusory world of a false self.[8] My experience in clinical practice also suggests that when psychological control is lost in early dementia, there is a tendency for people to change their personality, sometimes sadly and unaccountably, becoming angry or avaricious egoists. Characteristics which are the reverse of their previous personality often develop - the previously kind and accepting person may become irritable and even vicious, because their niceness was bought at the cost of repressing negative impulses, and these reappear when the *superego* censor is out of order. Depressed, angry old people who seem paranoid because they start to project guilt onto someone else probably demonstrates a previous failure to acknowledge their *shadow*.

B. INTEGRATION THROUGH ARCHETYPAL POLARITIES

Jung points out that 'there is no reality without polarity'[9], and all his work centres around reconciliation of opposites in the psyche. His main focus is on the concept of *archetypes*, which can typify any conceivable characteristic, good or bad to explain the

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remark that of his patients over 35, 'there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life'. Jung, CW 11, para 509.

[7] Jung, CW 9:2, para. 62.

[8] Ibid, paras. 16-18, and CW 8, paras. 409-410.

[9] Jung, CW 9:2, para. 425.

polarities. *Archetypes* are complexes which can be understood through images expressing tendencies, drives and energies. Jung calls the corporate influence of all *archetypes* the *collective unconscious*, which is made accessible in the heroes, victims and monsters of stories and myths. Instincts which are, for instance, found embodied in the gods and goddesses of polytheistic religions are universally recognisable in the conflicting tendencies of figures in fairy tales and dreams.[10] Jung assumes that they are universal symbols through which we can understand human behaviour, and that they are inherent within the mind at birth - inherited in that part of the brain which recognises and regulates typical patterns of behaviour. Those archetypes which do not please us as we experience them are relegated to the unconscious and are, therefore, part of the *shadow*.[11]

The archetypes in the unconscious are more inclusive than the *personal shadow*, because they embrace the potential of the community as well as of the individual. They represent every aspect of experience - male and female, tough and tender, creator and destroyer, slave and master - the list is endless and each has good potential. However, when archetypes are disavowed and repressed, they take their energy into the unconscious, and the conflicts that ensue give rise to psychological disturbances such as compulsions, obsessions and depression. Negative aspects also surface when the values which archetypes represent are neglected or overemphasised. The effect of absolutising archetypes can be seen in national movements, to the extent that the fear they engender causes strife and war.[12] Archetypes usually represent the extremes in the polarities of the psyche. Jung also holds that each reality in our conscious life has its opposite in the unconscious.[13] A parallel point is that the *ego*[14] and the *shadow* have the same origin and should therefore balance and complement each other. The

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[10] Jung, CW 9:1, paras 6-7, and 50ff., and 9:2, para. 280. *Archetypes*, according to Jung, are 'primordial or archaic images', 'the instinct's perceptions of itself', 'complexes that are constellated' and 'typical modes of apprehension'. Jung, CW 6, paras 625, 659, CW 8, paras. 277 & 280.

[11] A fuller description of archetypes is in Transitions, pp. 80ff. See also below.

[12] For instance, Cromwell's inability to come to terms with anything in the monasteries caused his armies to destroy everything, whether good or bad.

[13] Ibid, para.423.

[14] The *ego* drives our conscious life. Its 'role is to discriminate opposites, withstand their tensions, allow them to be resolved and finally to protect what emerges, which will expand and enhance the previous limitations of the *ego*'. Samuels, A., Shorter, B. and Plaut, F. (1986:1993) A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis, Routledge, p. 38.

inference from these two insights is that, if a stance is particularly strong in the conscious life, it may be a liability because there will be its complementary opposite lurking in the unconscious.

Archetypes, left unbalanced in consciousness, encourage complexes of self-destruction, jealousy, lack of authenticity and all the negativities of the instinctual drives in the unconscious. Lack of meaning, self-indulgence, and fragmentation can result from the combined negative effect of a few archetypes when they become strong enough to affect the whole psyche. Evil gains entrance through lack of recognition of these autonomous complexes, and consequent failure to accept and balance them; a state of despair supervenes when someone is overcome by their force.[15]. An example mighy be someone who is archetypally caring because of a need for appreciation, but who overwhelms people, oblivious of their real needs, and is resentful if not praised. Mixed motives are less easily recognised among the absolute values of the archetypes so that anger and deceit build up, causing havoc in the unconscious. On the other hand the positive aspects of the same archetypes (when balanced) would be hopeful, sensitive, courageous, harmonious and productive because a healthy tension between the characteristics of archetypes provides productive energy

i. SPIRIT AND THE INSTINCTS.

A peculiarly Jungian polarity represented by archetypes is the antithesis between spirit and instinct which occurs in most psychological complexes.

a) Jung uses the term *spirit* for all non-material aspects of a person such as aspirations, ideals and the imaginative use of symbol. Spirit is 'the quintessence of the life of the mind' in opposition to the instincts which serve the body.[16]

A good autonomous complex from the unconscious can be enlightening, drawing people into greater conscious awareness with 'visionary clarity'.[17] He calls spirit 'an elusive thing', and, at times, he exalts the concept to equivalence with the God image within people. To what extent Jung's concept of a Good Spirit as an *archetype* is

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[15] Transitions. p.97.
See also in the novels of Charles Williams, especially in Williams, C. (1931) The Place of the Lion. Gollancz.

[16] Jung, CW 8. para. 621.

[17] Ibid. para. 643.

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consonant with the Holy Spirit is open to debate, as he is not consistent in the way he uses the term and his work is infiltrated by Gnostic myths. In one place, he suggests that he is describing the work of the third member of the Holy Trinity - with 'a peculiar life of its own which is felt as an independent being'.[18] He also says that for spirit to be communicated and for its message to the psyche to be effective, symbols, such as the archetypes found in the Christian tradition, may be needed. Spirit can then become a powerful revelatory influence, 'changing the face of history'.[19]

Spirit, like instinct, has evil elements as well as good. Spirit and spirits are everywhere, like the wind, and can be dangerously one-sided, inflated or 'demonic',[20] for instance, as Dourley points out, the destructive aspect of spirit is found in the collective one-sidedness of 'isms' and fanaticism.[21] Jung concentrates on the tendency of the last few centuries to maximise the importance of intellect to the detriment of feeling, intuition and instinct; he points out that spirit should come to embrace and balance the energies of all aspects of life.[22] An excess of spirit, intellect or feeling which does not stay in touch with 'baser' energies turns people into ethereal non-entities, and is just as detrimental as an excess of unbalanced instinct which makes them self-seeking and brutish.

b) Instincts are a source of energy in the psyche and a driving force that motivate us to action and change, but they can only be balanced and channelled constructively when there is also balance with spirit. Jung describes them as 'impulsions' towards activities which are associated with feeling and usually not under voluntary control.[23] The polarities within the instincts can be illustrated by the *logismoi*, which are thoughts about basic instincts only when they are out of proportion and uncontrolled: the need for food to sustain life becomes greed; sex for procreation becomes lust; covetousness, derived from an instinct necessary for self-preservation, becomes hoarding and excess

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[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid, para. 644, and CW 9:1 , para. 393.

[20] Jung, CW 8, para. 647.

[21] Dourley, J. P., in Moore, R.L. and Meckel, D.J.eds. (1990) Jung and Christianity in Dialogue, 'Jung, Tillich and Aspects of Western Christian Development', Paulist Press, NY, pp. 83ff.

[22] Compare, Brown, N.O. (1959) Love's Body, Random House, NY., and Davis, C. (1976) Body as Spirit, Seabury, NY. pp.103ff.

[23] Jung, CW 6, para. 765.

with anxiety with no trust - 'futile planning for an unreal future'.[24] The instinct which directs the need for rest and relaxation becomes inactivity, *accidie* (sloth) and despair. Anger is an instinct that can be used to promote justice and mercy but easily becomes perverted, excessive and destructive. Realistic self-esteem and self-love is perhaps the most valuable of instincts for psychological health but pride, self-importance and self-absorption are the devastating results of its imbalance and they are basic to most of the other distortions.[25] Every instinct can be characterised in archetypal form, often with animal qualities, as many medieval manuscripts and bestiaries caricature them.[26] In each case, balanced tension between the extremes of spirit and instinct gives vitality.

ii. THE *EGO* AND THE *SELF*

There are some *archetypes* which are so fundamental that they need further elaboration, in particular the archetype of the *Self*, and the *Anima* and *Animus*.

There is an 'unconscious centre' where there is potentially a meeting of all opposites from conscious and unconscious life - of negative and positive aspects of disposition, attitude, temperament. This potential is an archetype which Jung names the *Self*.[27] The *Self* has psychological importance as it is also where the true self meets the false self, and it has spiritual importance in Jung's work because it conveys the possibility of a divine immanence. Jung borrows the term *Imago Dei* for the image of potential wholeness in each individual, when archetypes and all other opposites achieve balance. He observes that many of people's experiences of becoming whole through

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[24] Tugwell, S. (1984) Ways of Imperfection, DLT, p. 26.

[25] Evagrius realised that instincts and emotions which lead to lust, gluttony and other evil thoughts are necessary for life, and should be allowed to exist in moderation. Ibid. p. 28.

[26] Many of Jung's images come from Gnostic thought and from the Alchemists. Rieff, iconoclastically, accuses Jung of a 'mania for antiquarian shopping in disused modes of thought' and of creating 'a religion of sorts - for spiritual dilettantes who collect symbols and meanings as others collect paintings'. Rieff, P. (1968) The Triumph of the Therapeutic, Harper and Row, NY, p. 139.
It is comforting to know that Jung also found alchemy and its symbols unfamiliar and difficult at first. His reaction to the literature was initially, 'blatant nonsense ... impossible to understand' - Jung, Memories. Dreams, Reflections, p.230. It was only when he realised that the labyrinth of the Alchemist's thought contained key concepts which coincided with psychoanalytic findings that he became fascinated by some of these archaic images which, in his later works, he considers basic in our unconscious mind and abundant in everyday life.

[27] Ibid. paras. 789ff., and CW9:2, paras. 43ff. and many more.

reconciling polarities are *numinous*[28] (building on Otto's definition of the numinous as *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*) suggesting continuity between the human and the divine.[29] As Lionel Schlamm points out, the conflicting feelings such as fear and love or attraction and dread which occur when we are confronted with a staggering truth have this numinous characteristic. Although there seems to be a dark component, these feelings carry us out of ourselves 'in a strange harmony of contrasts'.[30] Gimello notes that 'a sense of the coincidence of opposites' is one of the well documented experiences of mysticism, along with an ineffable sense of unity with reality and 'a strong affective tone' which gives vitality.[31] The discovery of disturbing unconscious complexes has a similar effect when they are accepted as part of the self, and as the process is energising, it is an important feature in the therapy of depression. The implications for spirituality and the link with 'consolation' need further study.[32]

The *Self* is the potential with which we are created and to which we are returning. Jung identifies it with the image of God, and talks of it as the centre and circumference of the totality, (in a metaphor which is more familiar in the context of theologians such as Bonaventure, and which is also used by Tillich).[33] It is the wholeness which can occur when all polarities are integrated in both the unconscious and conscious - instinct and spirit, male and female, ideal and shadow and other apparently irreconcilable elements of life. As Edward Edinger says, the goal in psychological terms is to realise and make conscious the hidden archetype of the *Self* so that it may join with the *ego* and the *persona*.[34] The *Self* incorporates archetypes which are energising when in harmony, but static in isolation, and destructive in conflict. Balance is all important because it is impossible to maintain one pole without its opposite - they

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[28] Numinous (Numinosity) is the term used by Rudolf Otto. He describes three characteristics of the numinous which transport people out of their present concerns towards something outside and beyond them: the *mysterium* is mysterious beyond our comprehension; the *tremendum* is overpowering in its energy, inspiring awe; and the *fascinans* is irresistibly attractive.
Otto, R., trans. Harvey, J.W. (1923:1958) The Idea of the Holy, OUP, pp. 12-40.

[29] Jung, CW 6, paras. 429ff.

[30] Schlamm, L., in Ryce-Menuhin, J. ed. (1994) Jung and the Monotheisms, Routledge, pp.22ff.

[31] Gimello, R., in Katz, S. ed. (1978) Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis OUP, Oxford, p.178.

[32] See below, p. 159.

[33] Jung, CW 6, para. 791, and CW 9:2, para. 343.
See below, p. 164.

[34] Edinger, E.F. (1972:1992) Ego and Archetype, Shambhala, Boston, quoting Neumann, E., p. 103.

are part of the same creation and are complementary. As Dourley points out, this balance can be understood equally well in terms of Tillich's ontological polarities. [35]

Victor White, in one of the earliest presentations of Jung's writings within Christianity, recognised the profound Christian implications of the balance between *ego* and *Self.* He wrote that 'The *ego* needs to release some of its autonomy over the *Self*' so that the less acceptable parts of the unconscious can be recognised and integration of the whole person can be achieved.[36] Self-acceptance is only possible if the *ego* relinquishes its power to dominate. It is equally important that the *ego,* which is in touch with the realities of the world, should not be swamped and assimilated by the *Self.* Conscious contact with reality has to be maintained in balance with the insights from the collective wisdom of the archetypes; the inner world of reflection and the outer world of experience are of equal importance. Alienation and melancholia occur when there is disconnection, particularly if a grossly inflated *ego* collapses and is then confronted with chaos because there has been no inner life.[37] A similar danger can arise from excessive religious enthusiasm related to false self-ideals with archetypes of grandeur. Maria von Franz's experience of patients endorses this opinion, leading her to the conclusion that 'compulsive goodness can make you ill'.[38] If, at the other end of the scale, there is assimilation of a frail *ego* into a dominating *Self,* there can be little testing of complexes arising from the unconscious against reality, and psychotic delusions result.[39] Without balance, the unconscious 'disgorges its threatening images' leaving a situation of intolerable anxiety and 'psychic catastrophe'.[40]

Edward Edinger takes up the religious theme by describing a recurrent cycle in which the *ego*'s desire for independent power separates us from our inner resources. He writes that 'the connection between the *ego* and the *Self* is vitally important to psychic health. The *Self* gives foundation, structure, and security to the *ego* and also provides energy, interest, meaning and purpose.' [41] If the *ego* is too dominant and inflated, life is lived without depth and without reference to inner principles. Edinger

[35] Dourley, J. (1981) The Psyche as Sacrament, Inner City Books, Toronto, p. 51.

[36] White, V. (1960) Soul and Psyche, Collins and Harvill, p. 66.

[37] Edinger, Ego and Archetype, pp. 37ff. As, for example, in extreme extraversion.

[38] von Franz M.L., in Jung, C.G. ed. (1964:1978) Man and His Symbols, Picador, p. 208.

[39] Edinger, op. cit, pp. 5ff.

[40] Jung, CW 10, para. 694.

[41] Edinger, Ego and Archetype, p. 43.

holds that, for the modern person, 'a conscious encounter with the autonomous complexes and *archetypes* of the psyche is equivalent to the discovery of God'.[42] This encounter enables us 'to integrate the conflicting fragments of our personality'.[43] Arrogance and sin is the cause of our alienation, so it is only through constant repentance, forgiveness, and acceptance that we can regain a sense of wholeness by keeping the *ego* open to the influence of the *Self*. Edinger suggests that Christ used the images of Scripture to explain Himself because they unite the polarities in the collective wisdom and archetypes of many centuries.[44]

Edinger is particularly relevant here when he extends the Jungian theme, by applying to it the concept of *kenosis* or self-emptying in Christ. He describes the Incarnation as a model for human selflessness which is paralleled when the *ego* can become sufficiently empty to allow the conscious self to be filled by the redeemed archetypes of the *Self*.[45] Then, 'strength, power, fullness and success' are replaced by 'weakness, poverty, suffering, and failure which are given special dignity'.[46] The values we often consider unworthy, and which depress us, are turned upside down when opposites are reconciled by the acceptance of weakness. In this way, Edinger brings the teaching of Jung to illuminate our understanding of the Crucifixion, and much of his writing on vulnerability has an affinity with spiritual writers such as Ignatius.[47] Edinger

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[42] Ibid, p. 104.

[43] Ibid, p. 294.

[44] Edinger, E. (1986) The Bible and the Psyche, Inner City Books, Toronto, p.14.
Gerd Theissen, who recognises the importance of the person Jesus, is also sympathetic to Jung's view of Christ as a symbol of the Self or a 'pre-existent tendency towards self-realisation' because of the brief time it took for the historical Jesus to be accepted as a preexistent divine being. He argues that this interpretation of Jesus is most likely to have been readily understood because of archetypal and collective expectations of a reality that has always existed.
Theissen, G., trans. Galvin J.P.(1987) Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology, T.and T.Clarke, Edinburgh, p. 15.

[45] Edinger, Ego and Archetype, pp. 138ff.

[46] Ibid, p. 146.

[47] Jung was sufficiently interested in the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises to lecture on them in Zurich in 1939, but on the whole he is critical of the Ignatian system comparing it unfavourably with Yoga as a means of understanding the deeper parts of the self. Jung does not comment on the Ignatian model of discernment, but he notes that the Exercises tend to bring about a 'total surrender to God'. Jung finds this surrender disturbing, because he does not think the image of God conceived by an individual is necessarily of ultimate value, without projections. He notes, however, that the Ignatian system involves a dynamic and powerful process because it impresses the conflict of good and evil, and provides a symbolism which encourages the acceptance and reconciliation of these opposites - a process which would be impossible without some access to the unconscious.
Jung, CW 9:2. para. 252, CW 11, paras. 940-942, CW 13 para.293, CW 18, para 1548,

reinforces the view that the image of God is found in the non-inflated self, which acknowledges dependence on the presence of God, because it bears the mark of the Beatitudes - poverty of spirit, mourning and persecution. The alienated, proud and independent person, on the other hand, is separated from the God within, and is therefore subject to all the evils which occur through self-inflation and attempted self-sufficiency.[48] Edinger, with concepts which also harmonise with those of Horney, specifically mentions the likelihood of despair and melancholia when there is an inflated *ego* with ideals that are proud and unrealistic. Guilt then becomes entrenched, and alienation ever more apparent, until the facade breaks and the person loses his or her false ideal, abandoning themselves to the mercy of God.[49] Luther's cry for help in extreme despair is an example.[50]

There is a wealth of archetypal images in Old Testament stories, which can be used to support Edinger's view that all psychological development is part of the redemptive process. He considers that Joseph, Jacob, David, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and many others, can be analysed as symbols of individuation.[51] In the story of David, for instance, Goliath is said to represent a gigantic complex tyrannising the collective psyche and connected with David's Moabite ancestry. When David has to flee he meets temptations from his *shadow* and identifies with it in the form of Nabal or the Philistines. He falls into the clutches of evil by denying its presence when he arranges the death of Uriah in order to have his wife Bathsheba.[52] The struggle between the archetypes has its reward in the end for, despite David's very human failings, he becomes a prototype for the Messiah or, as Jung would say, of the individuated *Self*, a totality of opposites.[53]

iii. *ANIMA* AND *ANIMUS*

Two major archetypes, *anima* and *animus*, can be taken to illustrate Jung's concept of complementarity. The opposites of masculine and feminine are used the world over to symbolise a vast number of polarities such as, *Yin* and *Yang*, Hindu *Purusha* and

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[48] Edinger, Ego and Archetype, pp. 37ff.

[49] Ibid. p. 56.

[50] See above, p.134.

[51] Edinger, The Bible and the Psyche, p. 14.

[52] Ibid. pp. 84ff.

[53] Ibid. p. 91.

Prakrita, creative and receptive, firm and yielding, light and dark, sun and moon, *Logos* and *Eros*, action and passivity, dynamic and static, doing and being and many more, all complementary and needing the other. They complement that part of the person which is gender specific, and, though they are potential trouble makers, they are full of vitality when they are in harmonious balance.

The *anima* is the complex of 'feminine' characteristics, usually unconscious, in men - representing receptiveness and dependence, and needed to complement their virility. Jung linked the *anima* with *eros* and emotional tendencies, and at times, in his work, there are echoes of the Kabbala, in which feminine characteristics are given disturbing and dark nuances.[54] In other traditions the archetype of female characteristics is highly desirable, as in *Sophia* who represents wisdom and the Virgin Mary who represents holiness.

The *animus* is the complex of 'male' characteristics, representing dominance and independence, found in the unconscious of women and needed to complement their femininity. It is linked to rational aspects and *logos*.[55] Their complementarity is stressed when Jung says that

> Just as the *anima* becomes, through integration, the *eros* of consciousness, so the *animus* becomes a *logos*; and in the same way that the *anima* gives relationship and relatedness to a man's consciousness, the *animus* gives to women's consciousness a capacity for reflection, deliberation and self-knowledge'.[56]

Every person, whichever gender, has a mixed disposition and the distinctions should not give ammunition to those who are looking for stereotypes. Some feminists, such as Mary Grey, object to the clustering of characteristics as gender related, and appear to confuse the feminine *anima* with a female person. They do not do justice to Jung's concept when they suggest that his descriptions undermine the importance of 'feminine' characteristics and do not allow for 'male' characteristics such as intellect and leadership in women.[57] Jung finds health in a balance of characteristics.

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[54] Gottlieb, F., in Ryce-Menuhin, J. ed. (1994) Jung and the Monotheisms, Routledge, p.63.
The *anima* is here connected with the *Shekhinah*, the emanation of the spiritual into the material, traditionally thought of as feminine.

[55] Jung, CW 9:2, para. 33.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Grey, M. (1989) Redeeming the Dream, SPCK, p. 23.

Anima and animus are probably the most universal archetypes from the collective unconscious which have immediate relevance for every individual.[58] The contrasexual tendencies are necessary to balance the personality and should not be neglected nor allowed to become dominant. According to Jung, they also mediate between the conscious and the unconscious - sometimes becoming personified and recognisable as companions in dreams and analysis.[59] They can lead to greater understanding and effectiveness, but if they are distorted they carry the worst aspects of the opposite gender. If aspects of the self are denied and separated from consciousness they are likely to get out of control and can develop into carbuncles which erupt and burst destructively into consciousness. Jung has most to say about the loss of the anima in mid-life because it causes, in men, a diminution of vitality, of flexibility and of human kindness. The result, as a rule, is premature rigidity, crustiness, stereotyping, fanatical one-sidedness, obstinacy, pedantry, or else resignation, weariness, sloppiness, irresponsibility.[60] Men with an anima which is neglected or out of balance become moody, unreliable, irrational, disaffected and miserable, because in Jung's opinion anima is responsible for moods and animus for opinions.[61] A similar list can be drawn up to describe a woman's misuse of animus, making them domineering, strident, reckless, irrational, power seeking, demanding and over-assertive.[62]

Mythological stories and fairy tales, like Beauty and the Beast, are considered to be about the recognition of the animus which, though once despised, can become a valuable companion giving women initiative, courage, objectivity and wisdom.[63] Grey would probably agree with this as she suggests that the outstanding sin of women could be passivity, not pride.[64] The rule of balance which is all important in this field decrees that neither the male nor the female, nor the anima, nor the animus is superior or inferior. The man may need to share the nurturing and caring role, usually kept for the

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[58] Jung, CW 7, paras. 297ff., CW 9:2, para. 34.

[59] Jung, CW 7, para. 338, CW 9:2, para. 39, CW 11, para. 48.

[60] Jung, CW 9:1, para. 147.

[61] Jung, CW 7, para. 331
see also, Samuels, A. (1985) Jung and the Post-Jungians. Tavistock Routledge, p. 213., and Hunt, S. in Moore, R.L. and Meckel, D.J. eds. (1990) Jung and Christianity in Dialogue: the Anthropology of Carl Jung, Paulist Press p. 247.

[62] Jung, CW 7, paras. 331ff., and. Jung, CW 6, para. 804.

[63] Henderson, J.L., in Jung, C.G. (1964:1978) Man and His Symbols, Picador, pp. 130-143,

[64] Grey, op. cit. p.17.

woman, while she is often called to decision making and outside work. Harmony within and without is only obtained through respect for differences and this necessitates a degree of self-oblation - in Jungian terms sacrificing the *ego*. There should be neither masculine superiority nor aggressive feminism but a celebration of difference in creative opposition. This is described by Mary Grey as 'redemptive mutuality which can take on the language of self-sacrifice, surrender and self-giving love' instead of the 'ethic of domination, competitiveness, individualism and military strength'.[65] The mistake she makes is to write as if this were a new discovery of feminism. Christianity has always preached this 'redemptive relatedness' and self-giving, however little it may have been demonstrated in the institutional Church.

A contemporary vignette illustrates that it is possible to alter the self-ideal and to face some of the darkest elements of the psyche without disintegration:

Michael was a sensitive young man who had been brought up in a stable and caring family where he was perhaps overprotected from harmful influences. He suffered some identity problems as an adolescent and became mildly depressed during his first year at university. He found it difficult to join in most social activities, but went with a folk dancing group to Poland where he was taken on a tour of Auschwitz. The horror of the inhumanity and scale of evil which he encountered there shattered his faith in humanity, and in God. He became withdrawn and more depressed to the detriment of his work and job prospects. The horrific degradation and cruelty of the holocaust awoke his awareness, in himself, of complexes representing, among other tendencies, the struggle for power, self-idealisation and destructive ruthlessness. He internalised much that came from the collective past and hated himself. He struggled with the overwhelming misery that came from his introjection of evil archetypes, but fortunately for other people, he did not defend himself against it by projection onto other people.

Eventually Michael recognised that there were ways of working for peace and justice and he involved himself in Amnesty International. The bitterness and anger remained, partly directed at the faults of the outer world and partly inwards in continuing self-hate. He felt himself to be thrashing uselessly at unseen powers and was ineffective, despairing and constricted. He was absorbed in a form of chronic depression which consumed all his energy and added nothing to the world in which he

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[65] Ibid, p. 176.

was working. Fortunately he was engaged, and his future wife and he worked out that it was, as Amnesty International says, 'better to light a candle than to curse the darkness'. The fact of evil came to be accepted together with a recognition of a personal need for repentance and forgiveness, and his Christian life was rebuilt with growing commitment. The suffering Christ who bears the cruelty of the world became a meaningful reality, saving him from the wave of terrible evil which threatened to swamp him as well as the people who had originally suffered. The greatest turning point which liberated his energies came when he realised the evil potential was not only 'out there', but also in himself, though in a different form. He could recognise that, in spite of everything, God cared for him, forgave and loved him, and he could extend this experience to embrace some of the awfulness in the world. He discovered that anger, resentment, bitterness, lack of feeling, and fear which were normally suppressed can build up into destructive and unthinking alliance with cruelty. This was no longer the frustrating irrational guilt of depression but a realistic appraisal of his own nature. Michael, thankfully, came to accept his *shadow* and to believe in the power of redemption. He became a greater force for good than he would have been without these experiences, as he had greater realism, and had more energy available in his work for other people.

2. TEMPERAMENTAL POLARITIES - TYPOLOGY

In addition to the negative characteristics which we want to conceal there are opposites in the way in which we normally function which Jung has classified into a typology. This classification is a basic and simple way of recording the different and opposing tendencies which constitute differences of temperament. The unused faculties are those that are least preferred, and they remain underdeveloped, latent in the unconscious personal *shadow*. The types are not divided by a rating scale but by preferences in their reactions to different situations, and these preferences always reveal hidden and neglected capacities.

In order to systematise the functions and attitudes of personality, Jung assembled a large range of observations on psychological experiences in normal everyday life, related to him by his patients, and he then compared these patterns of behaviour with those recorded in other settings, and from different ages and cultures. Of all his work, this analysis of personality has proved to be the most empirical. The work on

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temperament was extended by Katherine Briggs and her daughter Isobel into the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and has been extensively validated in reliable demographic surveys.[66]

The main characteristics of Jungian typology, as expanded by Isobel Briggs (who married Clarence Myers) are constellated into four pairs of opposites between:

a) Extrovert or Introvert: This is a measure of attitude which indicates the preferred source of energy - whether from contact with the outer world and with other people, or from inner resources. An extrovert may not understand an introvert's need for solitude, nor the time it may take them to process and respond to conversation. An introvert may wonder at the way in which extroverts tend to work out their thoughts by talking.[67]

b) Sensing or Intuition: Sensing is a preference for perceiving reality through the senses in a detailed, practical and factual way; intuition connects facts into a pattern and fits them into a larger context using imagination and inspiration to see the implications of the whole situation..

c) Thinking or Feeling: This is a measure of the preferred way of judging, valuing and making decisions. A person whose preference is for a thinking function is logical, analytical and objective and may override personal feelings for other people in order to reach a rational solution. A person whose preference is for a feeling function, though very capable of rational thought, may not readily apply reason to their judgements because of an inner sense of value and conviction, and their sympathy for other people. The distinction is not between the intellectual and the emotional.

d) Judging or Perception: This measures the orientation towards the outer world, either with a judging attitude which wants to come to conclusions and make decisions, using

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[66] Briggs-Myers, I., and McCaulley, M.H.(1985:1993) Manual: Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Consulting Psychologists' Press, Palo Alto, CA, pp. 52ff.
The findings, which were originally based on conclusions from observation of a limited range of people, have now been statistically assessed. Questionnaires have been standardised and confirmed as reliable and valid.

[67] Jung considers that the extroverted type is particularly prone to depression and gives a rationale of this tendency in terms of the direction in which psychic energy is directed. An extroverted type prefers to direct attention outwards and gain energy from the outer world, and if this extroversion is not balanced by some introversion, the paucity of the inner life becomes evident when under stress. For instance, there are no resouces to deal with a situation which results in little interaction with other people. At the other extreme, Jung describes the problems of the unbalanced introvert who is out of touch with other people, and in whom melancholia occurs through excessive sensitivity and inhibitions. In this case, energy is locked within the inner world and the Self is isolated from the more realistic ego which could help in resolving the problems.
Jung, CW 6, paras. 470ff., and 565ff.

either a thinking or feeling function. This type likes things structured, orderly and settled, and has no connection with being judgmental. The perceiving types, on the other hand, like to leave matters open until all options have been considered and the situation fully understood, using the functions of sensing or intuition.

None of these attitudes or functions are used to the exclusion of the others but one will tend to dominate and others may be underdeveloped. The capacity opposite to that which is preferred may atrophy and cause inner restriction if an effort is not made to bring it into use. The extrovert must pause to reflect and the introvert must make an effort to enter into relationships. A person who perceives the world using only practical sensory means, looking no further than hard facts, neglects their imagination. Someone, on the other hand, who relies solely on intuition may become out of touch with the real world if they fail to look at the details. The neglected aspects stay in the *shadow* and the longer they stay there unused the harder it will be to bring in a balance.

In the Myers-Briggs typology each of the sixteen possible combinations is a type, as seen in Figure 4. Each type brings great potential and each has its own value as Isobel Briggs-Myers describes in her book <u>Gifts Differing</u>.[68] Each type has, however, a predictable dominant function and a predictable inferior (least preferred) function - the latter remains in the *shadow* because we are reluctant to use it. In other words everyone tends to neglect one or more of the four functions (intuition, sensing, thinking or feeling) which is at the opposite pole from their dominant function.

Most people tend to balance the four functions as they grow towards maturity, and ass W.H. Grant and his colleagues point out, growth towards God's likeness should mean strengthening the least preferred, and least used 'inferior function', so as to balance the opposite tendencies.[69]

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[68] Briggs-Myers, I. (1980) <u>Gifts Differing</u>, Consulting Psychologists Press, Palo Alto, CA.

[69] Grant, W.H., Thompson, M. and Clarke, T.E. (1983) <u>From Image to Likeness</u>, Paulist Press, NY, p.209.

ISTJ(S)	ISFJ(S)	INFJ(N)	INTJ(N)
ISTP(T)	ISFP(F)	INFP(F)	INTP(T)
ESTP(S)	ESFP(S)	ENFP(N)	ENTP(N)
ESTJ(T)	ESFJ(F)	ENFJ(F)	ENTJ(T)

Key-I. Introvert E. Extrovert N. Intuitive S. Sensing

T. Thinking F. Feeling J. Judging P. Perceiving

Figure 4. The Sixteen Myers- Briggs Types

(Dominant functions in brackets.)

An interesting illustration of the importance of maintaining the balance and tension of the polarities of temperament can also to be found in George Eliot's novel Middlemarch.[70] The pretentious Casaubon is so obsessed with the importance of his intuitive ideas and supposed intellectual abilities that everything is subordinated to his abortive work on 'the Key to All Mythologies'. He is totally introverted and judging, making conceited, insensitive demands on his wife, Dorothea, which not only ruin her life but also are so unbalanced that his own sanity is threatened. Casaubon has no sense of inner values and is out of touch with reality. The probability that his type is INTJ has little to do with his distasteful personality. He is a caricature in the way he ignores other people's values and feelings - not characteristic of more balanced introverted, intuitive, thinking and judging characters who are pleasant, stimulating and innovative - one standard description, however, describes them as having 'faith in an inner vision that can remove mountains... independent, persevering and determined'[71], a description that resonates with Casaubon.

Dorothea is Casaubon's opposite in most respects, sensitive and warm in her relationships, though deceived by her idealism. Her introverted religious ardour and

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[70] Eliot, G. (1871:1958) Middlemarch, OUP.

[71] Briggs-Myers, Introduction to Type, p. 24.

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bookish leanings are reasonably balanced by her interest in the outer world, but her awareness of reality and the practical matters on the estate are not well balanced by intuition - she tends to see details rather than the implications of a situation. When she makes decisions which require a greater perspective than the immediate present, she comes to conclusions which lead her into a great deal of trouble. Were there more perception in Dorothea's make-up, she would not jump to the disastrous conclusions that lead to her marriage - she lets her strong principles and judging attitude lead her into premature faulty decisions which she upheld until after Casaubon's death. She is best described as introverted, sensing, feeling and judging (ISFJ). The accepted description of this type includes 'dependable and devotedly accepting responsibilities beyond the call of duty ... private reactions may be vivid and intense and are often unpredictable to other people ... outer calm in a crisis .... behaviour is sound and sensible ... painstaking, hard-working doing the "little" things and carrying a project through to its completion' - very appropriate for Dorothea.[72]

3. PSYCHIC ENERGY

The polarities so far described are a few of those which are energising when they are kept together in creative tension. The psychological concept of energy stems from Freud's description of *libido* as the force of instinctual drives. Jung differs from Freud in having a more optimistic view of the creative possibilities of energies within the unconscious. Gert Theissen likens Freud's idea of the unconscious to a swamp which has to be drained, full of dysfunctional material which is unrelated to reality and which accumulates conflict. Jung's idea of redeeming the unconscious is more attractive, and Theissen uses for it the metaphor of a spring ready to supply energy when needed.[73] Both Jung and Freud believe that when unwanted psychic material from painful experiences is repressed it binds energy in the unconscious. Freud is battling to curb fantasy and tame *libido* because it is only useful in satisfying the 'pleasure principle', and he wishes to establish rationality and the 'reality principle'.[74] Jung, on the other hand, uses symbols to release energy for valuable work, by bridging

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[72] Ibid, p.21.

[73] Theissen, op. cit, pp. 12ff.

[74] Freud, SE 21, 'Civilisation and its Discontents', pp.75ff.

the rift between the contents of the unconscious and the conscious mind. Freud is trying to counteract imaginary inflated ideas about the self, without being concerned with the use of imagination as a creative resource.

The integration of the *shadow* occurs in the process of becoming 'whole' which Jung calls *individuation* - a process which is the source of energy for vitality and mental health. Jung claims to have analysed eighty thousand dreams in order to reach his conclusions, and in most of these there were two sets of opposing forces intersecting and coming to rest at a central point (as in an Eastern Mandala).[75] He reaches the conclusion that 'the psyche is made up of processes whose energy springs from the equilibration of all kinds of opposites'.[76] The strength of psychic energy depends on keeping polarities together in tension so that there is a gradient - a potential created by opposite 'qualities, complexes and affects in the mind'.[77] Harmony comes from the resolution of previous conflict, so that the tension between the opposite tendencies liberates energy, and Jung believed that life, being an energic process needs the opposites, for, as William Blake says, 'without contraries there is no progress'.[78] The need for the tension of opposites is a universal law, and it is also possible to consider aspects of the problem of evil through this model.[79] Evil can result, for instance, from the vacuum which occurs when polarities are not in contact, and also from conflicting polarities which cannot be reconciled.

Jung compares psychic energy with physical energy without claiming more than close analogy between the two types of energy. He does not, for instance, attempt

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[75] Jung, CW 9:2, paras. 59 & 208.

[76] Jung, CW 13, para. 7, CW 18, para. 1417.

[77] Jung, CW 8, paras. 61 & 438-9.
Information systems are able to act as models for certain aspects of the mind, such as learning, memory, feedback and communicating. Peterfreund attempts to explain the findings of psychoanalysis as a mechanistic behavioural system based on cybernetics. He is very critical of Freud's use of energy concepts analagous to those of the physical world. He protests against the use of words such as 'drive', 'channel', 'force' and 'gradient'. Peterfreund, E. and Schwartz, J.T. (1971) Information, Systems and Psychoanalysis, International U.P., NY, pp. 11, 57, 231, and 331.

[77] Jung, CW 8, para. 51.

[78] Blake, op. cit, Plate 4, p. 150.

[79] Jung, CW.11, para. 291. also Jung, Answer to Job. The differences between Jung's idea of religion and a traditional Monotheism are, however, highlighted in his correspondance with Martin Buber and with Victor White which deal respectively with the problems of relationship with a transcendent God, and with evil. The subject is well reviewed by Ann Lammers, in Lammers, A. C. (1994) In God's Shadow, Paulist Press, NY.

to locate psychic energy in the nervous system, and he leaves, as an open question, the possibility that psychic energy could affect physical energy.[80] He was, however, influenced by physicists such as Wolfgang Pauli,[81] and he assumes that psychic energy (like physical energy) will maintain itself without loss, by analogy with the first law of thermodynamics which states that energy can be exchanged or kept hidden but cannot be lost.[82] He also considers that mind and body, though seen through different frames of reference, can be different aspects of a single reality. Energy in the psyche flows because of gradients, and though the flow tends to be in a constant direction, there can be exchange, progression and regression between the inner and outer worlds.[83] Jung illustrates his point by drawing attention to states of introversion in which the ego relies on the inner world for the exchange of energy, and extroversion in which it relies on the outer world. In either case, energy can be dissipated or used constructively.

The dynamic depends on the degree of difference between opposites as they are maintained in tension without abandoning one pole.[84] Because of the magnitude of the differences between the contents of the unconscious and the conscious mind, it is in the meeting of these polarities that there is the greatest potential for change and individuation. The direction of flow becomes retrogressive when experiences are repressed in the unconscious. Prejudices and 'habits of thought' become closed systems which lock energy in useless complexes.[85] There is no freedom when these complexes are dominant, and it is interesting to speculate on their contribution to our 'original sin'.

Jung makes the assumption that a balance of energy is achieved in any new situation - there may be energy exchanges between the autonomous complexes of the psyche which may also lose or gain energy from the environment. He also describes entropy of psychic energy in abnormal pathological states when energy is either locked in and unavailable as in severe psychosis and degenerative conditions, or dissipated in destructive neuroses, mania and hysteria.[86] He speculates on the eventual possibility of finding objective means of measuring the 'intensity of affective phenomena' which

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[80] Jung, CW 8, para. 10.

[81] Ibid, paras. 438-9.

[82] Ibid, para. 3.

[83] Ibid, para. 363.

[84] Ibid, paras. 10 & 49ff.

[85] Ibid, para. 51.

[86] Ibid, para. 50.

enable this process, but he recognises that this is beyond the bounds of present knowledge.[87] In contrast to Freud's attempt to follow a neurophysiological approach, Jung asserts that he starts 'with the assumption of the sovereignty of the psyche' without reference to any need to link his hypotheses to a somatic or even an intellectual basis.[88] This allows him scope for innovative ideas and greater tolerance of the mysterious and the spiritual.

Speculation on the degree to which the energy of the psyche can be compared with other energies (or indeed, affects them) is interesting but inconclusive.[89] An interesting comment, which is related to the possibility of a physical basis for psychological or religious phenomena, comes from the neurophysiologist Peter Fenwick. He suggests that it is possible to locate some religious experiences such as visions and mystic experiences in the right temporal lobe of the brain but, as he says, this does not invalidate them nor their ultimate value. With Teilhardian resonance, Fenwick says that consciousness and our freedom is built into the 'stuff of the universe'.[90] On a pragmatic basis, it is certain that physical and mental energy are low in classical descriptions of depression, and that spiritual energy is low in the descriptions of *accidie*. The symptoms are, however, so intertwined that it is hard to avoid the conclusion that all types of energy are also woven together.

All the paradigms through which we understand health and wholeness are movements towards realising greater potential by liberating energy. The Christian religion resounds with concepts of spiritual dynamism which, paradoxically, is often found in material powerlessness.[91] Paul Nicholson, a Jesuit, writes that 'the Ignatian

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[87] Ibid, para. 53.

[88] Ibid, paras. 421ff.

[89] Paul Davies explains that even for a physicist the concept of energy is slippery because it is usually measured by its effects on something else, in terms of movement, heat, light, sound, electricity or by exchange in the substances of chemistry. Davies, P.C.W. (1983) God and the New Physics, Penguin, p. 31.

[90] Fenwick, P. (1996) in Bhugra, D. ed. (1996) Psychiatry and Religion, Routledge, p. 175.
Professor Eugene D'Aquili has done similar work suggesting that the inferior parietal lobe is responsible for constructing abstract concepts from sense perceptions (a place for 'generating gods') and that there is also a midbrain location where the ergotropic, sympathetic system (mediating energy expenditure in fight or flight) links with the trophotropic parasympathetic system (energy conserving, regulating homeostasis). In his view, both systems are saturated and spilling over into each other in states of intense consciousness, triggered, for instance, by the numinous, or by beauty or romantic love.
D'Aquilli, (1996) The Neuropsychology of Reality. Gresham College, p. 56.

[91] As for example, St Paul in 1 Cor. 4:10, 2 Cor. 12:10 and 2 Cor. 13:9.

tradition looks to manifestations of energy as indications of God's work' - God has created all things and is at work within them.[92] Donal Dorr is one of the very few people who writes at length on 'spiritual energy', by which he means a creative force which is accessible and effective in our lives. He traces the aspects of Christ's life in which power is released and transferred to help others - in forgiveness and healing, in facing social issues and through prophetic inspiration.[93] This positive energy is needed to fight the evil forces of negativity. Spiritual energy can transform our mood and penetrate into the whole of life, just as a persistently low mood dampens the flame of energy making people lethargic and self-absorbed. The contention here is that love, joy, peace and the other 'fruits of the spirit' are found in 'consolation' and they are energising. 'Desolation', on the other hand, is a state of low motivation and low energy, and is sometimes a sign that effort is needed. If the energy of consolation gets out of control it may be dissipated in manic activity, and on the other side of the scale, if the temptation to sloth is overwhelming, *accidie* and depression may supervene. The connection of consolation and energy is not often made, though it is a common experience that any accession of love increases awareness and energy.

Belief in the transcendent God and contact with Him in prayer adds an additional dimension to the creative tension between opposites, and therefore an opportunity of accessing a different aspect of vitality. In the Ignatian understanding, an unexpected surge of energy accompanying spiritual awareness and sense of the numinous is 'consolation without previous cause'[94]. It is not certain whether this experience is the same as that described in other traditions, or whether there is different quality of energy from a specifically religious experience. There are undoubted similarities between those that are described as an 'epiphany'[95], 'a. timeless moment'[96], a peak experience[97], oceanic feeling[98] or 'ecstasy'[99]. These moments of heightened awareness can be

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[92] Nicholson, P. (1997) The Way 1, Book Review, p. 81.

[93] Dorr, D. (1996) Divine Energy, Gill and Macmillan, p. viii.

[94] 'Consolation without previous cause' is a God-given awareness of divinity which comes so as to confirm commitment. It needs scrutiny to ensure that there are no mixed motives. Munitz and Endean, op. cit. 'glossary' p.xvi, and Spiritual Exercises. 336, p. 353.

[95] Steiner, G. (1989) Real Presences, Faber and Faber, pp. 3 and 225.

[96] Eliot, T.S, (1969) Complete Poems and Plays, Four Quartets: The Dry Salvages V, Faber, p. 189.

[97] Maslow, A.H. (1954:1970) Motivation and Personality, Harper and Row, NY, p. 164.

[98] Transitions. p. 106.

described as mystical and are usually short, as William James noted[100], but they can be artificially prolonged and the energy will then be dissipated in pointless over-activity and misplaced 'enthusiasm'.[101] Rudolf Otto describes the energy that comes with a numinous experience which 'clothes itself in symbolic expressions - vitality, passion, will, force, movement, excitement'[102] The direction of the energy determines its effectiveness so that, when it is a response to the 'wholly other' in worship and love, it is healing, creative and vitalising whereas there is also the possibility of using numinous energy in a destructive and power-seeking way.[103] Inappropriate use may also give rise to elated states which may then move into mania or hypomania, becoming a medical problem. Alternatively energy may be tied up in confusion and conflict, particularly if there is a course of action which should be followed and it is neglected - lethargy may then supervene, leading down the slope to *accidie*, despair and depression. In each of these states there are spiritual, mental and physical components which need the gift of discernment to determine where they should lead.

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[99] Ecstasy is described in terms of being taken out of oneself, in union with a higher force, whereas enstasy was described in the Eastern Church as an awareness of the immanent God. Clement, O., trans. Berkeley, T. (1993) The Roots of Christian Mysticism, New City, p. 231.

[100] James, W. (1902:1987) The Varieties of Religious Experience, Penguin, p. 381.
James summarises the essence of true religious experience as being ineffable, transient, coming from outside (in that it can not be manipulated, planned or predicted) and giving rise to heightened awareness and vitality.

[101] Knox, R. A. (1950) Enthusiasm, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p. 591.
Knox traces some of the heresies which have arisen from arrogant or unbalanced enthusiasm, but he finds that a fine line divides it from creative vision.

[102] Otto, op. cit. pp. 23-24.

[103] Ibid, pp. 177 and 208.

PART 3. THE REDEMPTION OF VULNERABILITY AND *KENOSIS* - A PATTERN IN THE WORLD.

'For when I am weak, then I am strong'.[1]

In the previous sections the connections between the physical, the psychological and the spiritual aspects of depressed mood have been explored through the writings of the early Fathers on *accidie*, the works of Paul Tillich and the Ignatian concept of desolation. The works of Karen Horney and Carl Jung provide some of the psychological detail. All these very different approaches emphasise the need to reconcile and integrate the polarities of our being so that we can avoid energy-consuming inner conflict, and relate to the world with vitality and authenticity. The convergence of different central points, where many polarities meet in harmony, can then be conceived as the means of attaining balance in individuals as they relate to their community.

In 1994, I painted the picture on page 164 in order to understand better the reconciliation of different polarities, and the symbolic meaning of convergence of the different central points as we are redeemed into God. It shows spheres of influence, each with an inner light growing clearer and more substantial as people and communities come together. It expresses the glory and splendour of God with symbols of light and fire. The light of the Holy Spirit comes down to earth in a hidden way; fire and light blaze forth from the glory of the Godhead to whom we are returning. The picture tries to symbolise movement, dynamism and the interpenetration of the centres of spheres. It was motivated by some of the writings of Teilhard de Chardin[2], which, as Barbara Reynolds points out, have an affinity with some of those of Dante when he describes images for the interchange of love within spheres that are populated with saints.[3] They 'become increasingly actual and personal

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[1] 2 Corinthians 12:10b.

[2] Teilhard de Chardin, P., trans. Wall, B. (1955:1965) The Phenomenon of Man,. Collins, Fontana, .pp. 284-288. Teilhard had a vision of the convergence of all things (including our 'diminishments') into a pattern of giving and receiving from centre to centre. Evolution would ultimately be fulfilled in Christ as we press upwards and forwards through a process of 'centration' and increasing love. Unfortunately though he did not lack compassion in his own life, he does not take due account of those who suffer for the sake of progress or whose line is obliterated by the evolutionary process. His mystical vision of the ultimate fullness of God, towards which everything is working now is, none the less, inspiring.

[3] Reynolds, B. (1962) Introduction, in Dante, A., trans Sayers, D. and Reynolds, B. (1962) The Divine Comedy. vol. 3, Penguin, p. 30.

the nearer [they] approach to the personalising action of the Centre of centres'.[4] The picture is based on the text, 'all things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together ... for in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven'.[5] The illustration symbolises much of the theology inherent in this thesis, but it does not include the threefold nature of our relationship with the Trinity. The Spirit is represented but our relationship with Christ as Saviour is not explicit.

Our hope springs from the risen Christ's eternal redeeming power, and although it is probably true, as Tillich says, that 'disease is a disruption of centredness under all dimensions of life'[6], the link which he makes between healing and salvation requires further examination by looking into the nature of our redemption by Jesus. Moreover, we can seek to learn more about the Godhead from Christ's life and Resurrection. The polarities and tension of God as found in Christ, through which He can transform our fragmentation, will be explored primarily through the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar. He recognises the creative tension of opposites and the value of ontological thought, but above all, he is concerned to express the experience of God's Love revealed through Christ's *kenosis*[7] and our consequent understanding of the Trinity. Christ who suffers pain (including the anguish of god-forsakenness) for our sake is also exalted as a manifestation of the splendour of God. The Love of the Trinity is more than 'the drive toward the reunion of the separated' as Tillich puts it.[8] It is glorious, beautiful, full of vitality, and above all, personal within a courteous community, which has the perfect balance of the individual and others.' Balthasar is concerned with the Christian's place (in the Church) in the dramatic struggle of

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[4] Ibid, p. 33.

[5] Colossians, 1:16.

[6] Tillich, ST 3, p.277

[7] *Kenosis* means self-emptying and is used of Christ's voluntary act in relinquishing some divine attributes in order to come to earth. Philippians 2:6-7. Its extended use covers other profound self-giving, through participation in God's love. It does not negate God's *plerosis*.

[8] Tillich, ST3, p.134.

good against evil, and through this co-operation with God, he shows us a way of accepting our place within the pattern of glory in God's Kingdom of Love.

The Ignatian belief that God enfolds all things, and is at the centre of all things, reconciling their fundamental opposites, is fundamental to Balthasar's work. It will be elaborated further, in parallel with the work of Nicholas de Cusa who also stresses that God is to be sought at a centre where polarities are reconciled. Balthasar's view of *kenosis* is supplemented by Miguel de Unamuno's emphasis on the extent of God's involvement in the world. God's interaction with suffering presents us with the possibility of His mutability as a prerequisite of love. Balthasar struggled with the implications of believing in a compassionate God but, before him, Unamuno had pioneered a theology of the suffering of God, who is with us in paradox, confusion and despair. Charles Williams gives another complementary approach, emphasising the Christian role in a community, which is fulfilled by bearing each other's burdens – a mirror of the Trinity which is perfect 'giving and receiving'. He stresses the human capacity to participate in God at a central point of reconciliation and forgiveness.

The ways in which opposites, which would otherwise be the raw material of our inner conflicts, can be integrated are then explored through therapeutic approaches which are related to the classical transcendentals which are used by Balthasar. Firstly, realistic thinking about the authentic self in cognitive therapy is a search for *truth*. Secondly the use of symbolic art is related to a search for *beauty*. Thirdly the spiritual life, with its search for God's *goodness* and love, enables forgiveness of the past as of the present, and acceptance of both the good and the bad in ourselves. Self-forgetfulness, joy and peace are fruits of the Spirit which will confound the self-absorption, misery and turmoil of depressed mood, and participation in the life of God can become a reality.

Vulnerability and weakness may be all that is felt, but this is precisely what Jesus offered on our behalf, and in this apparent weakness, He brings redemptive strength. Our participation may seem, at times, to be only in the humiliation, but Christ's *kenosis* was completed by the victory of the Cross, and His humiliating but triumphant death. Through the Resurrection which followed, He brings joy and abundant life out of suffering.

CHAPTER 7.

THE DIVINE POLARITIES

'For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.[1]

'Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God ...'[2]

1. HANS URS VON BALTHASAR (1905-1988) AND HIS BACKGROUND

The works of Hans Urs von Balthasar will be used to explore the significance of self-giving in Christ's birth, life and death, putting His dereliction into the context of the Resurrection and the Trinity. Balthasar's approach to the transcendent balances Tillich's concentration on the immanence of God. Balthasar was a Swiss theologian about whom Henri de Lubac writes that he always keeps a balance in the tension between the humiliation of God in Christ and His infinite grandeur and freedom.[3] Balthasar started his academic life by studying German idealism and later turned to theology, dating his sense of vocation from an experience during an Ignatian retreat in 1927.[4] As student of philosophy at Pullach near

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[1] Colossians 1:19.

[2] John 13:3 (JB).

[3] Lubac, H. de, trans. Hague, R. (1969) The Church: Paradox and Mystery, Ecclesia Press, Shannon, pp. 103- 121.

[4] Scola, A., trans. Eerdmanns Publishing Co., Michigan (1995) Hans Urs von Balthasar: A Theological Style, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 9.

Munich, he was initially influenced by Erich Przywara who stimulated his interest in *analogia entis*, whereby the attributes of God can be described, though never adequately, through created goodness and human metaphors. As Edward Oakes translates Przywara, the tension between 'God in us' and 'God over us' has to be maintained.[5] God's *kenosis*, revealed in the Son, is balanced by His self-possession, stability and glory.

Balthasar's theology is firmly rooted in the light we are given to illuminate the darkness of God's distance, which is infinite and inexhaustible. However, he held that the wonder of the Incarnation is sufficiently comprehensible for us to have a vision of the Love, Glory and Beauty of God. As Deirdre Carabine shows, he had problems with the apophatic approach of the Eastern Church which maintains that God, in His transcendent Essence, is totally unknowable.[6] When he was a Jesuit from 1929 - 1950, Balthasar repeatedly followed the pattern of Ignatian Exercises, which steeped him in Scripture and love for Christ. Though he appreciated the place of controversy and dialectics in theological thinking, he believed that we must move beyond these to the place of beauty where there is 'disinterestedness' (lack of self-interest), and where revelation can show the love of Christ. The love of God cannot be domesticated, and Balthasar enjoys the metaphor of fire to describe it sweeping us up with an energy we cannot understand, taking us where, perhaps, we might not want to go.[7]

When Balthasar was a chaplain to students in Basel he met Adrienne von Speyr who revolutionised his thinking about salvation, and in particular about the credal phrase 'He descended into Hell', to which I shall return.[8] Balthasar's hope that, in the final reckoning, all Creation is redeemed, led him to found, with Adrienne, a lay missionary movement, the Community of St John. He felt a need to give his attention to this secular foundation, and so lost the support of his Order, leaving reluctantly in 1950. Tina Beattie considers that his relationship with Adrienne was parasitic, and symptomatic of his view of Mary as a

[5] Oakes, E.T. (1994) Pattern of Redemption, Continuum, NY, p. 33.

[6] Carabine, D., in McGregor, B. and Norris, T., eds. (1994) The Beauty of Christ, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, pp. 87-90.

[7] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Leiva, E.S. (1954:1979) The Heart of The World, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, pp. 117ff.

[8] Balthasar quotes Gregory the Great as an early example of those who recognised the significance of the Descent in terms of the redemption of human sinfulness and estrangement. Mysterium Paschale, pp. 175-6.

submissive model representing all things feminine. Adrienne apparently played her part, even by sometimes assuming some of Balthasar's physical ailments![9]

Balthasar is, in many ways, a traditional Catholic theologian, who is often considered excessively conservative, particularly in his views about the Church, but he is of relevance here for three outstandingly radical and original aspects of his theology:

i. He highlights Christ's descent into mental and spiritual suffering, linking this approach with our redemption from states such as depression.

ii. He has a helpful theology of the Trinity as a community of Love.

iii. He links ontological polarities with the 'transcendentals', particularly with beauty in the *gestalt* of Christ. *Kenosis* is in creative tension with *theosis*, and this tension is known to us as Glory.

2. THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTOLOGY

Balthasar, though he makes many *a priori* assumptions about God, is original and consistent in his contribution to Christology, through which he suggests that Christ reveals God's eternal triune nature as *kenotic*. He also affirms our natural tendency to appeal to the Almighty when in distress because Christ also felt abandonment, vulnerability, pain and humiliation. He recognises that the Gospel stories can only be meaningful enough to help us if we put them in the context of the Resurrection which brings us, through Christ, into the presence of the Trinity. The wonder of Christ's self-giving can only make its full impact if we believe that it is God Himself who has taken on our burdens, not just a good man with whom God is pleased. God's *kenosis*, in the sense in which it is used here, pre-supposes a 'high' Christology, in which God's Love is shown through Jesus' divinity, revealing Him to be both self-emptying and triumphant - associated with weakness as well as with power and glory. In this chapter, it will be argued that Jesus, embracing the worst dereliction and the greatest splendour, reveals the eternal nature of the Godhead through His self-giving, and shows what it means to say that 'God is Love'.[10] Christ's Incarnation, with its vulnerability and suffering, contrasts both with His authority and power when on earth, and with the glory which is made manifest by the Resurrection.

This approach to the nature of the Trinity, from whence Jesus came and to whom He returned, depends, to a great extent, on the Johannine writings of the New Testament. It is

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[9] Beattie, T. (1998) 'A Man and Three Women – Hans, Adrienne, Mary and Luce', in New Blackfriars, 79:924, pp. 101-2.
[10] 1 John 4:16.

generally supposed that St John's Gospel must be interpretation from the late first century or early second century, but it records an important developing strand of the theology of the early Church which conveys truth.[11] In the discourses of the Gospel, chapters 14-17, the humiliation of Jesus is juxtaposed with His closeness to the Father and certainty of the Spirit. Christ prays, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify Thee', and 'all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them'.[12] Knowing that He was soon to be disgraced and killed, He talked in terms which spoke of His Father, and of the Spirit who would come to the community of believers, suggesting concepts which we now interpret as the Trinity and the Church.

Tillich's Christology, on the other hand, is open to a variety of interpretations.[13] He certainly combines an Incarnational view of Christ as *Logos* with one which is Adoptionist.[14] His conception of God's involvement in the world does not convey the same conviction as Balthasar, partly because the relevance of the loving inner life of the 'social Trinity' is not related to the human picture of Jesus. For Tillich, the paradox of the Cross and the Resurrection are symbols.[15] The Cross is a symbol which unites all existential polarities, and the Resurrection is a symbol through which the 'Spiritual Presence' gives hope that the Kingdom of God, as a community of 'New Being', will evolve in the world.[16] Tillich states that the God is 'personal' but not to be considered as a person[17], and that 'The unapproachable character of God or the impossibility of having a relation with him in the

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[11] Tillich also uses Johannine material, but mainly restricted to those passages related to *Logos*. J. G. D. Dunn reminds us of the kaleidoscopic image of Christ which developed in the first century, pointing out that the Johannine writings were influenced by Wisdom imagery about pre-existence. Dunn, J. G. D. (1980) Christology in the Making. SCM, pp. 258-268.

[12] John, 17:1, and John, 17:10.

[13] Thatcher, A. (1978) The Ontology of Paul Tillich. OUP, pp. 147-8.

[14] Tillich, ST 2. pp. 148ff. Tillich suggests that the Spirit 'adopts' Jesus because of his conformity with the will of God.

[15] Tillich regards a symbol as a subjective means of learning about truth. A symbol (including metaphors, images, pictures, people and stories) bridges gaps in our understanding by pointing to reality, and in Tillich's view, it participates in the reality for which it stands. Tillich, ST 1. p. 239, ST 2. pp. 153-165, and ST 3. pp. 283ff.

[16] Tillich calls the Spiritual Presence a symbol 'expressing unambiguous life' and a sign of the Divine Spirit. Tillich, ST 3 , pp. 107-8.

[17] Tillich describes the personal element of God as 'the Ground of everything personal' and he says that 'he carries within himself the ontological power of personality'. Tillich, ST 1. p. 245.

proper sense of the word is expressed in the word "holiness"".[18] Balthasar conveys a different understanding in that, though he always respects the distance we are from God, he appears to have had a relationship with Jesus through which he could come nearer to God. There certainly must be a holy 'otherness' and an ineffable aspect to God, but we also have the human picture of God in Jesus to whom we find (to our surprise) we can sometimes relate, helped by our experience with other people because of God's indwelling in our midst. We will turn to Balthasar to develop our understanding of this mystery.

Taken as a whole there are inadequacies in Tillich's trinitarian theology because he describes the Godhead solely in terms of work (creative power, saving love and ecstatic transformation) and cannot come to terms with the concept of three in one.[19] Without postulating a satisfactory doctrine of persons in the 'immanent' Trinity[20], there are few grounds for assuming the on-going 'Spiritual Presence' of the economic Trinity. However a few brief sentences from his work, which have some affinity with Balthasar's view of trinitarian life, will launch us in the right direction. He says that, 'the divine life is the divine self-love. Through the separation within himself God loves himself. And through separation from himself (in creaturely freedom) God fulfils his love of himself – primarily because he loves that which is estranged from himself'.[21]

3. THE GOD-FORSAKEN CHRIST

The importance of Christ's identification with the negative aspects of humanity depends on Him also being an integral member of the eternal Trinity. Balthasar's theology, as he says himself, is totally dependent on a belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ. If Jesus had been just another good man who was scapegoated and disgraced, he might have been a visionary and a hero, but not a Saviour. In a short essay Only if, Balthasar outlines his views in one sentence:

> Only if the same one who has the monster world on his conscience, who possessed
> the incomprehensible power and the frightful courage to let this monster loose, only if
> this one not only shares in the most terrible anguish but surpasses it by laying hold of
> it from below (for only God can know what it means to be truly forsaken by God), only

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[18] Tillich, ST 1, p. 271.
[19] Tillich ST 3, pp. 283ff.
[20] Immanent is used here in the technical sense reserved to describe the eternal inner life of the Trinity as opposed to the 'economic' Trinity revealed as the means of salvation in the world.
[21] Tillich, ST 1, p. 282.

if that Maximum coincides with this Minimum (both beyond our comprehension) not in indifference, but in such a way that absolute power becomes one with absolute powerlessness in sheltering compassion, thus only if God is triune: if the same God is Father and Creator of the cosmos and man, and if he is the Son who gathers all god-forsakenness on the Cross, and if He is the Love between the two, and if the love extended to the uttermost is a single Spirit, Spirit of the Father and the Son, Spirit of strength and weakness, Spirit of the same Love: only then do I receive a key which makes the meaning of being credible and endurable.[22]

Was there ever a longer sentence, or one with a more complete theology? The same Christ who is described as Co-creator[23] offers Himself in obedience for the sake of the world, and in spite of the worst conceivable alienation, the gulf between His condition and His identity in the eternal Trinity is bridged by the Spirit of Love. Balthasar stresses that the Creator-God has put Himself at the mercy of human beings in the complete powerlessness of the Cross, and it is in His weakness that His power and glory are made known to us.[24] He quotes Gregory of Nyssa who says 'the humiliation of God shows the super-abundance of his power which is in no way fettered in the midst of conditions contrary to its nature ... the greatness is glimpsed in the lowliness, and its exaltation is not thereby reduced'.[25]

The obedience of Jesus to the will of His Father is seen throughout the Gospels from childhood onwards, in the wilderness when He is tempted, and more particularly, in the Garden of Gethsemane where Christ uses His human freedom to choose the will of the Father.[26] In the desolate cry from the Cross, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'[27] there is dereliction and even greater suffering which gives us a clue to understanding the terror and horror of feeling isolation and separation from God, which Balthasar envisages in the 'Descent into Hell'. John Saward says that where there is 'hell' on earth, the presence of Jesus on the Cross and in the Godless world of Hell should help those who are in 'the bleak hole of depression, doubt, confusion or despair'.[28] Balthasar himself talks of the 'inner

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[22] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Nelson, E,A. (1969:1983) Convergences, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, p.136-7. The essay continues by outlining some of the tasks of the Church as the Body of Christ in the world.

[23] John 1:3 and Colossians 1:15-20.

[24] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Nichols, A. (1990) Mysterium Paschale, T. and T. Clarke, Edinburgh, p. 33.

[25] Balthasar, Mysterium Paschale, p. 34.

[26] Mark 14:36

[27] Mark 15:34.

[28] Saward, J. (1990) The Mysteries of March, Collins, pp. 127, 132.

spiritual separation from God' and its affinity with *akedia* (with its feelings of futility, doubt, anguish and despair, which are so close to those in depression) as a form of Hell.[29]

Balthasar recognises in Christ a 'solidarity with the abandoned' in Hell[30], though critics consider that he was not justified in developing the Catholic doctrine of Christ's descent mainly on the basis of Adrienne's experiences.[31] Whether this is so or not, his ability to draw our attention to the lengths to which Christ went is invaluable. The Descent into Hell may be a step further than the feeling of being forsaken on the Cross, but they both symbolise the same kind of powerlessness, god-forsakenness and humiliation needed to redeem human sinfulness, and there is no way of knowing what might have happened on Holy Saturday. Certainly it was a time of abandonment, fear and uncertainty for the disciples; they must have been asking for meaning and purpose in a very empty world. The intermediate stage between the tomb and the Resurrection is, however, bridged by Jesus' anticipation of rising again and His promise to send the Spirit. It seems to be a fact of life that we all have to suffer and, in some way, descend into an abyss which can be symbolised by Holy Saturday, before a resurrection experience can be enjoyed.[32]

Balthasar hoped for universal salvation, so that through Christ and His Church, the transformation of the entire world would be achieved. He was regarded with suspicion by his own Church when he said that the Descent into Hell means that there is no human condition outside God's love. However, he overcomes convincingly the Biblical problem of references to eternal perdition by pointing out that all the sayings of Jesus on this subject take place before Easter, before His redemptive work was completed.[33] Balthasar became so concerned to dispense with outmoded concepts of Hell that he wrote, towards the end of his life, Dare We Hope That All Men Be Saved?[34] For him, the hope that no one is to be left in Hell is

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[29] Balthasar, Mysterium Paschale, p. 77.

[30] Balthasar, Mysterium Paschale, pp. 160ff.
O'Donnell, J. (1992) Hans Urs von Balthasar, Geoffrey Chapman, p. 5.

[31] Kerr, F. (1998) New Blackfriars, 79:923 'Adrienne von Speyr and Hans Urs von Balthasar', p. 32.

[32] When the Son descends into Hell He seems to be acting 'contrary to his divine nature' but the paradoxes do not nullify the Johannine certainty that Jesus reveals the Father, and is One with Him in the community of the Godhead.

[33] Balthasar, Theodramatics 4, p. 253, quoted in Oakes, op.cit. p. 311.

[34] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Dru, A. (1968:1988) Dare We Hope that All Men Be Saved?, Ignatius Press, San Francisco.

dependent on Christ's descent into Hell, which he visualises as a more complete self-emptying than the Crucifixion – as if the Cross weren't enough.

The suffering of Hell symbolises god-forsakenness, emptiness and despair, akin to that of depression, and Christ, by His descent to the extremes of this agony (whether on the Cross or after death, whether symbolic or actual), has redeemed it on our behalf. When depressed, we may wander weeping in the garden as Mary Magdalene did, or sit fearfully behind closed doors like the disciples.[35] In each case Jesus appeared to give encouragement, though not immediately recognised, and usually in order to bid farewell. Similarly, the source of comfort and strengthening may not always be obvious nor long-lasting, and we need 'ears to hear' and 'eyes to see'.[36] It is interesting that the 'doubter' Thomas, who at one time, had been willing to go towards Jerusalem and die for Christ[37], was the one who wanted empirical proof that Christ was 'alive', and then eight days later is the first to profess the divinity of the Risen Lord.[38] Balthasar says that we should change our anxieties into a welcome for the presence of 'God who is a consuming fire'.[39] Self-absorption and negative thoughts cannot survive an experience of God's resurrection light and fire.

The 'descent' into the 'underworld' would be useless if it were not for the Resurrection, which gives life, joy and significance to every detail of life. Balthasar's view is that Easter announces the ultimate victory that is in eternity, and that we can experience glimpses of the risen life here and now, though our ability to recognise it is regrettably slow. He quotes Teilhard de Chardin's vision of 'the law of the world' which is the pattern of progress towards the Love of God through death and resurrection, dissolution and the synthesis of opposites.[40] The Resurrection is not to be understood in terms of a dead man living again, but as a transfiguration into a new form of existence – a unique event, without analogy[41], but with consequences which we can share now.

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[35] John 20:1, and John 20:19.

[36] Mark 8:18.

[37] John 11:16.

[38] John 20:28.

[39] Balthasar, Glory 7, p. 539.

[40] Balthasar, Mysterium Paschale, p. 61.

[41] Balthasar, Mysterium Paschale, pp. 193-4.

4. RESURRECTION AND THE TRINITY

Scripture suggests that God's nature is reflected in the humility of the Incarnation and the Cross, as well as in the glory of his Resurrection and the energy of Pentecost. We are encouraged to formulate our concept of God from our knowledge of Christ. For instance, St John writes that 'the Father and I are one' and 'he who sees me, sees the Father'.[42] If one believes that 'God is Love', then it is reasonable to agree with Balthasar that giving and receiving, separating and coming together must be unparalleled in the Trinity, through the supreme polarities of emptiness and fullness. Scola summarises Balthasar's trinitarian theology saying,

> 'First of all there is the trinitarian "being with" of the "Three-in One", in which the one Being of God continually gives and receives itself in the loving exchange between the Persons. It is this original love, well expressed by the term "with", from which everything comes and to which everything returns.[43]

Balthasar was acutely aware of the problems of speaking about change in the Trinity, raised by the concept of exchange between *kenosis* and *plerosis* in the Godhead.[44] Long standing controversies have arisen over whether God is immovable unchanging Being who cannot be approached even by analogy, or whether the world mirrors his creative Becoming. If we agree with Newman that 'My unchangeableness here below is perseverence in changing'[45], we may be pleased that Balthasar goes further by applying this idea to the immanent Trinity. Gerard O'Hanlon considers that he is distinctive in his 'explicit attempt to combine the static with the dynamic, to preserve the category of state while being open to that of event'[46], and describes Balthasar's view of the Trinity as having an inner liveliness of *kenotic* love.[47] As Scola interprets his view, there is a Christological cipher of all reality at an ontological level, and

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[42] John 10:30. See also John 14:9, and Hebrews 1:3.

[43] Scola, op.cit. p.108. Creation is one of the results.

[44] Balthasar, Glory 7, pp.211ff.

[45] Oakes, op.cit. p. 35, Note 30.

[46] O'Hanlon, G.E. (1990) The Immutability of God in the Theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar, CUP, p.112.

[47] Ibid, p.63.

'triune love allows difference in God himself'[48], so that, 'impotence perennially joined to omnipotence is more potent than all the powers of the world'.[49] For Balthasar, the immutability of the Godhead could never be a static state. John Saward summarises Balthasar's stance with a number of quotations saying, for instance, that the inner trinitarian life is one of 'eternal dynamism, liveliness and eventfulness'.[50]

In Balthasar's view, the Incarnation does not alter the Being of God but it <u>reveals</u> Him, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, if this is so, a revelation that comes through Christ must involve suffering for the Father. Balthasar struggled with the dilemma, coming to the conclusion that 'only a hair's breadth separates the real suffering of the God-Man and the non-suffering of God'. Making very fine lines of distinction, Balthasar speaks of walking on a razor's edge to avoid the fashionable talk of the pain of God.[51] Pain and suffering are, therefore, to be distinguished from pity, wrath, tenderness and the other feelings attributed to God in Scripture, which Balthasar considers are more than anthropomorphisms.[52]

If, as Balthasar tentatively suggests, 'suffering' occurs in the Trinity, it must be only remotely analogous to what we understand by human suffering, and in no way changes the essence of God who is, not only eternal *kenotic* love, but also eternal joy, in which God exists as 'pure dynamic actuality'.[53] Balthasar went on to coin the word 'supramutability' to express the dynamic responsive and eternal nature of God.[54] In like manner, because we can only talk of God in terms of analogy[55], he suggests that God can be said to experience 'supra-suffering'.[56] This razor edge approach is nuanced and tentative but Balthasar is right in stressing that the analogies we make in order to understand God's love and His response to human need must be 'ever more' and 'ever greater' than our imagination can conceive.

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[48] Scola,op.cit. p. 50.

[49] Scola,op.cit, p. 81.

[50] Saward, J. (1990) The Mysteries of March, Collins, p. 13.

[51] O'Hanlon, op.cit, p. 38

[52] O'Hanlon, op.cit, pp. 82-83.

[53] Woods, M., about Aquinas, quoted by Saward, op.cit, p. 17.

[54] O'Hanlon, op.cit, pp. 131ff.

[55] Or, as Tillich puts it, through symbol.

[56] O'Hanlon, op.cit, pp. 136 and 175.

The total Godhead suffers in Christ for the sake of the world, but Balthasar does not believe that this suffering affects God so as to change Him fundamentally. This view is not incompatible with the concepts of supra-mutability and supra-passibility because Christ and His suffering are eternally at the heart of the Trinity, and Christ reveals the Godhead rather than altering it. The Godhead, by definition, exists beyond the limitations of time and space, and as Love is constantly 'giving and receiving' it expresses itself in creativity. As Scola puts it 'the perfect intratrinitarian communion that carries in itself this essential element of *kenotic* otherness (difference), which is linked to the perennial event of love circulating in God, is the adequate explanation of the Creation and Incarnation'[57] Paradoxes remain, as they always will, when we try to understand the Almighty Creator who takes human form and reveals Himself in weakness, but this theology is arguably the best way of incorporating the different polarities of Christ's life into the life of the Trinity.[58]

The Trinity can be described as personhood in community where, as Kallistos Ware says, there is 'self-giving and reciprocity'.[59] This is, for me, impossible to conceptualise without envisaging elements of risk and change. Stability and reliability must therefore come from the perfect balance of polarities in God, giving peace, and enabling Him to be eternal rest as well as eternal dynamism. Perhaps there is a clue to our understanding in the Ignatian 'consolation' which may be analogous to this peace, and is usually an energising experience as well as one in which there may be joy in spite of pain.

In a preface to the second edition of <u>Mysterium Paschale</u>, Balthasar stresses the primacy of Christ's 'Descent into Hell' as an expression of the inner-Trinitarian nature of Christ's *kenosis* saying, 'we shall never know how to express the abyss-like depths of the Father's self-giving, that Father who, in an eternal '*supra-kenosis*', makes himself destitute of all that he is and can be so as to bring forth a consubstantial divinity, the Son'.[60] This sounds

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[57] Scola, op.cit. p. 63, extracting his information from Balthasar, <u>Theologik 2</u>, pp. 119-128.

[58] Colin Gunton is critical of Balthasar for using the Cross as a model for the Trinity, suggesting that it could be one-sided without due attention to Creation and Resurrection. I would maintain that Balthasar does not neglect either of these, and that some of the conclusions Gunton reaches coincide with those of Balthasar. This is particularly so when he ends his survey of trinitarian theology by saying that 'to be is to exist in a dynamic of mutual giving and receiving', and that we can understand God and the world as related in otherness. Gunton also uses a familiar ontological metaphor when he speaks of 'the eternal giving and receiving of the Father, Son and Spirit'. Gunton, C.E. (1997) <u>The Promise of Trinitarian Theology</u>, 2nd Edition, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 205.

[59] Ware, K. (1979) <u>The Orthodox Way.</u> Mowbrays, p. 34. Eastern and Western theologies can agree with this understanding of the Trinity. It is not necessary to consider here the problems of 'procession' of the Spirit which led to to the schism over the '*filioque*' clause of the Creed.

[60] Balthasar, <u>Mysterium Paschale</u> p. viii.

too extreme a statement of the self-giving within the Trinity - Christ suffered god-forsakenness on earth, but should this necessarily mean that the same self-emptying occurs in the Godhead?[61] We tend to think that hope can only be sustained if God, in the Trinity, maintains the reliability of His Being, as one God, without risking the complete self-emptying which Balthasar's language suggests. It is possible, however, that this is wishful thinking, and that Love must be ready to go to the utmost extreme of self-giving, and if this is so, the Father as well as the Son (and presumably the Spirit too[62]) must make Himself 'destitute'. *Kenosis*, which could seem to be totally precarious, can be strong, because the activity of Love is the power which unites - by analogy with what we know about *agape* and *eros*.[63]

Walter Kasper also makes points which resonate with Balthasar's view of *kenosis*, though he does not examine the inner nature of the Trinity in the same way.[64] Writing that 'self-emptying is essential to love', that love and suffering go together, he argues that 'God does not divinise suffering, He redeems it ... *kenosis* and suffering now no longer have the last word; the last word belongs to exaltation and transfiguration'. Above all, God's self-emptying on the Cross is 'not a de-divinisation of God but his eschatological glorification'.[65] The trinitarian persons are characterised by their selflessness, and like Balthasar, Kasper says, 'they are, each in their own way, pure surrender, self-emptying; their eternal *kenotic* existence is the condition for the possibility of the temporal *kenosis* of the Son'.[66] Kasper also quotes Gregory of Nyssa's point about Christ's descent into lowliness representing 'a certain excess

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[61] There are those who consider that Balthasar's view of the separation and reunion of members of the Trinity comes very close to tritheism. MacKinnon, D.M. in Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Halliburton, J. (1975) **Engagement with God**, SPCK, p. 14.

[62] As Bulgakov suggests in his early work where he concentrates on the kenosis throughout Creation causes the interpenetration of wisdom into the world, for the sake of its divinisation. Bulgakov, S.N. ed, Pain, J. and Zernov, N. (1976) A Bulgakov Anthology, SPCK, pp.62ff. He later came to emphasise the enduring and continuous self-giving and interpenetration of the Son's love as a manifestation of the preexisting kenotic nature of the entire Trinity. Rowan Williams claims that Bulgakov is one of the first theologians to distinguish the term panentheism from pantheism, and to use the concept of *kenosis* as normative and pivotal in all language about God, in creation as well as in redemption. Williams, R., in Ford, D.F. ed. (1997) The Modern Theologians, 2nd Edition, Blackwell, Oxford, p. 504.

[63] Balthasar applauds Dante for bringing *eros* before the throne of God. Balthasar, H. U. von, trans. Saward, J., 'In Retrospect', reprinted in Riches, J. ed. (1975:1986) The Analogy of Beauty, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 215.

[64] There are many works on the Trinity with very different interpretations from that suggested here, but a critical analysis of these is beyond the scope of this thesis.

[65] Kasper, W. (1982) The God of Jesus Christ, SCM, pp. 196-7.

[66] Ibid, p. 310.

of power'.[67] and argues that as 'God is Love', the doctrine of the Trinity is the only way in which freedom in Love can be expressed through the Godhead.[68]

The concept of a Trinity, where all the members are self-negating and self-emptying in constant interactions of giving and receiving, can be illustrated by analogy with the simultaneous existence of wave (momentum) and particle (position) in modern physics. John Hitchcock, for instance, considers that the 'mutual indwelling' which modern physics discloses within the molecule can be taken as an analogy which can illustrate the *perichoresis* of the Trinity. Interdependence within the molecule has been called 'togetherness in separation', and it demonstrates the basic pattern of everything in the Universe which Hitchcock relates to God, because 'we dwell in Him and He in us'.[69]

5. CONTINGENT POLARITIES

Balthasar, whose theology is largely dependent on insights into transcendence, provides a new view of the polarities of ontology. Though he deals with many contingent polarities it becomes evident, in his studies of Christ's *kenosis* and *plerosis*, that these polarities are opposites into which everything can be gathered and so redeemed.

From our experience of human polarities and the belief that we are made in God's image, we can appreciate Donald MacKinnon when he points out the need to come to terms with the *coincidentia oppositorum* highlighted by Christ's *kenosis*.[70] The tension between polarities in human life, between God's transcendence and His immanence, between the Creator and finite creation were all vital issues for Balthasar. He attempts to link them all by insisting on the integration of theology with prayer, emphasising that only the 'eyes of faith' can know God.[71] Realising that his own insights were not only intellectual, he was probably

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[67] Ibid, p. 191.

[68] Ibid, pp. 295ff.

[69] Hitchcock, J. (1991) The Web of the Universe, Paulist Press, NY, pp. 132ff.

[70] MacKinnon, D. M. in Balthasar, Engagement with God, p.7. *Coincidentia oppositorum* is considered fundamental to Balthasar's work and mentioned three times in MacKinnon's introduction.

[71] Balthasar, Glory 1, pp. 156ff.

influenced by mystics who say, for instance, that 'the eye which sees God is God's eye', and 'it is in God's light that we see light'.[72]

Appropriately, therefore, Scola's work aims to expound the theological style and 'form' of his friend's writings by tracing a coherent argument which links the three main groups of books.[73] He describes Balthasar's view that analogy is possible, not only ascending from image to archetype (*ana-logic*), but also descending from the archetype to the image (*cata-logic*).[74] We can only presume that we have any access to this two way process between God and human beings because we have experience of the saving grace of the Trinity through the life of Christ. Balthasar says that,

> to interpret finite being it is necessary to have constant recourse to the phenomenon of polarity ... polarity signifies a rigorous intertwining of the poles of tension. And this could not be more evident than in the polarity between essence and existence in finite being. The connection is so close that in its unity it constitutes the insoluble mystery of created being so that every attempt to explain one of the two poles as the locus of the mystery, in order to possess itself of the other, is bound to fail.[75]

Balthsar concentrates on three polarities in 'contingent being' two of which are different from those used by Tillich. He describes spirit-body (*Geist* und *Leib*), man-woman (*Mann* und *Frau*) and individual-community (*Individuum* und *Gemeinschaft*).[76] The 'spirit-body' polarity may have an analogy with Jung's polarities with the same names, but goes much further, in that Balthasar's concept joins the finite to the infinite. It is discussed in more detail in Section 6, below. The individual-community' polarity parallels Tillich's, and is clearly of prime importance for the work of individual Christians in the Church or in any community, as well as being vital when considering the nature of God as Love. It is discussed further in Section 8, below.

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[72] Leahy, B. in McGregor, B. and Norris, T., eds. (1994) The Beauty of Christ, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 45.

[73] The seven volumes of the Glory of the Lord, concern the **Beauty** of Christ's revelation in a theology of aesthetics (theophany). The five volumes of Theo-drama concern our cooperation with God in the fight of **Goodness** against evil (action), and the three volumes of Theologik seek for **Truth** through the concept of *Logos* (logic).

[74] Scola, op.cit, p. 55, derived from Balthasar, Theologik 2, pp. 25-57 and 159-198.

[75] Scola, op.cit, pp. 29-30, translating from Balthasar, (1985) Theologik 2, p. 100.

[76] Balthasar, H.U. von (1976) Theo-dramatik 2:1, Johannes Verlag, Einsiedeln, pp. 325ff.

Gender polarity raises interesting questions about the Trinity, if this can be understood in terms of gender at all.[77] There could be a total feminine presence in the Holy Spirit, as in Bulgakov's early sophiology, or we might find an analogy through the relationship of *anima* and *animus*.[78] The concept of *perichoresis* puts both these possibilities within our grasp. It is worth noting that male/female opposites are also an important basis of the individual/community polarity. There is a glaring weakness in Balthasar's discussion of the feminine which he seems to regard solely as a quality of receptive obedience, as in Mary's willingness to be the bearer of the Incarnation, and her 'yes' to God as a model for mother Church. One wonders whether, like Jung, he would see the recently proclaimed dogma of the Assumption as a way of providing for a feminine presence in the Godhead.[79] The impression Balthasar gives is that the feminine should always be consenting and passive, lacking a robust and well functioning *animus*. Oakes understands the implications of Balthasar's ontology, and admits that he 'stammers' at the possibilities of feminine imagery in the Trinity which, in his understanding, would inevitably mean passivity in receiving. If he accepts Balthasar's concept of a *kenotic* Trinity eternally giving to the limit and accepting 'gifts' in return, it can not be the passivity of receiving at which he balks, but the very idea of femininity. John Saward, however, considers that Mary's *fiat* represents the willingness of mankind to be creative and receptive in active co-operation with God,[80] and Rowan Williams, in a foreword to Saward's book, agrees that there is a supremely active element in being at the disposal of God.[81] Obedience to the will of God is, certainly, a basic aspect of faith, but there are great dangers in Balthasar's approach, especially if Mary is emphasised as the archetype of a believing Church, because many Churches still maintain a male hierarchy who are authoritarian in their interpretation of the will of God to the people. Human nature being what it is, manipulation and exploitation are almost inevitable. Oliver Davies considers that Balthasar ignores the

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[77] Tillich, for instance, thinks that the Trinity transcends gender. Presumably, this view is possible for him because he does not include the male/female opposites in his ontological polarities, and considers them to be biological categories. Tillich, ST 3, p. 294.

[78] Julian of Norwich calls Jesus 'our true mother' as if aware of the *anima/animus* complementarity. Revelations, 60, p.169. Anselm also appeals to 'Christ my mother' and says, of the Father and Son, 'even if you are fathers you are also mothers', in a long passage which talks of transformation by being 'mothered' by Christ. Anselm, St., trans. Ward, B. (1973) 'Prayer to St Paul', Meditations of Saint Anselm with the Proslogion, Penguin, pp. 153-156.

[79] Jung, CW, 11, 'Answer to Job', paras. 749ff.

[80] Saward, op.cit, pp. 66ff.

[81] Williams, R., in Saward, op.cit, p.viii.

problem of abuse of power, and that abuse is particularly likely when one group of people (all male) have access to greater knowledge.[82] This is not entirely true, as Balthasar himself talks of the dangers of 'triumphalism of the hierarchy'[83], and also alerts us to a different type of power-seeking in splinter groups who are arrogant enough to think that they have a monopoly of truth. Gerard Loughlin adds to these criticisms, the valid point that Balthasar's 'unity' of the sexes is always male dominated.[84] It is apparent that Balthasar's view of the male/female contingent polarities is inadequate, and if they are to be considered as true polarities and not just biological differences, much work remains to be done in order to determine their relation to the divine life.

6. GLORY IN THE *GESTALT* AND THE SUSPENSION OF MISERY.

The most helpful of Balthasar's work on polarities, in the context of this discussion, is the development of a theology based on classical 'transcendentals' (being, unity, beauty, truth and goodness) because they can enlighten our understanding and commitment to God's *kenosis* and His *plerosis*. The transcendentals create a bridge between the material and the transcendent, being one aspect of the body/spirit polarity, which also has an affinity with the polarities of dynamics and form, and the finite and the infinite. It should be noted that the Spirit is not absent from any aspect of life, so the body/spirit polarity is not between the immanent and the transcendent, though by bringing the opposites together, we can learn about the transcendent through the immanent.

The harmony of Christ's body and spirit, in His obedience to life and death, give glimpses of transcendental beauty - aesthetic experiences of God's glory in His utterly free gift of love.[85] These experiences do not mean aestheticising the mysteries of God in poetry, pictures or music, though these may provide helpful metaphors and symbols, but in apprehending at a deep level the transcendental beauty, goodness and truth of God's love,

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[82] Davies, O.(1998) New Blackfriars, 79:923, 'Von Balthasar and the Problem of Being, pp. 15-16.

[83] Balthasar, Engagement, p. 92.

[84] Loughlin, G. (1998) New Blackfriars, 79:923, 'Sexing the Trinity', p. 24.

[85] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. and ed. Dru, A. (1968:1977) Love Alone: The Way of Revelation, Sheed and Ward, pp. 43-50. This small book contains a summary of the seven volumes of The Glory of the Lord.

which cannot be understood in purely human terms.[86] It is something that takes us out of ourselves, and which can be 'ecstatic'. Balthasar suggests that beauty is the inner reality which penetrates into the darkest places of the struggle of good with evil in which death and suffering, as well as life, are embraced.[87] Beauty gives us glimpses of the divine immanence through which we can get clues about God's transcendence. Christ who meets our emptiness and need, and through whom life can gain new meaning, takes us out of ordinary human perceptions and preoccupations to focus our attention on His victory and glory.

Balthasar starts with the assumption that beauty and the other transcendentals are part of the fabric of being, expressing a bond between God and human beings.[88] 'The True' is, for Balthasar, mainly revelation through the Word of God in Scripture 'which grasps and answers every human question'; 'the Good' is the events of Christ's life, especially His *kenosis*; 'the Beautiful' is the glory of the other two which 'surpasses and integrates all natural beauty' and gives every thing meaning through love.[89] As Thomas Norris writes of Balthasar's understanding,

> The True needs the splendour of the Beautiful, the Good needs the attraction of the Beautiful, and the Beautiful is pleasing because it is rooted in the Good and the True. Beauty has a certain primacy, since it is the radiance of Being and a manifestation of the real. If beauty is neglected, truth loses its persuasiveness, goodness its attraction, and Being its very credibility. Beauty, then, is the integrating and unifying transcendental of Being, for it goes beyond the 'neutrality' of the True and the 'subjectivity of the Good.[90]

Balthasar writes that the beautiful is above all a form (*gestalt*[91]) and 'the light does not fall on this form from above and from outside, rather it breaks forth from the form's interior.'[92] It

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[86] Balthasar disagreed with Karl Rahner's transcendental theology which finds transcendental characteristics in 'anonymous Christians' (working from humankind to Being). Balthasar looks first for the revealed transcendence of Being.

[87] Balthasar, Glory, 7, pp. 23ff.

[88] He describes the bond, in language which is difficult for English Protestants, as a nuptial relationship with the Church, putting much stress on 'Marian' and ecclesiastical surrender in faith to God. For example, Balthasar, Glory 1, pp. 562-5. He is more accessible when he explains the infant's first experience of his or her mother's smile as an epiphany which gives a sense of the good and the true, and inspires wonder and love.

[89] The transcendentals interlock and complete each other, and Balthasar uses the 'analogy of beauty' (in particular) as a more concrete way of approaching God, rather than the more abstract concept of 'analogy of being' on which it is, nevertheless, based.

[90] Norris, T. in McGregor, B. and Norris, T., eds., The Beauty of Christ, pp.228-9.

demonstrates the 'life-principle' which gives everything a vital and dynamic 'form' and character.[93] Beauty provides an experience which gives a sense of completeness, harmony and rest, through which we can go beyond our fragmented and restless human condition and be drawn towards God.[94] The *gestalt* of Christ with its completeness and inner truth is the 'form in which all other forms find their center and ground'. He is a force that unifies and brings together the 'wondrous exchange of contraries' which are found at the centre of life,[95] but to appreciate this, we have to enter into His life in prayer and action.

Our tensions are not resolved by finding an Aristotelean mean between extremes, but by allowing paradox, and even contradiction, to be reconciled and transcended in God. Our conception of beauty links the concrete and the universal, the finite and the infinite, as well as the humiliation and the glorification of Christ. The Son glorifies, radiates and clarifies God, and enables us to see His hand bringing harmony into the world, reconciling polarities, entering the darkness and redeeming all things. Balthasar quotes Karl Barth to express his own view that God enters that which is the total opposite of Himself and that, in doing this, He confirms His own unity - 'God's beauty embraces death as well as life, fear as well as joy and that which we call ugly as well as that which we would call beautiful'.[96] Balthasar stresses that God's glory in the world is recognised through Holy Spirit, but he also applauds Barth in his insistence that we should 'sharpen our sense of the vast distance between divine Absolute and creaturely Relative'.[97] Contrasts help us to experience the effects of beauty, such as the dark and the light, the near and the distant, God's generosity and our self-centredness, Christ's humiliation and His glory. However, the distance and difference of God

[91] A *gestalt* is a form in which the whole has characteristics which exceed the sum of the component parts.

[92] Balthasar, Glory 1 , p. 151.

[93] Balthasar, Glory 1, p. 118.

[94] David Jasper points out that the aesthetic effect is an attitude of praise with a power which compels our attention, both exciting our imaginations and engaging our lives. Jasper, D. (1989) The Study of Literature and Religion, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, p. 76.

[95] Balthasar, Glory 1, p, 677.

[96] Balthasar, Glory 7, p, 23.

[97] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Oakes, E.T. (1971:1992) The Theology of Karl Barth, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, p. 385.

is emphasised by a number of Ignatian scholars[98], and should warn us not to take the analogy of beauty too far.

Aesthetic experience may also be fostered through the prayerful study of Scripture, and Balthasar calls the result 'the union of the greatest possible concreteness of the individual form and the greatest possible universality of its meaning, or of the epiphany within it of the mystery of Being' - a 'shining forth' which is beyond ontology.[99] All experiences of God, whether they are called 'peak experiences', 'epiphanies', or 'consolations' must have consequences in everyday life, and Balthasar believes that harmony with the beauty of Christ engenders an energy that will turn the world upside down.[100] Sometimes it is an energy hidden in what appears to be human weakness if, as in Christ, the power is hidden.[101] The hiddenness of God and His power is a recurrent theme in Balthasar's work, but he believed that the 'real presence' of Christ is in every Eucharist, so that the consecrated bread and wine is able to strengthen ordinary Christians as they partake of His life and energy.[102] This, in turn, can give a clue to the sacramental nature of other experiences, so that strength can come, not only when we are focused on God, but also through other experiences, even where the redeeming features are veiled and we feel desolate, or god-forsaken.

The nature of the Triune God, in whose life we can participate, is recognised through the events of the Incarnation, which compels us to believe that God is compassionate as well as full of glory. He shares our pain, our joy and our hope, and holds together in loving tension weakness and strength, helplessness and power. Though we may pass through the 'valley of the shadow of death', there is always the option of participation with Christ, so as to become increasingly enfolded in God's transforming love, reflecting this in the world. The final chapter of The Glory of the Lord talks of the 'astonished joy of the Resurrection' which

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[98] For instance, Fessard, G. (1956) La Dialectique des Exercises Spirituels, Aubier, Paris, p. 17, and Zeitz, J.V. (1982) Spirituality and Analogia Entis According to Erich Przywara, UP of America, Washington, p. 231.
The pronouncement of the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215: 'as great as may be the similarity, so much the greater must the dissimilarity between Creator and creature be preserved' is always kept in mind, ensuring that 'the tension between "God in us" and "God over us" is maintained'. Riches, J.and Quash, B., in Ford, D.F. ed. (1997) The Modern Theologians 2nd Edition, Blackwell, Oxford, p. 137.

[99] Balthasar, Glory 1, p. 234.

[100] Balthasar, Glory 1, pp 490ff.

[101] Balthasar, Glory 7, p. 323.

[102] Ibid. pp. 432ff.

overcomes and 'embraces sorrow and death'[104], and this is the message Balthasar would like to convey most of all. As he puts it 'the Cross has its place in the heart of the bliss of God' and, in God, pain and joy are not incompatible.[105] They are, in fact frequently experienced in tension together.[106]

8. THEO-DRAMA: OUR FREEDOM AND GOD'S POWER

Balthasar's view that, in the Godhead, there is a reciprocal response of love to the suffering and changes of the Universe[107], means that we too should have an analogous response. The polarity of freedom-destiny is given a prominent place in his writings about the drama of action in the fight between good and evil. It entails a study of people and their freedom, in relation to God and His freedom.[108] Balthasar takes beauty into the world of action, having as his theological motto 'the greatest possible radiance in the world by virtue of the closest possible following of Christ'.[109] The beauty that emerges is a synthesis between our understanding of eternal values and their appropriation in the ordinary world which is full of strife - a beauty that can not be separated from truth, nor from ethical implications. Scola paraphrases Balthasar saying 'we cannot be mere spectators of glory, but we are seized by it in order to become its co-workers'.[110] The Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection of Christ led to the coming of the Spirit and the formation of the Church. Balthasar's social theology is based on the place of the Church, as the Body of Christ, in the dramatic clash of good with evil. The liberating 'suspension of strife' in the aesthetic experience has to be matched by re-entering the tension of human affairs - the Christian life has to be lived in a rhythm of prayer and action. Appreciation of beauty is sterile and joyless if it does not motivate us into alignment with the forces for good.

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[104] Ibid, pp. 532ff.

[105] Ibid, p. 535.

[106] See chapter 8 below.

[107] Balthazar, Love Alone, pp. 45 and 83ff.

[108] Balthasar, Theo-dramatik 2:1, pp. 186ff.

[109] Balthasar, in Riches, op.cit. 'In Retrospect', p. 201.

[110] Scola, op.cit, p. 40.

Most of Balthasar's statements on social matters lack particularity, but he is explicit about those on the fringes of society in the short work, Engagement with God, where he mentions the incurably ill, mentally ill and handicapped.[111] In this book he insists on the Church's involvement in the world, balancing the principle of individuality (the integrity of individuals and authority figures making up the community) with that of community as a whole.[112] MacKinnon, in an introduction to this work, commends the thoroughness of Balthasar's 'profound elaboration of the concept of *kenosis*[113], and his insistence that the life of Christ is now continuing in His Church, directing our love.[114] This love is often expressed by avoiding the struggle for power, and sending Christians to the outcasts on the fringes of society. Thus, Balthasar talks of the world as a theatre of action, where there is engagement with every injustice, and only Love is effective. We have to make decisions, but it is Christ who ensures the victory through His Cross and Resurrection. As O'Hanlon explains, Balthasar uses the analogy of Theo-drama to fashion a theology of history in which God the Father is author, the chief actor is the Son and the director is the Holy Spirit, and we are part of the cast.[115] Balthasar himself writes that,

Nothing in the life of Jesus is separate from God's involvement, nothing in His being beyond or above the embrace of the Father's action, for He is the Father's action. He it is, who constantly takes over and acts for and with the Father, guided step by step by the Holy Spirit. He spares Himself little, and therefore His disciples and those who listen to Him can expect to be spared no less'.[116]

Balthasar describes the estrangement of the political and social scene which displays urges to self-defence, aggression and murder, and all the vain and futile forces which separate us from God.[117] God's self-emptying love penetrates this 'abyss' and reaches us at our lowest

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[111] Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Halliburton, J. (1971) Engagement with God, SPCK, p. 63.

[112] Ibid, p. 31.

[113] MacKinnon, in Balthasar, Engagement, p. 4.

[114] Balthasar, Engagement, pp. 40 and 48.

[115] O' Hanlon, in McGregor and Norris, The Beauty of Christ, p. 95. In Theodramatik 4, Balthasar describes the vicarious substitution of Christ and a Christological theology of history which could be compared with Williams' Descent of the Dove. See below, p. 218ff.

[116] Balthasar, Engagement with God, p. 49.

[117] Ibid, p. 37.

points in the struggle of good with evil. Our interconnectedness reflects that of the Trinity when we give ourselves to the Christian rhythm between the individual and the community.[117] The Church is, for Balthasar, the pre-eminent channel for redemption for the whole world, and as in much good drama, the highest good is to be found in forgiveness - no easy task in the face of the horrors of the Holocaust, but however great the evil, it can be an occasion of love through Christ who shares and redeems the pain. Selfishness, resentment, anger and cruelty are widespread, and we should all admit corporate responsibility, knowing that we need to be forgiven as well as to forgive. A terrible destructiveness builds up from small events, with the horrendous accumulation of unrepented sin which constitutes Hell, and which is all represented at the Crucifixion. The concept of Hell makes the results of sin seem more excruciating, and Balthasar's concept of Christ's 'solidarity with the abandoned' in Hell all the more remarkable. When the tensions of life generate inner conflict, we build up a hellish misery of fear, self-absorption, anger, resentment, despair and other ingredients of depression, but if the reality of beauty can penetrate into the darkest places of the struggle of good with evil, then everything is given meaning through love.[118] Balthasar describes the right use of human freedom, breaking down the shackles of a sinful habit as 'self-possession', and paradoxically, the recognition of weakness can lead to an increase of this freedom and of power.[119]

St Paul has no doubt that 'the weakness of God is stronger than men ... God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong', and 'when I am weak then I am strong'[120] Balthasar talks of the responsibilities of a 'poor and servant Church' which is not over concerned with its structures, and of Christians being led into situations where they may feel abandoned.[121] Balthasar admired Georges Bernanos' novel The Diary of a Country Priest, and cites it as an important example.[122] The references to persecution could be interpreted as dangerous advice unless they are modified by emphasising that suffering and weakness should not be sought,

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[117] This emphasis is made clear in Theodramatics, not yet all translated into English.

[118] Balthasar, Engagement, pp. 39ff.

[119] The discussion of *analogia entis* brought out considerable difference of opinion with Barth about the anology of freedom. Balthasar, H.U. von, trans. Oakes, E. T. (1971:1992) The Theology of Karl Barth, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, pp. 161-2 and 255ff.

[120] I.Cor. 1:25,27, and 2 Cor. 12:10.

[121] Balthasar, Engagement, pp. 93ff.

[122] Bernanos, G. (1937:1977) The Diary of a Country Priest, Harper Collins.

but should be accepted only when there is no better option. He does, however, indicate that callings vary within the communities for whom the Word 'is the living personal presence of the Trinity, articulated in their life of brotherly love'.[123] Some people will have authority and status, some will live hidden lives of self-sacrifice, and some will be pilloried for their beliefs.

We are redeemed, not as individuals living in isolation, but through our interdependence; our moods and our negligence as well as our actions have an effect on other people, and so it is not only for our own sake that we need healing. Guilt, anger, fear and the other negative forces active in depression are forces that disrupt our relationships and can be disastrous in a community, but they can be met and conquered by the transforming power of love. Common purpose, mutual reliance and gratitude are powerful forces which should be particularly evident in the Church as it continues its healing and reconciling ministry, as the Body of Christ, in the world.

8. A REVERSAL OF VALUES.

Balthasar summarised his extensive writings about the relevance of the Christ who provides beauty amid desolation when, towards the end of his life, he wrote,

'God does not come primarily as a teacher for us ('true'), as a useful redeemer for us ('good'), but for *himself*, to display and to radiate the splendour of the eternal triune love in that 'disinterestedness' which true love has in common with true beauty.'
And,
'God's splendour (surpassing the transcendality of "philosophical" beauty) reveals itself and authenticates itself precisely in its own apparent antithesis (in the *kenosis* of the descent into Hell) as love selflessly serving out of love.'[124]

His work implies a complete reversal of values, if we are going to allow love to bring about the ultimate reconciliation of our fragmented parts. Disinterestedness, indifference, and detachment are unfortunate terms, in that they sound antisocial, but in Balthasar's context they mean a lack of self-interest which can allow the freedom to serve God in other people, and more involvement in their interests not less.

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[123] Balthasar, Engagement, p. 99. This was written at a time when 'brotherly' probably included women, but it could equally well indicate an automatic tendency to minimise the importance of women.

[124] Balthasar, in Riches, Analogy of Beauty. ' In Retrospect', pp. 213 and 214.

Because Jesus identifies Himself with every human misery (even experiencing the 'absence of God' in the agonies of His Passion), He is able to include these experiences in the burden He carries on our behalf. The Resurrection enables the reunion of the separated polarities of our existence because Christ carries them into the healing and reconciling love of the Trinity. Balthasar's views about polarities in the world, and in God, complement those of Tillich. Though both writers use an ontological paradigm, and are compatible in some of their conclusions, their style and their interests drew them into very different areas. Tillich is concerned with individual psychology and with society and politics, whereas Balthasar is interested in individual 'spirituality' (prayer), and engaged with culture through an extensive knowledge of secular literature, philosophy and history. In general, Tillich's ontological polarities stand up better to critical examination, and are more easily applied in a psychological framework, particularly to the underlying tendencies in mood change.

However, Balthasar, by using the polarities of *kenosis* and *plerosis* (fullness of love) as central themes in his theology, also provides a dimension beyond ontology, through which we can understand, by analogy, the tensions of the divine life - the transcendent beauty of Christ's self-giving, providing a non-intellectual insight into the nature of the Trinity. Both theologians advocate a balance of subjective and objective approaches, but whereas Tillich's psychological and 'spiritual' insights are couched in language which is probably too theoretical to encourage changes of attitude, Balthasar's use of poetic and archaic phraseology, though it may strike chords of *poiesis*, is sometimes excessive and flowery. Both writers stimulate our interest, increasing our understanding of ourselves in our relationship to God, and Noel O'Donoghue is right when he writes of Balthasar, 'flawed wisdom is the most we humans can expect from one another. The question is whether the light that shines through and beyond the flaws is good and true and beautiful'.[125] The flaws O'Donoghue sees in Balthasar include his view of the feminine, his inability to accept the full value of people outside his Church and his increasing ecumenical deafness, to which one could add his failure to see the need to change other attitudes in the Church, but I, like O'Donaghue, have no doubt that light shines through the limitations.

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[125] O'Donoghue, N. in McGregor and Norris, op.cit, p. 266.

CHAPTER 8. GOD AT THE CENTRE - NICHOLAS DE CUSA, IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA and MIGUEL UNAMUNO.

'There is a root or depth in thee from which all the faculties come forth, as lines from a centre or as branches from the root of a tree. This depth is called the Centre of the soul, I had almost said of thy soul; for it is so infinite that nothing can satisfy it or give it rest but the infinity of God' [1]

'Jesus wept'.[2]

CONTENTS

This chapter complements the last by considering some other aspects of the polarities inherent in theological concepts of our relationship with God, particularly those of pain and joy. The work of Nicholas de Cusa suggests a synthesis through bringing opposites together towards God at the Centre, where all conflicting elements can be reconciled. The Ignatian tradition also stresses that God can be found in all things, and adds that, through Christ, we can participate in His unifying love. The theological writings which stress the reconciling of opposites in Love have an affinity with the findings of psychologists such as Jung who say that 'psychic energy' is generated at the centre of our being when opposites are brought together. The theologians add that the force of love which unites all things is revealed to us in Christ's life and its fulfilment in Resurrection.

Dame Julian of Norwich reflects a basic theology which underpins this thesis when she says. 'Look, I am God. I am in all. I do everything! I never cease upholding

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[1] Law, W., quoted in Happold, F.C. (1963) Mysticism, Penguin, p.379.

[2] John 11:35.

my work, and I never will. I am guiding everything toward the end I ordained for it from the first, by the same might, wisdom and love with which I made it. How can anything be wrong?'[3] The feelings we have about tragedy and mortality make us feel helpless and hopeless but trust is necessary if we are to be healed and transformed, because pain and joy are both at the centre of life. Through our sorrows, as much as through our happiness, we can participate in the life of God, and He feels with us. Miguel Unamuno is an early example of those who deviate from the standpoint that God can only be perfect if He is impassible. While accepting Balthasar's reservations about mutability, I contend that God enfolds all movement, all change, and all distress, being both central in them, and also beyond them.

1. GOD AT THE CENTRE

Concepts of God at the centre of all things is very ancient, and prayer with the image of a circle signifying wholeness is practised in many cultures. The centre is the place where balance, harmony and reconciliation give rise to an energising spirit. Examples can be given from ancient sun-god myths, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam amongst others.[4] Plotinus uses the symbol of the centre saying that 'we hold through our own centre to the centre of all centres, just as the centres of the great circles of a sphere coincide with that of the sphere to which all belong'.[5] As Christopher Bryant puts it, 'mystics through the ages have always written of the inner centre at the heart of our being where God indwells, a meeting place where there is no contradiction'.[6] A powerful expression of this concept of God is by the medieval Franciscan monk, Bonaventure, who wrote in the thirteenth century that,

because the most pure absolute Being, which is being without qualification, is the first and the last, it is, therefore, the origin and the consummating end of all things. Because it is eternal and most present, it therefore encompasses and enters all duration as if it were at one and the same time its centre and its circumference.

[3] Julian, Revelations, 11, p.81-2.

[4] Cooper, J.C. (1978) An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols, Thames and Hudson, P.32.

[5] Plotinus, trans. MacKenna, S. (1956:1991) The Enneads, 6:9:8, Penguin, p.545.

[6] Bryant, C. (1978) The River Within, DLT, p.13.

The Biblical term for the centre of our lives, as we live them now, is usually the heart, a metaphor given a variety of connotations. We are reminded that hearts are divided, containing evil imaginings, hatred and idols as well as good, but we need single-mindedness and a whole heart.

Because it is utterly simple and the greatest, it is, therefore, totally within all things and totally outside them and thus 'is an intelligible sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere'.[7]

Tillich uses the metaphor of 'centre' as a means of expressing the place where God unites all polarities and a place where self-integration occurs. It is the 'point that cannot be divided'[8], and he writes that, 'the Spirit takes the personal center into the universal center, the transcendent unity which makes faith and love possible'.[9] This centre is a place of spiritual and moral integrity towards which we can move in order to heal our fragmentation. Constant interaction through exchanges of giving and receiving (with each other and with God) enables us to come nearer this point of balance and harmony. We are dependent on the love of God and His power and movement for this process (not least on His forgiveness) and, therefore, Tillich relates it to the concept of God's dynamism which is always active in the world. Tillich goes so far as to say that 'God is eternally creative; through himself he creates the world and through the world himself'.[10] However, as we have noted, he insists that God, as eternal Love transforming and integrating all things, must, in some sense, remain beyond human changes. In this understanding, human beings are part of the divine life and creativity, and are therefore part of a 'not yet' in the Kingdom which is gradually being revealed as history continues to develop.[11] It is interesting to note that Tillich, in terms that are now becoming familiar through quantum physics, also understands the presence of God's creativity and redeeming love as 'an interdependence of everything with everything else' working towards the salvation of the Universe as a whole.[12] It is apparent that our struggles have eternal significance in a wider setting than we can conceive.

Tillich, influenced by Boehme, Schelling and Jung, equates salvation with reconciliation of the darker side of mankind, writing that 'healing means reuniting that

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[7] Bonaventure, trans. Cousins, E. (1978) The Soul's Journey into God, C.W.S. Paulist Press, N.Y. p.100. The image is said to have been based on syncretistic Greek texts and to have come to Bonaventure through Alan of Lille.

[8] Tillich ST 3, p.32.

[9] Tillich, ST 3, p. 269.

[10] Tillich, ST 2 p.147.

[11] Ibid, p.120.

[12] Ibid, p. 96.

which is estranged, giving a center to what is split, overcoming the split between God and man, man and his world, man and himself.[13] Tillich's concept of centredness, borrows from ideas of wholeness in *Gestalt* philosophy, and he visualises it as a dynamic state of interactions going out to, and returning from, all opposing forces.[14] He describes the healthy integrating movement of life's processes around the centre, using a number of spatial metaphors, such as a circular movement from the centre and back in new self-creation and self-integration, a horizontal movement which takes us forward into self-alteration, and a vertical movement which 'drives us towards the sublime' in self-transcendence.[15]

Tillich talks of prayer as a point of balance and tranquillity which can be found through *The Spiritual Presence*, as we seek to find our personal centre, and bring our concerns (including a concern for individual and corporate healing) before God.[16]   In and through the Spirit, the polar elements meet, and God's creativity responds to faith with the energy of grace. Opposites can meet, so that by the light of the Holy Spirit, illusion can come face to face with reality, and the hidden desires which cause conflict can begin the process of reconciliation. Bridges between our human understanding and eternal values, and between the conscious and the unconscious mind are made by moving towards the ultimate point of reconciliation revealed in Christ.

A. NICHOLAS DE CUSA (c.1400-1464) - THE INTEGRATION OF POLARITIES.

Nicholas Cusanus, who lived shortly before Ignatius, is pivotal as a source of much of the thinking which recognises the importance of the meeting of polarities, bringing the Creator and the created together, and in them all other opposites, thus providing a dynamic which liberates energy. Cusanus, a German philosopher, cardinal and reformer, lived in a world which was beset by strife, corruption and apathy. He aligned himself with the Papal cause in trying to negotiate union with the Greeks and later administered the Papal states in Rome for Pius II. He worked on the

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[13] Tillich, ST 2, p.166.

[14] Tillich, ST 3, p. 33.

[15] Ibid. pp. 30-31.

[16] Ibid. pp. 277ff.

disheartening task of seeking reunion with more than one dissident group.[20] At the same time as having these responsibilities, he wrote about his mystical understanding of theology. Pauline Watts suggests that he goes through a sequence of understanding which is initially confined to 'learned ignorance' about an absent transcendent God, but later comes to appreciate the image of God and the immanent power of His presence.[21] Throughout his writings Cusanus is seeking metaphors to help our conceptions of God, but he knows that any symbols we use are disproportionate and inadequate.[22]

Cusanus stresses that 'God is in all things', and he also says that 'everything is in everything',[23] a statement which is very reminiscent of the nuclear scientists. God is totally beyond reason - no theory, however subtle, can explain Him, and it is the mystics who find Him in the simplicity of what Cusanus calls 'learned ignorance'. In other words the unconscious and intuition, through the inpouring of Grace, are able to apprehend matters which are beyond the capability of reason and language.[24] He values the world which is unfolding God's nature, talking of the polarities of 'movement and form', 'potency and act', which make the 'Soul of the World', saying that 'whilst matter ascends towards being actual, form descends to limit, perfect and determine matter'.[25]

Cusanus describes God in the world as 'the super-essential unity in which all contraries coincide', beyond anything which we can comprehend.[26] He was open to accusations of having pantheistic tendencies because he says that 'God is in and through all things, and all things are wholly in God'[27], and in the world He is in paradox - to be found as explanation (explicatio) of the inexplicable (complicatio).[28] Cusanus recognises throughout, however, that God is beyond the world as Creator, and that we owe everything to His power - He is known though unknowable, and only

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[20] Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, (1957) p. 955.

[21] Watts, P. (1982) Nicholaus Cusanus, (Studies in the History of Christian Thought), E.J. Brill, Leiden, p. 232.

[22] Watts, op. cit., p. 51.

[23] Cusanus, N., trans. Heron, G. (1954) Of Learned Ignorance, RKP, p. 83.

[24] Ibid, pp.7ff. and 139.

[25] Ibid, pp. 105ff.

[26] Ibid, p. 49.

[27] Ibid, p. 139.

[28] Cusanus, N., trans Salter, E.G. (1928) The Vision of God, J.M. Dent, p. 15.

seen in darkness (as some of the Fathers say 'the dark ray of dazzling light').[29] God is infinitely great and infinitely small, the centre and the circumference. For Cusanus, He is everywhere, in the same way that we have noted in Tillich and in the Ignatian tradition. Cusanus has an interesting passage on God's apparent mutability and diversity as we know Him in His immanence, which is at odds with a belief in God as an immutable unity of absolute truth.[30] For Cusanus, however, every contradiction seems to add to 'God's unplumbed depths,' and is therefore a source of praise.[31]

In a delightful book (written to explain his ideas to a community of monks), which is based on a metaphor derived from the image of an icon with eyes which follow the beholder from wherever he may look[32], Cusanus expresses the kernel of his faith, saying that 'Thy look is Thy being ... I am because Thou dost look at me ... if Thou didst turn Thy glance from me, I should cease to be'.[33] He adds that 'He is the absolute Ground in which all otherness (*alteritas*) is unity and all diversity identity'.[34] Tillich also, for all his emphasis on the *Ground of Being*, holds to the belief that we are totally dependent on God's continuing creative and reconciling power. It is only because God is the transcendent Creator, keeping us constantly in mind (seeing us) that, through His regard, we are able to find Him immanent in the multitude of things - 'Thou callest nothing to be something, and that which is nothing heareth Thee because that which was nothing becometh something'.[35] The metaphor of the vision of God has a double meaning - God's vision of us and our vision of God, so that Evelyn Underhill, commenting on Cusanus, says that 'we are led from our contemplation of the gaze of God transcending all creatures and including them in His Eternal Now, to the revelation of God as immanent in creatures, since His essence penetrates all things and through them He draws man's spirit to Himself'.[36] Watts stresses that Cusanus was seeking metaphors which help in 'the recovery of the sense of divine immediacy'

Cusanus, Ignorance, p. 210.

[29] Cusanus, Vision, p. 43.

[30] Ibid, p. 74.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid, p. 5.

[33] Ibid, p. 16.

[34] Ibid, p. 13.

[35] Ibid, p. 47.

[36] Underhill, E., introduction to Cusanus. Vision, p. xvi.

through paradox and mystical theology.[37] She mentions that, in his later works, the omnipresent immanent power of God is recognised and stressed as much as our ignorance about Him - we are made in the image of God.[38] Cusanus also emphasises the importance of using God's gifts in interaction with other people and the surrounding culture[39], but at the same time, he notes the relevance of the inner world. People, assisted by Grace, should 'search for the divinity through voluntary introspection and through self-discovery and self-realisation'.[40] Cusanus was a theologian who would have appreciated modern psychological work on the polarities of the mind. To illustrate his concept of the way in which God influences us, Cusanus often uses metaphors taken from popular games such as *ludus globi* - the movement of the ball depends on the will and skill of the player but occurs within the structure of concentric circles, representing the community, and the universe with Christ at the centre.[41]

Tillich and Cusanus are alike in seeing the world in a process of separation and reunion in which opposites repel and attract each other.[42] Polarities coincide throughout nature, so Cusanus says that 'disjunction and conjunction alike are that wall of coincidence, beyond which Thou existest, set free from all that can be spoken or thought'. The coincidence of contradictories' (something we cannot understand) is the place where God is found at the centre of all centres. For Cusanus, the absolute maximum which is God's transcendence coincides with the absolute minimum, so that He is in the meanest thing as well as in the greatest,[43] and for Tillich, 'the infinite is present in everything finite'.[44] God as Trinity is the essential Unity which reunites everything that has become separated in a divisive and estranged world.[45] As Noel O'Donoghue says, 'the infinite creates the finite, yet remains infinite in its relations

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[37] Watts, op. cit, p. 29.

[38] Ibid, p. 30.

[39] Ibid, pp. 231-2.

[40] Ibid, p.229.

[41] Ibid, pp. 192ff.

[42] Tillich, ST 3, p. 34.

[43] Cusanus, Vision, p. 53.

[44] Tillich, ST 1, p. 81and 263.

[45] Tillich, ST 3, p. 284.

with the finite. Prayer makes it possible to apprehend this conjunction, transcending, as it does, the ordinary in which it is rooted.[46]

All opposition (excepting, perhaps, that which is total contradiction, evil or not-real[47], can be said to imply a context which is able to unite the opposites, and Cusanus points to the Incarnation, saying, 'all diversities that become united take their unity from the maximal union of the two natures of Christ'.[48] As Tillich stresses, Cusanus' eirenical philosophy is more about dimensions than hierarchies, as it seeks harmony, with an invitation to dialogue in practical areas, both personal and political, where divisions can be healed.[49] The Cross of Christ may seem to be a contradiction to the glory of God, but it is a means of bringing us to the Centre where self-giving and vulnerability receive Grace and steadfast love. In our negative moods, a fragile offering can meet the strength which transforms if we are open to finding God at the centre of our being - in the midst all our turbulent desires.

B. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA (1491-1556) - FINDING GOD IN ALL THINGS

The need to seek the centre of our being in order to find the grace of God which can redeem and heal our mood brings us back to the Ignatian distinction between consolation and desolation. The aim of discernment is to calm the contrary tendencies so that they can be changed and brought into harmony with the work of Christ, an aim which culminates in 'finding God in all things' - a resurrection experience in the midst of discord and anxiety. The contemplation on 'attaining divine love' summarises the whole process and brings the Exercises back to their sacramental purpose of transforming the ordinary things of life so that they are recognised as created and maintained by God.[50] Ignatius prefaces this contemplation by pointing out 'that love ought to manifest itself more by deeds than by words' and that

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[46] O'Donaghue, N.D. (1979) Heaven in Ordinarie, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 178.

[47] Doran enters into a long discussion of the problem of evil, coming to a conclusion that it is a contradiction of reality, rather than the contrary of good which may still be transformed as part of what is real. Doran, op. cit, pp. 113ff.

[48] Cusanus, Ignorance, p.103ff

[49] Tillich, ST 3, p. 13.

[50] Ignatius, Spiritual Exercises, 230 - 231, p. 329.

love means sharing everything that is owned.[51] There is no valid ownership, certainly not of our own good qualities, because every bit is gift from God. Ignatius writes that

> He dwells also in myself, giving me existence, life, sensation and intelligence; and even further, making me his temple, since I am created in the likeness and image of His divine Majesty ...... God labours and works for me in all the creatures on the face the earth ..... my limited power descends from the Supreme and Infinite Power above; and so of justice, goodness, piety, mercy and so forth – just as the rays come own from the sun, or the rains from their source.[52]

Ignatius wrote, in a letter urging the interaction of ordinary life and prayer, that the 'kind of meditation which finds God our Lord in all things is easier than raising oneself to the consideration of divine truths which are more abstract, and which demand something of an effort to keep our attention on them'.[53] Involvement in the ordinary fragmented things of life, and finding God in them, is a hall mark of the Ignatian way. Tensions between instinctual, material and spiritual aspects of life often result in stress and fear, which then lead to depression. If we are convinced that at the centre of everything there is the presence of God, and feel this truth at a deep level (*sentir*), there will be consolation, instead of anxiety. There is an interaction between the transcendence and immanence of God which was symbolised, for Ignatius, in the Eucharist. He took for granted that the Mass would be the main focus of sacramental life in Christ, while at the same time, finding the sacramental presence of God in all things.[54]

Joseph Tetlow paraphrases Ignatius, saying that 'all that I am and all that I have is participation in God'[55], and therefore, the only possibility of finding reality is through a spirituality that infuses everyday life, giving it meaning. Everything which is not within this orbit is without substance, but we are 'unfinished created glory', as Jules Toner puts it.[56] The meaning and purpose of each individual is therefore sacred, and there should be no room for destructive lack of self-esteem. Though God is to be found in all things, and there are similarities in His nature and ours, Ignatian

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[51] Ibid, 230-231, p. 329.

[52] Ibid, 235-236, p. 330.

[53] quoted by Houdek, F. J. (1994) Way Supplement 79, 'Prayer and Mission', p. 23.

[54] Spiritual Diary, pp. 73ff.

[55] Tetlow, J.A. (1989) Choosing Christ in the World, The Institute of Jesuit Sources, Saint Louis, p. 173.

[56] Toner, J.J. (1991) Discerning God's Will, Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis, p. 15.

theologians such as Erich Przywara. His view of a rhythm of ascent and descent[57], of desolation and consolation - at one time feeling separation when drawn away from God by the forces of non-being, and at another time a feeling of unity when drawn towards Him in love, is expounded by a number of Ignatian scholars.[58] They point to the element of pilgrimage (becoming) in concepts of spiritual growth, and the consequent need for continual change and self-giving - losing the soul to gain it. Love alone has any real meaning, and if a desire for love becomes a reality, we participate in God so that our problems are put into a different perspective. Love, which penetrates into all things, can permeate our contradictory thoughts and feelings, and reconcile the polarities which cause conflict and stress - a process that always involves forgiveness, and some form of abandonment.

Fessard analyses Ignatius' intention in terms of a dialectical philosophy which has an affinity with that of Tillich, and which resonates with Nicholas de Cusa.[59] He stresses, for instance, that God inhabits the smallest thing but cannot be contained by the largest.[60] The most insignificant aspect of life can be drawn into the divine and must be respected for its potential. Moreover, there is a constant circular dynamic which takes us from the universal into existence and back through the love of Christ. The opposites of '*être et non être*' are drawn into the love of God.[61] Non-being is taken up into Being, as Tillich insists, and as Edouard Pousset says in presenting the work of Gaston Fessard, 'freedom passes from non-being to being by becoming itself'.[62] This speaks of our inner need to seek the reality about ourselves, and to be authentic in our relationships, if we are to find that part which has eternal value.

Tillich's writings have several other affinities with those of Ignatius, noting that God is omnipresent, participating creatively in all things, the transcendent God who is also the *Ground of Being*.[63] As Tillich puts it, God can only be thought of

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[57] Przywara, E., trans. Bouquet, A.C. (1935) Polarity, OUP. p. 147.

[58] For example in Egan, H.D. (1976) The Spiritual Exercises and the Ignatian Mystical Horizon, Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis, p. 8, and Zeitz, op. cit, p. 88.

[59] see below.

[60] Fessard, G. (1956) *La Dialectique des Exercises Spirituels*, Aubier, Paris, p. 172.

[61] Ibid, p. 221.

[62] Pousset E., tans. Donahue, E.L. (1980) Life in Faith and Freedom, Institute of Jesuit Sources, St Louis, p. 13.

[63] Tillich, ST 1, p. 277.

symbolically, so that even the concepts of immanence and transcendence are only 'spatial symbols', and no human category can describe Him.[64] The *Logos* is, however, God's self-revelation in all things which Tillich describes as the 'immanence of creative potentiality'.[65] His concept of *theonomy,* which is the motivating power within a community, coming from the Spiritual Presence parallels the Ignatian tradition[66], because they both suggest that ultimate values can become part of the personality or group by introjection.[67] Theonomy is accessed through symbol and mysticism, and results in religious knowledge which Tillich says, 'comes out of the center of the totality and leads back to it'.[68] Inner knowledge for which Tillich uses the term *gnosis,* or 'participating knowledge'[69], can be compared with the Ignatian use of the word *sentir* - a deep feeling for the things of God.[70] This knowledge does not want to control but to be in harmony with the divine. It is most likely to occur when conscious and unconscious desires are brought together, bringing a resurgence of spiritual energy which is healing. Andrew Louth also points out that this kind of knowing and assimilation of values through prayer has always been valued in the Eastern Orthodox traditions of contemplation, where it is complemented by the theologian who spreads this knowledge in communicable form.[71]

The polarities of prayer and action, the individual and the community are held in close association by the Ignatian process, and Tillich also clearly implies that a

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Adrian Thatcher, however, points out ambiguities in Tillich's position. For example, estrangement means God is not present, yet God incorporates non-being and conquers it. Thatcher, A. (1978) The Ontology of Paul Tillich, OUP, pp. 137-8.

[64] Tillich, ST 1, pp. 236ff., 239 and 263. Tillich's concepts of God can be compared with traditional ideas of *analogia entis* as discussed, for instance, by Hans Urs von Balthasar. who says that 'Christ reveals the Godhead rather than altering it - 'He who hangs on the Cross brings God to a loveless world and to Hell, and stays God'. .

[65] Tillich, ST3, p. 422. See also p. 213, on *perichoresis.*

[66] Ibid. p. 159.

[67] In Tillich's terms, avoiding the extremes of either a heteronomous objective imperative, which is foreign to the culture, or an autonomous subjectivity which is limited to that culture. Tillich, ST3, pp. 251ff. Tillich worked, as he puts it himself, 'on the boundaries', between heteronomy and autonomy, between theology and philosophy, and between religion and culture - from a vantage point where there can be interpenetration and a more holistic view. Hamilton, K. (1963) The System and the Gospel, SCM, pp. 199-200.

[68] Tillich, ST3, p. 255.

[69] Ibid, p. 137.

[70] Rahner, H., op.cit, p. 207.

spirituality which is out of contact with the world in which we live becomes idolatrous religiosity in a destructive isolation of self-inflation. Frank Houdek reiterates that there is an integrating rhythm if we can relate prayer to our life in the world - each aspect expands and enlivens the other.[72] To refuse this way, if it is obvious and available, is to be beset by guilt, false ideals, worthlessness, lack of meaning and lack of purpose – in other words, to be on the road to depression. These theological insights into the importance of integrating polarities, not only incorporate the whole of life, but they also relate it to the transcendent dimension which is more healing and more energising than any power inherent in ourselves.

2. INTEGRATING PAIN.

A. GOD AND SUFFERING

We are concerned with polarities which occur because of emotions, such as suffering or delight, commitment or withdrawal, guilt or forgiveness, love or hate, trust or insecurity. Our desires, motivation and our energy depend on the stability and balance of many conflicting feelings, and it seems likely that the tensions we experience are necessary for our progress. God's response to our emotional dilemmas is at the central point where opposites are reconciled, and it is there that we can begin to understand that the strength of Love is found in apparent weakness. There are paradoxes in our understanding of the nature of God and His compassion, but our response to the Christian story and our experience of contrary tendencies in ourselves can lead us to accept the possibility that suffering and joy can become united in Him (as, for instance, in the experience of forgiveness). If God is, as we have argued, at the centre of all things, he must be in the midst of our feelings.

There can be no doubt about the importance of our feelings, as Robert Doran writes, 'Feelings are energy. Feelings are the basic sensitive component of every human operation. Feelings make of spirituality a story. Feelings are the drive and the

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[71] Louth, A. (1974:1978) Theology and Spirituality, SLG Press, Oxford, p.15. He writes that 'the contemplative holds to the centre, the still centre, and knows (gnosis); the theologian carries the power of the centre outwards, manifesting its wisdom (sophia).

[72] Houdek, F. J. (1994) Way Supplement 79, 'prayer and mission', Way Publications, p. 28.

momentum of the life of the human spirit. Feelings join the spirit to the body in a conscious unity'.[73] Nevertheless a common interpretation of *apatheia* has been associated with the classical concept that in order to be perfect God must be without emotions, immutable and impassible. This traditional concept is not compatible with the loving, self-giving God who is found in the Bible. Even before the Incarnation, the Hebrew Scriptures suggest that God can, and does, suffer on behalf of his people. Isaiah sums it up when he says that 'in all their distress he too was distressed'.[74] Statements like this have been given a poetic rather than a substantial meaning, or been dismissed as anthropomorphisms.[75] If, however, God does not bear our suffering, the excruciating anguish of the world may seem good reason for loss of faith, and we despair when we see the horrors which men and women inflict on one another.

There is a frequently quoted incident from a concentration camp (Buna), recorded in Night by Elie Wiesel - one of those who witnessed a young boy suffer a lingering agony before dying. He cried out that God was on the gallows and that He died there too.[76] This cry has been variously interpreted. It could have meant a loss of faith because 'a God who loves' seemed absent or totally helpless and 'dead' (as Primo Levi thought) but Wiesel, on the other hand, felt more like Job, wanting to accuse God of being present but remaining inactive.[77] Others interpret the event as a re-enaction of Christ's death, and redemptive because God suffered the agonies of death with the child.[78] A Jewish writer, Ulrich Simon, became Christian because of the Holocaust, feeling that only the Cross of Christ could match the horrors of Auschwitz and ultimately redeem them. Simon, as a result, writes that 'God has entered history in the sacrifice of Jesus'.[79] Grace Jantzen adds to this view by saying that 'only a God who can suffer could command respect after Auschwitz'.[80]

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[73] Doran, R., in Moore, R.L. ed. (1988) Carl Jung and Christian Spirituality, Paulist Press, NY, p. 80.
See also Doran, R. (1990) Theology and the Dialectics of History. UP Toronto, p. 85.

[74] Isaiah 43:9, NIV.
Doran, Jung, p. 80.

[75] Mozley, J.K. (1926) The Impassibility of God, CUP, p. 4.

[76] Wiesel, E. (1981) Night, Penguin, p. 77.

[77] Ibid, p. 84.

[78] Fiddes, P.S. (1988) The Creative Suffering of God, Clarendon Press, Oxford, p.4.
Marcel Sarot finds this untenable because of the record of Christian antisemitism. Sarot, M. (1991) Modern Theology, 7:2, 'Auschwitz, morality, and the suffering of God', p. 138.

[79] Simon, U. (1975) Story and Faith in the Biblical Narrative, SPCK, pp. 55ff.

[80] Jantzen, G.M. (1984) God's World, God's Body, DLT, p. 85.

Participating in another's suffering imaginatively is necessary for empathy, and one cannot conceive of a God who has less capacity for this than we do ourselves.

For Wiesel it was not, however, necessary to adopt Christianity for he found something within him straight away saying of God, 'where is He? Here He is - He is hanging on this gallows'. [80] Wiesel himself, steeped from childhood in Torah, Talmud and Midrash, explains his point of view saying that he needed God, even in Auschwitz. Though he cried out - 'never shall I forget that smoke ... those mountains which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams into dust'[81], he never renounced a Jewish faith that could cry out in protest and anger.[82] He explains that, in the Midrashic tradition, God accompanies His people in their suffering - they suffer with Him in exile, and they share the same hope.[83] Wiesel rightly says, 'we know that God suffers because He tells us so'[84], and his belief was not naive; it was tested and tried in the furnace of his own suffering, and in his empathy with the agony of others. He feels for God's tears, and says, 'He is at once link and sundering, pain and healing, injury and peace, prayer and pardon. He is, and that must be enough for us'.[85] The ability to love God, who feels for us in all circumstances, is necessary for those who wish to maintain faith in states of depression.

Until recently, the concept of suffering in the Godhead rarely crept into Christian theology, though we have every reason to believe from the Johannine writings that it was God who suffered on the Cross. He brings the Godhead to earth, entering into our pain with far more than empathy, and 'by bearing our sins'[86], takes our pain into Himself - and yet He allows us to continue in our destructive use of freedom. The human nature of Christ has been kept strangely separate from ideas about the nature of the Godhead. The many Councils determining doctrine came out in favour of paradoxes which only lead to further ambiguity. Nicaea and Chalcedon, for instance, talk of God as having one being and one substance (*homoousia*), but three persons (*hypostases*), and the third Council of Constantinople declares that

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[80] Wiesel, Night, pp. 75-76.

[81] Ibid, p. 44.

[82] Wiesel, E. (1996) All **Rivers Run to the Sea**, Harper Collins, p. 83.

[83] Ibid, p. 103.

[84] Ibid, p. 104.

[85] Ibid, p. 105.

[86] Hebrews 9:28.

has two wills, the divine and the human, but they are undivided, unchanged, unseparated and unconfused - apparent impossibilities. None of the Councils entertained, however, the most pertinent, though difficult, paradox of all, possible mutability or passibility.[88]

Anselm was concerned about the paradoxes of God: and heads one section of the Proslogion, 'how is He omnipotent, though there are many things He can not do',[89] and another, 'how is He both compassionate and beyond passion'. He asks 'if Thou art not pitiful whence can the wretched gain so much comfort?' and he concludes that God's compassion is of a different order from ours and without emotion.[90] This is explained by J.K. Mozley as a way of thinking of God as untouched in His eternal Being, but being capable of pity in His movements towards mankind.[91] This concept suggests that he might edge towards a God of polarities with the energies or the immanent aspect having different attributes from the transcendent essence. These mysteries have caused a wide spectrum of literature from diverse traditions, and there is good reason for believing that the close association of Christ's human and divine natures, and the doctrine of *perichoresis*, mean that we can conceive of Christ's suffering in a way that brings all pain into the intra-trinitarian life of God.

In the late nineteenth century the climate of opinion began to change, and there were sporadic efforts to discuss the possibility of a mutable and passionate God, so that it is now more acceptable to suggest that God can suffer and change, making Himself vulnerable to the suffering of Creation. There is now a considerable body of opinion who would see, in God, the dynamic activity of intrapersonal love. He is a reliable Being who is in one sense unchangeable, but who is also responding to our need. Over a hundred years ago, I.A. Dorner (1809-1884) pioneered a view which has become ever more acceptable. His published essays were only translated into English recently. In them he rejects aspects of a *kenotic* Christology that suggest that God is radically altered by the Incarnation, but nevertheless, wants to modify the

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[88] Lohse, B. trans. Stoeffler, F.E. (1985) A Short History of Christian Doctrine, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, pp. 253-255.
  John O'Keefe, however writes that the prime concern of the fifth century debates was about impassibility, the Alexandrian school represented by Cyril, considering that God does suffer. O'Keefe, J.J. (1997) Theological Studies 58, 'Impassible Suffering? Divine Passion and Fifth-century Christology', pp. 39-60.

[89] Anselm, St. (1973) Prayers and Meditations of St Anselm with the Proslogion, Proslogion ch.7, Penguin, p. 248.

[90] Ibid. p. 249.

[91] Mozely, op. cit. p. 112.

traditional view of total immutability. Dorner tries to steer a path between Deism in which God is absolutely transcendent and immutable, and pantheism which allows God the vitality of immanence but removes His transcendence.[92] He reconstructs the idea of God as inclusive and therefore complex as well as simple. He holds that the capacity of God must include acts of continuing creation for 'in creation there is plurality, process, change, contingency and without all these the world would be mere illusion', and argues that 'whatever the world has of being, it necessarily has from God, in whose being it participates'.[93] He rightly points out that it is impossible for anything which is of value in the world not to have come from God, including a freedom to change.

Dorner also uses an ethical paradigm by which he means the implications of having a God whose righteousness is immutable, but who can also reciprocate with love.[94] Dorner talks of the compassion of God, 'a holy inner participation, a living tender mercy' and he quotes, 'do not grieve the holy Spirit of God'[95], as evidence of the feeling aspect of God. He resurrects the idea of 'modes of being'[96] for the polarities of ethical necessity and ethical freedom and states that they 'co-inhere in love'.[97] The ethical necessity is the 'steadfast love'[98] of traditional immutability, but as Dorner says, there can be no love without freedom and God must participate in the process of reconciliation in historical time.[99] The involvement in the world as Creator, as Christ and as the Holy Spirit 'is not at the expense of the eternal perfection of God himself, but precisely by virtue of this permanent perfection.'[100] In his stress on the vitality, love and responsiveness of God as we know Him in the world, Dorner seems to be an early panentheist.

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[92] Dorner, I.A., trans. Williams R.R. and Welch, C. (1994) <u>Divine Immutability</u>, Fortress Press, Minneapolis, p. 161.

[93] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 95.

[94] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 148.

[95] Ephesians 4:30.

[96] Modalism was a form of Monarchianism which was proposed as a means of understanding the different aspects of the Trinity.

[97] Dorner, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 174.

[98] As described in the Old Testament, for example in Lamentations 3:22.

[99] Dorner, <u>op. cit.</u> p. 188.

[100] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 160.

Somewhat later, but still before any other serious study along these lines, C.E. Rolt wrote in 1914 about the power of suffering love, by which Christ reveals the nature of God as interpreted in the Johannine principle - 'I am in the Father and the Father in me ... he who has seen me has seen the Father'.[101] He says that if Christ displayed humility, then humility is the nature of God, because 'the mystery of the Cross is a mystery which lies at the centre of God's eternal being'.[102] Self-sacrifice is in God's nature, so Rolt writes 'since God is love and nothing else than love ... He eternally sacrifices Himself and in this act is contained the whole of His nature'.[103] This is the meaning too of love within the Trinity - God's self-love is unselfish and sacrificial. Selfless love in God does not, however, mean an expectation of eternal pain, because evil is vanquished as we learn in the Easter message. It does mean that joy can come through its polar opposite - as Rolt says, 'by suffering evil, God turns evil into good' and there is a 'continuous transformation of deadly violence into vital energy ... the brute forces are not destroyed, they are turned into channels of life and goodness'.[104] This view has an extraordinary affinity with Jung.[105]

Some years before Teilhard de Chardin, Rolt's study linked the energy of God's spirit with the pains of evolution in the development of the world and in history. He sees the power of the Cross as paramount in overcoming the brutality of evil and redeeming its energy so that it can be used for good and so become part of God's glory.[106] Rolt's view of evil is not conclusive, possibly because there is no satisfactory way of understanding it, but he joins those who consider that it is negative and non-existent in that it has no part in God or reality. Paradoxically for Rolt, there is potential in the chaotic energy of that which is opposed to good, and God can transmute it into order - He can make something out of nothing. Another of Rolt's ideas predating Teilhard is that 'the history of the human race may seem pathetically futile, but it is precisely from the elements of waste and failure that the spirit of man, aided by the grace of God, can draw the grandest harmonies'.[107] Rolt, with his many

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[101] John 14:10,11.

[102] Rolt, C.E.(1913) The World's Redemption, Longmans, Green and Co, p. 27.

[103] Ibid, p. 95.

[104] Ibid, p. 126.

[105] Possibly both originating from older writers such as Jakob Boehme.

[106] Ibid, p. 203.

[107] Ibid, p. 333.

insights, talks of our cooperation in the evolution of our fragmented lives through sacrificial love, and of the value of triumph over evil in bringing us to an ultimate state of peace and joy where there is 'the face of perfect Beauty'.[108]

Kenosis has been given a variety of interpretations[109] according to the degree to which the members of the transcendent Trinity are thought to be inherent in the work of the human Christ. Paul writes that 'though He was in the form of God, He did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men'[110], indicating the participating nature of the Trinity. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews also writes that, 'He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of His nature, sustaining the universe by His powerful command'[111], and the implication is that we can understand God and His nature through His self-giving. God is with us in our vulnerability, and 'capable' of taking risks. Christ endured suffering, death and feeling god-forsaken for our sake, and as Paul Fiddes concludes, He brought death into the being of God with the Resurrection.[112] If we come to believe this, our perceptions can never be the same, either of death which is conquered, or of the nature of God who manifests His love by taking to Himself all negativities. There is much to be said for Norman Pittenger's view that, 'love in action is God's essential nature', and all the other things said about Him such as His transcendence, immanence, omnipotence, omniscience and so on are 'descriptive of His mode of being Love'.[113]

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[108] Ibid, p. 335.
B.H. Streeter, also working at the beginning of the century, wrestled with these problems. He stresses the view which is fundamental in Transitions that our ideas about God must be metaphorical because we only have human categories in which to describe Him and we do not know the real meaning of omnipotence, love or goodness. He emphasises the value of growth and progress because development, in human terms, is intrinsic to vitality in a situation of continual change, and we may ask 'can God be less than this?' Streeter, B.H.(1914) The Hibbert Journal, 47, 'the Suffering of God' pp. 603ff. Streeter and Rolt are perhaps early examples of theologians who could see God in terms of 'process', but without losing the essential theistic sense of a transcendent Creator.

[109] The most extreme being Altizer with his cry of 'God is dead'. Altizer, T.J.J. (1967) The Gospel of Christian Atheism, Collins, pp. 91ff.

[110] Philippians 2:6,7.

[111] Hebrews 1:3 (JB).

[112] Fiddes, P. op.cit, p. 267.

[113] Pittenger, N. (1970) The 'Last Things' in a Process Perspective, Epworth Press, p. 116.

B. MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO - OUR AGONY AND GOD'S.

The importance of accepting the reality of the negative and dark parts of our psyche is implicit in all that has so far been written here, and it is suggested that this is best considered in the context of God who is at the centre of all things, working through the Spirit, reconciling, creating and forgiving. The psychologists Carl Jung and Karen Horney plead for authenticity, and spiritual writers such as Ignatius and Nicholas de Cusa describe the meeting of opposites as the place where God is to be found. For us, as suggested in Chapter 5, repentance is an outcome of such meeting, and a prelude to transformation.

There are other aspects which can be illustrated by the work of Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936), the Spanish philologist, philosopher and poet. He illustrates some of the tensions in our view of God, and the relation of these to our psychological conflicts. He battled with many paradoxes, not least those inherent in our concepts of God, and our fears that there may be a total lack of meaning. He argues that agony and struggle are inevitable in life, and a necessary aspect of God if He is to convey meaning.

Unamuno, existentialist in outlook, was a student of Kierkegaard's writing, and learnt Danish in order to study his works in detail - there are those who consider The Tragic Sense of Life to be a reinterpretation of Kierkegaard's The Sickness unto Death. Unamuno used the ideas of a number of Protestant thinkers in his 'efforts to shock Spanish religious thought out of its dogmatic lethargy'[110], and he elaborates some of Kierkegaard's metaphors in a way which causes Sinclair to describe the two men as having 'a common quirkiness'.[111] Amongst these metaphors is the powerful concept of the spider who is groping in the void and hurls itself into the abyss using a thread formed by 'spinning out its entrails'. Life should be lived so that we can fearlessly hurl ourselves 'into the abyss of the future's deepest darkness' by spinning out our own thread from our 'entrails'.[112]

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[110] Lacy, A. (1967) Miguel de Unamuno, Mouton, The Hague, p. 190.

[111] Sinclair, A., in Round, N.G., ed. (1989) Re-reading Unamuno, Hispanic Studies Glasgow University, p. 121.

[112] Unamuno, M.de, trans. Kerrigan, A. (1974) The Agony of Christianity, RKP, p. 238.

There is an affinity with Jung in Unamuno's concept of *shadow* and he is also aware of the problems of projection, as Nicholas Round comments in a review of Unamuno's novel, <u>Abel Sánchez</u>. Awareness of unconscious influences is seen in the fleeting glimpses which people have of an inner world of desires and impulses, and to become good people have to accept their own evil.[118] Unamuno is quoted as saying, in 1896, at a time when Freud was still only at the beginning of his psychological work, that 'the depths of the subconscious surge to consciousness in deep spiritual crises, in genuine psychic cataclysms .... the savage we carry within us, barely repressed by the crust of culture, opens a crack in the soul like an extinguished volcano that is suddenly rekindled'.[119] Unamuno maintains that we only know ourselves, as also we come to know other people, by our actions. He also indicates that, as we bring unconsciousness into consciousness, we understand and mitigate some of our suffering but gain the capacity to be more alive and aware, and so to suffer more. [120] Dreams of self-possession or self-dissolution alternate in his novels, as he says of one character, 'because a feeling of alienation makes him long for union, yet the dread of being submerged by the world sends him back in pursuit of a lonely and constricted identity'.[121] Sinclair points out that 'the notion of a contrary shadow self is central to Unamuno' - he uses twinned characters, doubles, mirrors and a number of other devices to express the tensions, many of which must remain unresolved.[122] Wyers describes Unamuno's work, with its 'frenzied shifts' and 'violent contradictions', as a mirror of our culture.[123]

Unamuno sees language, and religious language in particular, as trying to approach a truth and therefore as something which can never be dogmatic.[124] His thinking is intuitive and may seem contradictory, because, as with Pascal, whom he admired, 'the heart has its reasons, of which reason is ignorant', and 'it is the heart, not reason, that feels God. This is faith: God felt by the heart, not by reason'.[125] The

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[118] Round, N.G. (1974) <u>Unamuno: Abel Sánchez</u>, Grant and Cutler, p. 41.

[119] Ilie, P. (1967) <u>Unamuno</u>, Wisconsin UP, Madison, p. 16..

[120] Unamuno, M. de, trans. Crawford Flitch, J.E (1921:1931) <u>The Tragic Sense of Life</u>, Macmillan, p. 283.

[121] <u>Ibid.</u>

[122] Sinclair, <u>op.cit.</u> p. 135.

[123] Wyers, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. ix.

[124] Lacy, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 129.

[125] Pascal. B., trans. Krailsheimer, A.J. (1966) *Pensées*, 191, Penguin, p. 86.

distinction Unamuno makes between 'heart and mind' or between 'feeling and reason' is precisely that of Jung's functions, and in a similar way, he held that rationalism, by itself, leads to scepticism. Paradoxes should not be resolved intellectually. Nevertheless, the truth of the heart and of the imagination must be the same truth as that sought by logic.[126]

Agony is a key word in Unamuno's work and he explains that it means, through its Greek derivation, a continuing struggle.[127] 'Peace', he says, is death - for he does not think that we should live with polarities reconciled, but rather, struggling in the midst of paradox - he talks of the polemic of contradictions rather than the dialectic of synthesis from antitheses.[128] He is far from Teilhard de Chardin's optimistic concepts of evolution.[129] His aim, he says, is 'to play upon the strings that are usually silent in the psaltery of your hearts',[130] and 'may God deny you peace but give you glory'.[131]

Unamuno is sometimes thought to be a forerunner of Tillich because he stresses the need 'to struggle to be' with courage and so avoid 'non-being'.[132] He was aware of much suffering and vulnerability to despair, and was particularly interested in our ambiguous approach to death with the antitheses between heart and mind in our attitudes.[133] We have a yearning to survive, so that, though in intellectual discussion we are content to accept that death is inevitable, when there is an immediate threat to life there are few people who do not find themselves profoundly disturbed. Our minds and our hearts make different judgements, so that those of us who are healthy tend to continue our activities as if death will never come. Unamuno notes that if we use our ability to feel, there is an overwhelmingly tragic aspect to the world, and he comes to the conclusion that love and suffering must exist together, never the one without the

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Unamuno, Agony, p. 76.
Pascal is often quoted by Unamuno because of his struggle to reconcile the intellectual and the ethical with the fire of his faith.

[126] Unamuno, Tragic, p. 131.

[127] Unamuno, Agony, p. 9

[128] Kerrigan, A, in Unamuno, Agony, 'introduction', p.ix.
Wyers suggests that his fondness of paradox is 'an expression of emotional ambivalence which he would pass off in the guise of an intellectual riddle'. Wyers, op. cit, p. xvii,

[129] see pp. 188ff.

[130] Unamuno, Agony, p. 146.

[131] Unamuno, Tragic, p. 330.

[132] Valdés, M.J. (1966) Death in the Literature of Unamuno, Illinois UP, Urbana, p. 12.

[133] Sinclair, op. cit, p. 124.

other. As a result of this conclusion he assumes that, as we experience agonies, so does God. He talks of the 'infinite sorrow of God', and maintains that it is only because of God's capacity to feel and to suffer that human beings find it possible to relate to Him.[134] Unamuno understands the paradox inherent in reconciling the idea of a God who suffers, with His complete perfection, but he says, there are contradictions, however we regard life and death, and 'conflict is the very stuff of life; it is passionate uncertainty, doubt, wrestling with mystery' that helps motivate our lives.[135] He writes 'anguish discovers God to us and makes us love Him ... to love Him is to feel Him suffering ... God suffers in each and all of us'[136], and that 'suffering tells us that we exist and that charity is the impulse to liberate myself and all my fellows from suffering, and to liberate God, who embraces us all'.[137]

Unamuno reflects on the value of beauty in situations of tragedy where love and compassion are evident, saying that Beauty is a symbol of timelessness - 'eternalisation ... the perpetuation of momentaneity'. He equates beauty with charity, which 'eternalises and personalises everything it loves' through the suffering endured for another person.[138] Religion, for Unamuno, is an attempt to revalue pain and live with the Cross. It is compassion which spreads the Spirit and love of God.[139] Like Charles Williams[140], he recognised the ultimate importance of small daily happenings which may, in a hidden way, alter succeeding events and make history. The shoemaker who works with love and is willing to suffer for his clients' comfort may gain no prestige, but he is contributing to the sum total of redemptive suffering, joining his toil to the work of Christ in God.[141]

Unamuno was a rebel who said that religion is to struggle, as did Jacob, with God and with mystery, and to find no answers.[142] His approach was post-modern (long before this viewpoint came into our vocabulary) as he wrestled emotionally,

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[134] Unamuno, Tragic, p. 207.

[135] Ibid. p. 260.

[136] Ibid. p. 207.

[137] Ibid. p. 211.

[138] Ibid. pp. 201, 203.

[139] He had, however a dislike of institutionalised help which was usually like plaster and unable to cure social ills.

[140] See below, pp. 223ff.

[141] Unamuno, Tragic. pp. 274ff.

[142] Ilie, op. cit. p. 234.

intuitively and intellectually with uncertainty, diversity and relativism within the complexities of the 'flux of experience', without expecting to find any objective truth.[143] Unamuno would agree with Anthony Thiselton who, in interpreting the relevance of Christianity to the post-modern self, stresses that we are only ourselves in relation to others. The only possibility of overcoming a suspicion and distrust of doctrines is through an emphasis on the Cross with its message of love and service, and in the total abandonment of any search for power, with all the manipulation and strife that entails.[144]

Unamuno joined the band of those undergoing redemptive suffering in the saddest paradox of his life - at an event that took place when he was 72 and still rector of Salamanca University in 1936. Franco's military officials forced him to chair a meeting in which they chanted slogans such as *'muera la intelegencia'* (death to the intelligence) which Unamuno said was equivalent to saying *'viva la meurte'*, (long live death).[145] He noted that 'he had spent his life expressing paradoxes which aroused the uncomprehending anger of others', and he called General Astry's 'paradox repellent'. He accused the General of being 'a cripple dictating a pattern of mass psychology' and 'seeking ominous relief in causing mutilation'.[146] Unamuno was shouted down, led away, ostracised and deprived of office. He died not long after.[147]

Unamuno is memorable for his psychological insights, and for his insistence that, in doubt and confusion, there is beauty to be found in compassion, and ultimate values in Christ's self-giving which joins us to the Godhead.

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[143] Grenz, S.J. (1995) <u>A Primer on Postmodernism</u>, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 83.

[144] Thiselton, A. C. (1995) <u>Interpreting God and The Postmodern Self</u>, T.& T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 162.

[145] Lacy, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 92.

[146] Thomas, H. (1961:1977) <u>The Spanish Civil War</u>, Penguin, p. 502.

[147] <u>Ibid.</u> p. 503.

CHAPTER 9. BEARING ONE ANOTHER'S BURDENS.

'As you, Father, are in me and I in you, so also may they be in us ... I in them and you in me.' (John 17:21,22)

CONTENTS.

1. *PERICHORESIS* - ESSENCE AND ENERGIES

The interdependence of all things in an evolving pattern, discussed in the last chapter, can be linked to the concepts of participation in the life of God as the source of vitality, as described in the works of Tillich, and in the Ignatian tradition. This chapter looks at the involvement of God in our suffering and joy, using the concept of *perichoresis* through which we can understand that human beings can partake of God and grow into His Love. The polarities of the human and the divine, the finite and the infinite, spirit and matter, the One and the many, and the immanent and the transcendent seem irreconcilable, but the wonder and vitality of the Christian faith is shown by the way in which these apparent contradictions are brought together. The main emphasis, using the works of Charles Williams, will be on reconciliation, found through the polarities which determine our isolation or our involvement in one another - 'individualisation and participation' in Tillich's terms.[1]

Harry Williams points out that we have difficulty with spatial metaphors when we talk about God - we cannot place Him. He is beyond yet very close, transcendent above and in the depths within, the heights make Him inaccessible yet He can be intimate.[2] There must be a balance to avoid theism (which regards God as distant and uninvolved) or at the opposite extreme a pantheistic God who is identical with the

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[1] Tillich, ST 1, p.17.

[2] Williams, H.(1979) The Joy of God, Mitchell Beazley, p. 25.

universe (with no remainder). As Nicholas de Cusa quotes, 'everything exists in God and God is manifest in everything'[3] - without His immanence we could not recognise Him as transcendent. There is extensive Biblical basis for the concept of co-inherence or mutual indwelling with humanity, so that we are told that we can 'become partakers of the divine nature'.[4] There are Johannine statements such as, 'we dwell in Him and He in us'[5], the Pauline teaching of incorporation into Christ through the Spirit[6], and many texts which talk of Christians as 'sons of God'.

Many of the threads of theology using these concepts of God's in-dwelling stem from Patristic times. The Early Fathers thought in terms of the difference between God's inaccessible Essence on the one hand, and the Creation which is 'the task of His Energy' and accessible on the other.[7] If it were not for the energies of God in creation we could not exist, let alone be 'partakers of the divine nature'.[8] The concept of *perichoresis*, a metaphor meaning interpenetration or co-inherence, was developed to deal the Christological problems of the early Church when they were trying to comprehend how the Trinity could be 'three in one' and 'one in three'.[9] It is also extended to cover an understanding of the way in which God works in the world with an energy of love incorporating all human contact with the divine, and also penetrating the whole material world.[10] The concept of mutual indwelling within the Trinity, and the implications for the world, are expressed in more detail by Maximus the Confessor (c.580-662). He describes *perichoresis* or interpenetration as a way of understanding

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[3] Cusanus, N., trans. Heron, G. (1954) Of Learned Ignorance, RKP, p. 83.

[4] 2 Peter 1:4.

[5] John 15:4,7 and 1 John 4:13. It is to be noted that the writer of the epistle uses *agape* to describe the mode of our abiding in God - 1 John 4:16-19. See note 5, p. 64.

[6] Romans 6:5, and 12:5, and 1 Cor. 12:27.

[7] Prestige, in his study of Patristic thought, traces the initial concepts of interchangeability and reciprocation within the Trinity, and between the finite and the infinite, to Cyril of Alexandria in the fourth century. Prestige, G.L. (1936) God in Patristic Thought, Heinemann, pp. 282ff., and Lossky, V., trans. Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (1944:1991) The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, James Clarke, Cambridge, p. 73.

[8] 2 Peter 1:4.

[9] Kasper, W. (1982) The God of Jesus Christ, SCM, p. 284.
Interpenetration and in-dwelling within the Trinity obviates the need to think in terms of three Gods or three modes.

[10] Lossky, V., trans. Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius (1944: 1991) The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church, James Clarke, Cambridge, pp. 145ff.

understanding the union between the human and divine natures of Christ[11] - the *Logos* which is both here in the Universe and beyond, leading the world into God. Donald Allchin clarifies this theology by saying that

> it is the person of the incarnate Word who is at the centre of all things. The Incarnation of God and the corresponding deification of man, and in man of all creation ... God is constantly becoming man in man, so that man may no less constantly become God, through the grace and gift of God. Man's participation in goodness, at every level, is a participation in God Himself, who is the source of all goodness. All man's movements to realise the end for which he was created involve him ever more deeply in participation in the divine life which comes into the world and then returns to the source from which it comes.[12]

This statement has a close affinity with Teilhard's thoughts, and this is even more evident when Allchin paraphrases Maximus, saying that, in his thinking, 'nothing is lost, for all in love survive, because always the elements of unity and diversity, of the specific and the universal are held together'.[13] The immanent God is described as the dynamic life perpetually being born as Christ in the soul, pouring Himself out into the world of matter, multiplicity, and time in order to bring it back into unity - the cosmic Christ.[14]

Gregory Palamas (c.1296-1359) developed the doctrine of God's Essence and His Energies which had become dormant in the Eastern Church in order to clarify the paradoxical concepts of God's total transcendence and His total immanence. After Palamas the concept of God's Energies was widely adopted in the Eastern Church and became part of the Orthodox doctrine of grace and deification through which we can become 'partakers of the divine nature' and can communicate with the incomprehensible Trinitarian God. We have to choose whether we accept the Energies of God (including *kenosis*), through which we can participate in His activities, wisdom, love, power and justice. The Trinity in Essence is unknowable and incommunicable but the Energies of the persons of the Trinity become knowable and communicable through grace, 'as if in a mirror'.[15] The concept of God's Energies, and the possibility of participation in God

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[11] Prestige, op. cit. p. 296.

[12] Allchin, A.M. (1988) **Participation in God**, DLT, p. 71.

[13] Allchin A.M., in Montefiore, H. ed.(1975) **Man and Nature**, Collins, p. 149.

[14] Happold, F.C. (1963:1970) Mysticism, Penguin, p. 270.

[15] Lossky, op. cit. p. 86.

through them can provide a means of appreciating the reality of God's presence; whatever the circumstances, the love of God is able to reach us, and as Allchin explains it, 'the Father holds out His hands of love, the Son and the Spirit, to welcome all creation. The circulation of love which is in God through all eternity opens itself to embrace all things, to touch and heal the pain, the sorrow and the lostness of man'.[16]

Large sections of the Western Church, sadly, lost the concept of the indwelling God, and the God in whom we participate. The early Jesuits were, for instance, under threat from the Inquisition who were suspicious of direct spiritual inspiration and thought that the Jesuits believed in an illuminist heresy of the inner light.[17] There are, however, places where belief in God's indwelling has been maintained, notably with the Quakers and some mystics. Tillich and Teilhard de Chardin both emphasise God's self-revelation inherent in the world, and the assumption that He is also at the centre of human life is associated with this. Jantzen points out that Julian of Norwich expresses the same paradox about God's nearness to the soul. Julian writes, 'I saw no difference between God and our substance, but, as it were, all God; and still my understanding accepted that our substance is in God, that is to say God is God, and our substance is a creature in God'.[18] She teaches that Christ brings the 'New Creation', taking onto Himself all the hopes of mankind, so that 'what was lost in the old is resumed, reorganised, returned, and restored in our Lord'.[19]

Allchin traces the continuing place of *perichoresis* and 'participation in God' in the Anglican tradition, through the interpretation of the Eucharist.[20] He is interested in the Platonic resonance inherited from the early Church, and calls the acknowledgement that we can be partakers of the divine nature, 'a forgotten strand'. He traces it in the understanding of the Eucharist, and through the writings of people such as Richard Hooker, Lancelot Andrewes, Charles Wesley and E.B. Pusey.[21] Allchin describes the

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[16] Allchin, Participation, p. 74.

[18] The *Alumbrados* (illuminists) threatened ecclesial authority. Ignatius, Reminiscences, p. 41, and Munitiz and Endean, op. cit. note 84, p .369.

[18] Revelations,54, p. 157.

Jones, C., Wainwright, G. and Yarnold, E. eds. (1986) The Study of Spirituality, SPCK, p. 467.

[19] Wolters considers that her theology of the human race and recapitulation through Christ 'could have been taken directly from the teaching of Irenaeus'. Wolters, C. Introduction to Revelations, p. 34.

[20] Allchin, Participation, pp. 29ff.

[21] Ibid, pp. 3ff.

logoi (God's self-revelation in objects, events and people) as 'the God-given meaning, inscape, specificity and nature of things'[22], and quotes Thomas Merton who calls the presence of spiritual light amongst the Shakers of America an 'epiphany of *logoi*'.[23]

Allchin notes the connection of participation in God with the hallmark of Christianity which is joy.[24] But there is a shadow side, and David Jenkins links the concept of *perichoresis* with an intermingling of joy and pain. He is concerned that theology should not ignore the struggle and suffering of life and writes that

> the notion of interpenetration belongs to an approach which thinks and feels, in terms of an energetic, dynamic and organic intermingling which is working, struggling and flowing both from and to a mystery of union. We have to do, not with an interaction of separateness, but with an interpenetration of potential mutuality. [25]

and

> Jesus Christ, who is the man who is God and God become man, is the reality who represents to us that struggle and joy, suffering and transcendent calm, interpenetrate in the life of God and in human life, as we seek the fulfilment of our being and becoming in the image of God.[26]

Jenkins expresses similar ideas elsewhere, talking about the energy of suffering love through which God works in our midst, especially in the Church which stands for transcendent possibilities, even though it is so much in need of repentance.[27] The real contradictions of evil must not be denied or scaled down[28], and can only be confronted by God who is 'the energy and the end of the universe'.[29] The processes that redeem darkness and pain, bringing opposites together, are possible because of God's co-inherence, so that the infinite meets the finite, the eternal meets the temporal, love transforms apathy, and every negative experience can find healing. These concepts are made vividly accessible by the scholar and novelist, Charles Williams who makes their relevance to our conflicts and anxieties abundantly clear.

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[22] Allchin, A.M. (1996) 'The Worship of the Whole Creation: Merton and the Eastern Fathers' (quoting Merton, T. (1961) 'Lectures on Ascetical and Mystical Theology'), Sobornost 18:2, p. 34.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Allchin, Participation, pp. 4 & 68.

[25] Jenkins, D., intro. in Moltmann, J. (1973) Theology and Joy, SCM, p. 22.

[26] Ibid, p.23.

[27] Jenkins, D. (1976) The Contradiction of Christianity, SCM, pp.139 & 144ff.

[28] Ibid, p. 135.

[29] Ibid, p. 79.

2. CHARLES WILLIAMS (1886-1945)

A. THE WAYS OF FORGIVENESS, CO-INHERENCE AND EXCHANGE

The work of Charles Williams emphasises the impossibility of self-sufficiency; our calling is to live for others, recognising our interdependence, and dependence on the in-dwelling presence of God. He, like Teilhard, considers that all things are being redeemed into a pattern of glory, but his work is more symbolic, and more concerned with the way in which we manage our love and other feelings. Williams was a poet, novelist, don and lay theologian with flair and originality. He was a complex man with great energy and charm but his intimate friends said that, though he sought romanticicm, it was always thwarted, and he found deep relationships difficult, suffering from 'a stark inner loneliness'.[30] As with so many great writers, his own inner struggles against an innate pessimism informed his understanding of the human condition. Kathleen Spencer writes that everything about him was paradoxical.[31] He illustrates, particularly in his novels, practical aspects of God's co-inherence, our interactions and the energising power of the Spirit. Salvation is gained through an imaginative and generous loving response to others 'because He first loved us'.[32] He writes about the world as we know it, but using startling symbolism, myth, archetype, poetry and allegory to emphasise the significance of ordinary and apparently insignificant feelings and tendencies.

In upholding a 'way of affirmation', he honours all creation[33], valuing material things as well as all people because 'God, in Christ, is reconciling the world to Himself'.[34] Glen Cavaliero, commenting on some of the plays, stresses Williams' understanding of 'the mutuality of good and evil in human experience' as we work through 'the impossibilities and contradictions of circumstance', and come to co-inherence with God and each other through divine providence.[35] Williams affirms that

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[30] His vulnerability is shown in his letters to Lois Lang-Sims. Cavaliero, G. ed. (1989) Letters to Lalange, UP, Kent State, p. 6.

[31] Spencer, K. (1986) Charles Williams, Starmont, Washington, p. 28.

[32] John 15:12.

[33] Upholding Isaiah 45:7 - 'I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe'.

[34] 2 Corinthians 5:19.

[35] Cavaliero, G. (1983) Charles Williams - Poet of Theology, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 196.

Grace perfects Nature bringing about 'a pattern of glory', and God is approachable 'through the images of this world'[36], and he holds that earthly beauty, including sexual beauty, reveals divine Beauty as a signpost to God; natural goodness, related to eternal goodness, is revealed in many ways. He calls the Fall 'our determination to know good as evil' - the good continues to be there though we are more interested in other things.[37] Love means self-giving, and this is the hallmark of glory for 'everything that ever happened is an act of love or an act against love'.[38]

Williams illustrates his theology by using the analogy of Romantic Love from various literary works, and especially from Dante.[39] Romantic love is a pointer to the redeemed life because it points to virtue in the other person and therefore to the need for forgiveness for offending an ideal, at the same time as being taken out of oneself in ecstasy and a sense of awe.[40] Charles Huttar stresses that the physical aspects of arousal by beauty are important to Williams, and quotes from the Arthurian Torso: 'the body of the beloved appears vital with holiness; the physical flesh is glorious with sanctity - not her sanctity but its own'.[41] Heightened sensibilities provide energy for self-giving, and Williams writes 'The first encounter with Beatrice had awakened physical, mental and spiritual awareness; later encounters had communicated to Dante moments of humility and pure love'.[42] Huttar comments that Williams drew, to a certain extent, on his own experience of love and faithfulness to his wife, Michal (Florence), despite his attraction to other women and his love for an unattainable 'Celia'

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[36] Williams, C. (1941) Theology xliii, 'Natural Goodness', p. 211.

[37] Williams, C. (1942:1984) The Forgiveness of Sins, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, p. 129.

H. Blenkin writes in commentary on Williams' Platonic view of an 'affirmative way', pointing out that a life which affirms created things does not lead to hedonism. It involves love, requiring 'the same detachment and discipline, awareness and attention, and lowliness' as the 'way of negation' and asceticism. The affirming and the negating ways are complementary. Blenkin, H. (1955) Theology lvii, 'Two Ways to God', pp. 216ff.

[38] Williams, Forgiveness, p. 171.

[39] Dorothy Sayers notes Charles Williams debt to Dante, in his work on 'the affirmative way' and coinherence, and comments on its enduring psychological relevance. Sayers, D. L. (1963) The Poetry of Search and the Poetry of Statement, Gollanz, pp. 69-88.

[40] Williams, C. (1938:1950) He Came Down from Heaven, Faber and Faber, p. 67.

[41] Huttar, C., in Horne, B. ed. (1995) Charles Williams: A Celebration, Gracewing, Fowler Wright, Leominster, p. 37ff.

[42] Williams, He Came Down, p. 74.

(Phyllis Jones) in his forties.[43] Williams learnt, through his own distress, that the divine potential grows through tension, not in the glorious vision alone, but also in suffering and forgiveness.[44] His work is permeated by opposites which need to be reconciled; contraries such as doubt, anxiety and fear are the impetus for spiritual growth.[45]

As with any other numinous experience, 'the Beatrician moment' can be idolised in succumbing to a temptation to prolong pleasure for oneself, without using the love and energy it gives in self-giving.[46] Love is not a personal possession and as T. Howard summarises Williams' thought, it is wrong to linger in the ecstasy without moving forward in 'kindness, attentiveness, forbearance and courtesy'.[47] This 'new life' of thoughtful concern is, moreover, a joyful experience, a foretaste of the divine, because 'the life of substitute love, or way of exchange is both the acceptance of co-inherence and a pattern of behaviour which exemplifies it ... all life in the Kingdom is to be vicarious'.[48] It is equally wrong to linger in desolation or depressed mood without grasping any lifelines which are offered.

Williams' underlying belief in the 'co-inherence of all life' means that everything in the world is in touch with the presence of God's love, and exists for His glory - even sin, he says, exists to be forgiven.[49] He writes that the experience of pardon means that 'nothing is to be lost or forgotten; all things are to be known. They can be known as good, however evil, for they can be known as occasions of love'.[50] In this, Williams resembles Julian of Norwich (whom he quotes from time to time[51]) who

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[43] Huttar, op. cit, p. 87.

[44] Ibid. p. 90.

[45] Cath Fulmer-Davis, in Huttar, C.A. and Schakel, P.J. (1996) The Rhetoric of Vision, UP Bucknell, Lewisburg, p. 112.

[46] Williams, He Came Down, pp. 79-80.

[47] Howard, T. (1983) The Novels of Charles Williams, OUP, p. 18.

[48] Williams, He Came Down, p. 86.

[49] Williams, C., ed. Hefling, C. (1993) Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology, Cowley, Massachusetts, pp. 24-5.

[50] Williams, He Came Down, p. 59.
Huw Mordecai argues correctly that, despite an apparent dualism in some of Williams' occult images, and his membership of an obscure 'gnostic' order, he is essentially monistic, regarding evil as 'non-being' - the absence of anything that is good and real. Mordecai, T. H. (1992) Charles Williams' Understanding of Evil and Salvation, M.A., Durham University, p. 3.

[51] Mable, E, (1988) Charles Williams Society: Newsletter 49, p. 2.

talks of 'glad penitence'[52], and, like her, he also believed that 'all shall be well' because 'everything is working together for good'.[53] Williams constantly reiterates that all the contradictions in human nature can be overcome and transformed by forgiveness.[54] Despair prevents this movement towards love and change, and lack of self-esteem in depression prevents acknowledgement of personal worth, so that people tend to know their created goodness (lovableness) as evil.

The idea of co-inherence is based on concepts in St John's Gospel such as 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfectly one'.[55] He constantly reiterates the phrase 'bear ye one another's burdens'[56] as the necessary corollary of co-inherence. Awareness of need in other people and attentiveness to them provides opportunities to hold them in mind, suffer with them and, in some measure, be available in practical ways. Love is usually reciprocal, and we are dependent on one another, needing the humility to let other people share our burdens.[57]

The entry into co-inherence with God is not automatic but is through contrition. Baptism, when the god-parents take on responsibilities on behalf of the new Christian, incorporates the child into this co-inherence within a penitent Church.[58] Williams also points out that the Church has had its great historical moments of repentance. There have been turning points from great corruption when reformations and renewals have occurred, most clearly seen in 1534 when Luther and Ignatius of Loyola led their followers, in different ways, to new understanding of the Gospel.[59] The 'greed of men and the creed of Christ have run side by side', and the angry noise of quarrels is constantly with us, but the Church has always sustained those who recognise that they are in God and God in them.[60] The activity of the Spirit, transforming the perversity and sin which are inherent in human institutions, becomes noticeable in the history of

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[52] Julian, Revelations, 81, p. 206.

[53] Romans 8:28.
Julian, Revelations, 32, p. 109.

[54] Williams, He Came down, p. 15.

[55] John 17:23.

[56] Galatians, 6:2.

[57] Williams, C. (1993) Essential Writings in Spirituality and Theology, p. 213.

[58] Williams, C. (1939:1963) The Descent of the Dove, Collins, Fontana, p. 212.

[59] Williams, Descent, p. 157.

[60] Ibid, p.190.

the Church when communities bear one another's burdens. As it has been put, 'if you live alone whose feet will you wash'? Forgiveness of sins is the necessary preliminary to any deep relationship, and because we co-inhere with one another, we have to bear one another's burdens, bearing no resentment and allowing no self-pity.[61] Williams stresses that forgiveness should involve mutuality, with two people changing their attitudes and returning to a recognition of reality, with charity and 'accurate thought'.[62] It is to recognise good and to love it, so that the mode of knowing involves a change of disposition.

In one of Williams' radio plays of 1942, Pilate's wife suggests feelings of 'substitution' brought to her by a dream of vicarious suffering, in which she, her friends and Christ suffer together:

> He came to my bed and did not say a word,
> but his face became the face of each of my friends,
> each in turn, each pale, each in its agony,
> each staring at me. I knew their pains,
> the separate secret stubborn pains of each,
> and yet it was no one all the time but he.
> Their pains were in his body, and I too -
> Husband I too, I in Him -
> I felt my muscles cramp, my bone burn,
> my head rack as if thorns stabbed.
> Their pain in his, his in mine ....[63]

Alice Hadfield, in a biographical exploration, points out that the Cross was the starting point for all Williams' theology - 'the image of God's will which perfectly survives all life's contradiction'.[64] She quotes from an essay of Williams' which says that 'by that central substitution, which was the thing added by the Cross to the Incarnation, He became everywhere the centre of (and everywhere He energised and affirmed) all our substitutions and exchanges. He took what remained after the Fall, of

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[61] Williams, C., He Came down, p. 123.
   Williams, C., The Forgiveness of Sins, p. 98.

[62] Ibid.

[63] quoted by Every, G. (1948) Theology li, p. 146.

[64] Hadfield, A.M. (1983) Charles Williams, OUP, p. 214.

the torn web of humanity, in all times and in all places, and not so much by a miracle of healing as by growth within it made it whole'.[65]

Ralph Townsend draws attention to Williams' resemblance to Lancelot Andrewes, not only in his manner of writing, in which 'even the simplest words can operate at many levels at once - informative, emotive and evaluative - so that images touch the whole personality down to the very deepest levels of the psyche , and involve our bodily life as well'.[66] The experiences of co-inherence as a consequence of the Incarnation are to be received contemplatively, so that there is traffic between immanence and transcendence, past events and the present, the material and the spiritual, faith and experience, and between contemplation, theology and action.[67] The mystery of paradox is maintained. Townsend comments that for both writers poetic imagery and intuition are important ways of apprehending the faith at a deep level and that they both thought of God as a feeling Being, saying that He is 'not merely sovereign, but one who comes; He has come and does come. And what He was in Christ, self-emptying, defenceless, sustaining an irrevocable love for men, that He really is'.[68] The nature of God is shown in vulnerability for the sake of love, and if we wish to participate in His life we may be able to recognise God's presence in our pain.

B. THE IMPORTANCE OF MINOR MATTERS

Eric Routley points out that, whereas Tillich ends up with 'a groping mysticism' as an answer to our alienation, Williams uses, as a metaphor, the image of a redeemed city which is integrated and ordered, so that all the inhabitants relate to each other in self-giving.[69] Williams uses the image of the city, as a web which connects people in the way of exchange. The interdependence of people leads either to a harmonious community of divine love similar to the Augustinian tradition, or to a city of infamy like Dante's Inferno.[70] In either case we rise or fall together and even a small decision

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[65] Ibid. p. 215.

[66] Townsend, R., in Horne, B. ed. (1995)   Charles Williams: A Celebration, p. 44.

[67] Ibid, p. 42

[68] Ibid. p. 43.

[69] Routley, E, in Horne, B. ed. (1995)   Charles Williams: A Celebration, p. 27.

[70] Williams, C., ed. Ridler, A. (1958) The Image of the City and Other Essays, OUP, pp. 90ff.

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by one person can tip the scale helping to determine the direction we are all going. Freewill does not consist in making momentous decisions about world shaking situations but is exercised for good by being faithful to love in the small everyday things. We deny co-inherence when we refuse to receive help as much as when we refuse to give it.[71]

God is to be found in everyday life which Williams portrays through fiction. Thomas Howard suggests that in the novels, heaven and hell are lurking under every bush, so that, 'the sarcastic lift of an eyebrow carries the seed of murder since it bespeaks my wish to diminish someone else's existence; the shake of a fist is an image of animosity which is an aspect of anger; to open a door for someone with luggage recalls the Cross since it is a small example of putting the other person first.'[72]

Though many of the situations in William's novels are bizarre and fanciful, there is a resonance with our own experience as his metaphors strike home. He uses symbolism and archetypal imagery which help us to see that apparently insignificant tendencies are matters of ultimate importance. The characters find themselves performing heroic deeds or nefarious ones because of the type of people they are, and there is frequently a misuse of power.[73] They are influenced by a multitude of relatively unimportant choices which have already been made, and which make them either open to other people, or closed, exclusive and impenetrable. Every choice sets the scene for the next decision, and compulsive behaviour grows from small beginnings. As Howard puts it, in each of the novels there are those who 'in their egoism defy the rules of courtesy and make a grab for knowledge, power or ecstasy and who therefore come to grief'.[74] Williams describes fantastic, dangerous and exciting events which entail horrendous battles against demonic forces but he puts them in the context of mundane and even humdrum circumstances. His novels have been described as 'metaphysical thrillers giving an antithesis between good and evil in ordinary human behaviour'.[75] The characters all demonstrate that life must be, in some respect, lived for others if it is

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[71] Williams alludes to the parable of the wedding garment in Mathew 22:11-14. in Williams, City, p. 166-168.

[72] Howard, T. (1983) The Novels of Charles Williams, OUP, p. 5.

[73] Richard Sturch points out that this is a common theme among the Inklings. Sturch, R., in Horne, B. ed. (1995) Charles Williams: A Celebration, pp. 165ff.

[74] Howard, op. cit, p. 11.

[75] Ibid, p. 5.

not to lead to vacuity, hate and despair. There is often a clear battle between an enervating state of self-regard and an energising concern for other people. The power of co-inherence is made vivid and accessible in Williams' novels, a few of which can be described.

In <u>Descent into Hell</u> there is a gripping but rather complex story of heroic substitution and vicarious suffering which is used to help people bearing a variety of torments. Pauline is bearing the terror of a martyr and of a labourer who hanged himself, and Peter Stanhope, the poet, takes her fear onto himself in order that she can offer help to someone else. In one incident Stanhope sets himself the task of praying for Pauline who is terrified by an apparition of a mirror personality (her *shadow* self) which keeps obtruding. He lets himself be open to the fear, and 'the body of his flesh received her alien terror, his mind carried the burden of her world. The burden is inevitably lighter for him than for her, for the rage of a personal resentment is lacking'.[76] Set against positive experiences, there is the increasing dementia of the intellectual Wentworth who chooses his own hell through small egotistical choices. They lead to hatred, resentment, jealousy, fantasy and vindictiveness. Pauline, having been helped through her own crisis of identity, offers herself for him, but he rejects redemption and ends up without thought or feeling in a bottomless pit of boredom and inanity. In the story, he is several times offered the opportunity of grasping reality but prefers, instead, the illusions and emptiness on which he was 'hell bent'. He refuses the spiritual energy and co-inherence which was offered.

Redemption from a potentially disastrous situation is brought out in the novel <u>All Hallows' Eve</u>, set in purgatory, as 'new life' after death is beginning. Lester, the main character, discovers that she is in a world of her own making; one where there are things but no people. All her previous sins and selfishness need restitution if she is to escape the endless torpor and misery which her lack of interest in everybody else has engendered. She discovers that the inanimate objects she had thought so important have no real existence. There is a sharp contrast between her guilty, depressed and isolated state, and the joy which she gradually discovers can be available as she moves forward. In reliving her previous rejection of loving relationships she finds a latent spark of human feeling through which she wants to help her snivelling, querulous and generally unpleasant companion, Evelyn. The memory of a long past courtesy which she once

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[76]Williams C. (1937) <u>Descent into Hell</u>, Gollancz.

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extended so as not to hurt someone's feelings comes to her aid, so that she can not only tolerate Evelyn but love her, and this sets in motion a series of confrontations as she actively initiates action to save other people whom she had known. She finds herself confronting the evil Simon who is fraudulent, counterfeiting good with an apparent peace that was obtained through narcotics, hypnotism and murder. He is cruelly trying to gain absolute power over the vulnerable and curious people whom he lured to his house. He and his followers become grotesque and diminished, as the evil he represents is seen to be based on illusion without substance. In contrast, the self-sacrificing good in Lester becomes more real and she goes on to the fullness of joy.[77]

In these and several other novels, Williams discloses the true nature of his characters through decisions which seem insignificant, but which form habits, either increasing love and the energy to resist evil leading to self-destruction.[78] Some characters become solitary, impotent, bored, angry, guilty, inane and in bondage. Others surprise themselves, and other people, by increasing their humility, faith, courage and generosity; their reward is, paradoxically, just those things which the greedy and selfish try to steal.[79]

Williams' writing resonates with themes that have an affinity with other writers quoted here, stressing the overall providence of God who is the transcendent Creator, but whose energy enables transformation through everyday events. The interdependence of all things and all people within the enfolding love of God means that polarities are being reconciled and contradictions transformed. The novels are set in situations where evil is threatening destruction or annihilation so there is an eschatological significance in the response to every detail. The habits and attitudes we develop from small and apparently insignificant choices determine whether we and our companions are travelling towards the reality of heaven or to the vacuity of hell.

We are interdependent and inevitably influence one another and are upheld by our community. Williams points out that none of us would be sustained if it were not for the constant creative power of God. He is also one of the many who draw attention to Bonaventure's image of the centre and the circumference. He uses it to mean that we are on the circumference influenced by slights and setbacks, but Love

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[77] Williams, C. (1948) All Hallows Eve, Gollancz.

[78] Williams, C. (1930) War in Heaven, Gollancz.

[79] Williams, Descent, p. 30.

at the centre is there too, reaching out to influence our responses.[80] We are placed in a sensitive balance with other people all of whom are continually determining what to do in situations where there are a host of different choices - competing ideals and conflicting desires have to be balanced. Our actions must work towards harmonising polarities into a design and 'form' which does not obliterate the needs of other people. Williams says that 'the pattern of glory is a pattern of acts, (not talk) and a willingness to share another's burden'.[81]

As Rosemary Haughton expresses Williams' ideas, 'we are dying another's life and living another's death'. Exchange can be destructive if energy is used in order to dominate, possess or avoid people, as perverted energy repulses love, yet she says, 'through all this the sheer power of the principle of exchange persists in making some kind of sense out of it all'.[82] Small gestures which nourish selfless and generous attitudes in others spread in the community, counteracting those habits which increase self-absorption, guilt and despair. Haughton notes the importance of the Beatitudes because it is poverty which makes way for the energy of Spirit.[83] In the poverty of depressed mood, we need to reverse self-absorbed egoism in order to join the vulnerability and humility of Christ, in which we are invited to co-inhere. Whatever our mood, we can give and receive in small ways, and so join the movement towards the pattern of glory.

3. PAIN AND JOY COINCIDE

Pain can be an agent which leads to selfishness, sin and despair, but forgiveness can be the key to transforming it into a positive point of growth and love - forgiveness of past and present injuries in trust, and even, perhaps, forgiveness of God when we cannot understand the nature of His Creation. Though Andrew Elphinstone writes that pain can be a force which makes us choose the marginally less good and can act as a 'deterrent to the humbling act of repentance and the self-giving act of forgiveness'[84], it

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[80] Williams, He Came Down, p. 77.

[81] Ibid; p. 136.

[82] Ibid, pp. 114-115.

[83] Haughton, R. (1981) The Passionate God, DLT, p. 334.

[84] Elphinstone, A. (1976) Freedom, Suffering and Love, SCM, p. 76.

can also act as a reminder of our fragility. Dorothee Soelle writes that when suffering is experienced without resentment or self-pity, it brings a quality of life in which God can be found, and with Him joy - but it involves forgiveness of those responsible for the situation.[85] She writes, from her experience amongst deprived and persecuted communities where there was also joy, that 'the pains of the poor are also the pains of God. God suffers with them and transforms their pains'[86], and she talks of our task of bearing some of the world's sorrow. She also mentions the paradox of her own pain which brought her to realise that 'even though the pain is not tempered soothed or denied, it still brings a deep joy ... as if I were touching with my own hands the power of life' - darkness and light together in the one who embraces both.[87]

The conjunction of pain and joy needs further consideration as it is sometimes found in exceptional spiritual experiences. On the one hand, Stanley Hauerwas notes that, though it does not need to be so, 'most victims of suffering either sink into spiritual lethargy or become afflicted with self-hatred and participate in their own degradation', thus setting up a chain of further suffering.[88] On the other hand, some outstanding contemporary Christians have borne exceptional experiences, finding that Christ was present in a moment of acute and devastating pain. They provide encouraging examples, indicating that we are all engaged in a personal struggle into which crucified Christ can show a way of compassion, enabling us to participate in His life. As Hauerwas says, our task, in whatever small burdens we have, is 'to wrestle with the truth of everyday', and 'not to come to monumental decisions but to live through the contingencies of our lives'.[89]

Michael Lapsley, an Anglican priest in Zimbabwe who had been ministering to refugee A.N.C. South Africans, knew that he was a marked man before he received the letter bomb which blew off both his hands and blinded him in one eye. He did not lose consciousness, and the pain was excruciating. After a few days of disorientation and terror, he came to recognise with joy that he was with Christ, and with Mary by the Cross. He said in an interview that ' I realised that if I became filled with hatred,

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[85] Soelle, D., trans. Irwin, J.I. (1995) Theology for Sceptics, Mowbray, pp. 62-63.

[86] Ibid, p. 76.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Hauerwas, S. (1981) Vision and Virtue, Notre Dame, Indiana, p. 43.

[89] Ibid, p. 47.

bitterness, self-pity and desire for revenge, I would remain a victim for ever and it would consume me. It would eat me alive. God and people of faith and hope enabled me to make my bombing redemptive - to bring life out of death, the good out of the evil. I was enabled to grow in faith, in commitment to justice, in compassion'.[90] He refused to let his disability plunge him into depression, and, as Michael Worsnip writes, he took the view that the poor and the disabled are the 'treasures of the Church' because they bear the marks of rejection and suffering with Christ, and they point towards the reality of human interdependence.[91] Sheila Cassidy has written similarly about her experiences in Chile which included horrifying torture because of her care for ill rebel soldiers. She could, nevertheless, write of the hand of God in her experiences, saying that,

> incredibly, in the midst of fear and loneliness I was filled with joy, for I knew without any vestige of doubt that God was with me and that nothing they could do to me could change that. I knew too that in some strange way, the pain which I had suffered was his gift, and that far from being a sign of his lack of care or wrath, it was an unmistakable sign of his love.[92]

Margaret Spufford writes of a similar experience of agonising physical pain at a time when she was already suffering from the mental conflict of failing to cope with an acutely disabled daughter, the household, academic work and a breast-fed baby - she was dropped from a stretcher as she was leaving her infant son and the rest of the family to go into hospital, collapsing some vertebrae and adding to the problems of severe chronic osteoporosis. In a moment of searing pain, she writes: 'I had suddenly been aware even as I screamed, of the presence of the Crucified. He did not cancel the moment, or assuage it, but was inside it.'[93] Despair was always threatening but a Christian sacramental life, founded on the knowledge of Christ's suffering love, turned it into 'Celebration'. She could write, not only: 'I loathe and detest my bone disease. I am often miserable, often shamefully discontented, often isolated, often lonely. I fear pain, and the fear does not grow less'[94], but also: 'God does not defend his people from

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[90] Radio, BBC 4 (1995) <u>Seeds of Faith</u>, 11.45 pm., July 23rd.

[91] Worsnip, M. (1996) <u>Michael Lapsley: Priest and Partisan</u>, Ocean Press, Melbourne, p.147.

[92] Cassidy, S. (1977) <u>Audacity to Believe</u>, Collins, p. 223.

[93] Spufford, M. (1989) <u>Celebration</u>, Harper Collins, Fount, p. 38.

[94] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 92.

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worldly evil, and He seems powerless or unwilling to protect them. The trust one has to develop in Him lies far deeper, in the knowledge that He will be present in the deepest waters, and the most acute pain, and in some apprehension of His will to transform these things.' [95] Her daughter's congenital disease (which was bound to kill her in a matter of a few years) combined with her own very painful bone condition made the problem of maintaining trust in God acute.

Spufford describes the spiritual life as 'a journey from fear to trust' and, for her, the acceptance of suffering without bitterness.[96] She does not glorify suffering in any way and, although she quotes Teilhard de Chardin's analogy of the tree that has to shed so much in order to grow, she admits that we cannot understand, but only experience something that enables acceptance of limitation. She writes that pain is a process of 'somehow absorbing darkness' and 'we have to allow ourselves to be open to pain. Yet all the while we must resist any temptation to assent to it being other than evil'.[97] She struggled with her own incapacity and all the decisions that were necessary to keep her daughter alive, with a reasonable quality of life for a number of years, and then eventually to allow her to die after a second kidney transplant. Perhaps a clue to her remarkable resilience is her statement that, although pain is very isolating and grief needs expression, 'laughter at your own absurdity brings home your own total inadequacy and dependence on grace'.[98] Suffering and joy are strangely bound together in Christian biography, with the experience of 'joy in pain' being regarded as pure unexpected gift, an oblation which is probably only possible because of previous spirituality and self-giving.

A cogent poetic comment on the closeness of joy and pain is found in the English writings of the Lebanese philosopher and poet, Kahlil Gibran. He writes, for instance, that 'your joy is your sorrow unmasked... the deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain', [99] so that desire for love should be to know the pain of too much tenderness. He also writes poignantly that

your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding. Even as the

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[95] Ibid, p. 28.

[96] Ibid, p. 90.

[97] Ibid, p. 93.

[98] Ibid, p. 96.

[99] Gibran, K. (1926:1991) The Prophet, Macmillan Pan Books, p. 14.

stone of the fruit must break, that its heart may stand in the sun, so you must know pain ... much pain is self-chosen. It is the bitter potion by which the physician within you heals your sick self. Therefore trust the physician, and drink his remedy in silence and tranquillity: for his hand, though heavy and hard, is guided by the tender hand of the Unseen and the cup he brings, though it burn your lips, has been fashioned of the clay which the Potter has moistened with His own sacred tears.[100]

Gibran was also an artist who painted in a style reminiscent of Blake. Flouting gender stereotypes, and possibly indicating the paradox of the Trinity with the beauty of Love found on the Cross, he painted a particularly compelling and beautiful picture of three persons: the central one, a woman with arms outstretched as if on a crucifix (there are nails in her hands but no wood), the other two like the thieves, one on either side, clearly feeling and interacting with her - it could be a depiction of the crucifixion - or, because the positions and attitudes are like a mirror image of Andrei Rublev's icon of the Trinity, and because the nails seem to go into the breasts of the other two figures, it seems more likely that it reflects the Godhead.[101] To me, it represents an intuitive response to the transcendent God as He relates to human suffering in Christ, and it shows the beauty of mingled joy and sorrow.

The Christian experience showing that pain and joy can exist together in heart-rending depth of feeling without precluding peace, shows that there is redemptive value when suffering and love coincide, and, in this, there must always be an element of forgiveness. Our discontent, resentment, self-pity and despondency is a sickness of the soul for which the ultimate healing is to be found in the message of the Cross. Hauerwas emphasises the mystery which leaves us still questioning with a quotation from Wolterstorff, whose son was killed in a mountain accident but who says that

Suffering is down at the centre of things, deep down where the meaning is. Suffering is the meaning of our world. For love is the meaning. And Love suffers. The tears of God are the meaning of history. But mystery remains. Why isn't Love-without-suffering the meaning of things? Why is suffering Love the meaning? Why does God endure His suffering? Why does he not at once relieve his agony by relieving ours?[102]

There are no answers, but we are called to suffer with those whose agony is beyond comforting words, and to bear our own distress with patience. In all this pain we know

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[100] Ibid, p. 21.

[101] Ibid, p. 71.

[102] Hauerwas, S. (1993) Naming the Silences, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, p. 150.

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that Christ is also there, and that those who suffer can also participate in the divine life and joy of God.

Williams' understanding of co-inherence helps to highlight a theological understanding of hope that is relevant in depressed mood. God is in all things, and the examples cited illustrate the coincidence of pain and joy, confirming Williams' dictum that all things can be known as occasions of love. Balthasar's emphasis on Christ's descent into godforsakenness is the archetypal example of this conjunction. Feelings of purposelessness, meaninglessness and fear of condemnation become irrelevant if the real option of bearing each other's burdens is recognised as part of the life in God which begins with forgiving and being forgiven.[103] The process may be painful, but if there can be trust in God's redemptive power, made known to us in Jesus Christ, healing is beginning.

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[103] A number of popular books concentrate on 'healing the memories' in the therapy of depression. This is primarily a process of forgiving the people responsible for the early traumas which have led to feelings of guilt and worthlessness.

CHAPTER 10.

NEW FRAMES OF REFERENCE AND WAYS OUT OF A VICIOUS CIRCLE: COGNITIVE, SYMBOLIC AND SPIRITUAL MODELS FOR RECOVERY.

'Let light shine out of darkness'.[1]

CONTENTS

1. TRANSCENDENTAL PERSPECTIVES ON HEALING -- SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

As there are many factors which predispose people to depression, so there are many ways of curing it. They range from chemical and physical treatments dispensed by doctors, analytic psychology and other therapies needing professional expertise, to counselling and a host of other approaches, many of which have spiritual implications. Here I will mention three ways of changing fixed negative ways of viewing the world which have a religious significance, and which can be aligned with a search for the classical transcendentals[2]. The first way which can relieve depressed mood is cognitive therapy, approached through reasoning - a search for *truth*; the second is the aesthetic use of symbol using faculties that are intuitive and feeling - a search for *beauty*; and the third includes the other two in a search for *goodness*. The latter involves a change in a person's ethical frame of reference, to one in which God and the values of self-giving

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[1] 2 Corinthians 4:6.

[2] Transcending 'Aristotelean' empirical categories.

love have their rightful place. Each of these routes involves abandoning preconceptions and will entail receiving forgiveness, and forgiving those responsible for past hurts. Each of them enables opposites to come together for reconciliation, thus allowing some participation in the creative divine life. Returning to the model of depression, it will be suggested that without some form of spiritual change, other therapies will be incomplete.

A. COGNITIVE - A SEARCH FOR TRUTH

a) Historical Background

The belief that our emotions stem, at least in part, from conscious thought patterns dates back to the Stoics who said that 'men are disturbed, not by things but by the views they take of them', and as Marcus Aurelius sressed, *it is the judgement which is made of an event which makes it distressing, not the event itself*.[3] The importance of realistic thinking in controlling feelings is, therefore, not a new discovery but this search for <u>truth</u> has only recently found its rightful place in therapies for depression. Cognitive therapy is recognised as a relatively quick type of psychotherapy for people who are open to change, and whose mood is closely related to their conscious thoughts.

Robert Solomon, in an analysis of emotions from an existential point of view, comes to the conclusion that our feelings are no more than a means of self-assessment, for instance, we are unhappy when we consider ourselves belittled. He points out, correctly, that there are self-judgements involved in anger, grief, guilt and shame, and these are amenable to rational revision.[4] His view is, however, inadequate with regard to deeply seated emotions which are not amenable to change through altering established habits of thought.

Justin Oakley's profound study of morality and emotion helps to clarify some of the ambivalence there is towards responsibility for changes of mood. His analysis describes the three main components of mood[5] which are affect, desire and cognition.

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[3] Quoted in Blackburn, I. and Davidson, K. (1990) <u>Cognitive Therapy for Depression and Anxiety</u>, Blackwell, Oxford, p.16.

[4] Solomon, R.C. (1976:1993) <u>The Passions</u>, Hackett, Indianapolis, p. 184.

[5] A state of mind which affects all the functions of a person including those that are physical.

a) Affect (as he uses the word) is what we feel as an emotion, and is often accompanied by a bodily sensation, such as increased rate of heart beat, inertia, feelings of constriction, trembling and breathing rapidly.[6] b) Desire is always a factor in mood changes because emotions relate to our intentions, motivations, and expectations, so that hoping, yearning and coveting determine their origin. c) Elements of judgement underlie our desires, and an unruly desire can overrule the rational thought. Compassion illustrates the complex origin of our intentions; there is the desire to help others which is constructively thoughtful, loving and motivated, thereby including all three elements (which may, however, be confused by egotistical thoughts, desires and motives). At the opposite end of the scale, depression exists with the same components but they are distorted into negative thoughts, miserable mood, and constricted angry desire.

Oakley argues that to a great extent there is a moral element in the way we feel - emotions are like children over whom we can sometimes exercise control but who reflect credit and blame according to the way in which they have been nurtured and trained.[7] Oliver Letwin adds weight to this view when he describes emotions which arise as a result of rational choice, stressing that Aristotelean optimism about the possibility of a 'unified self' implies responsibility[8]. He writes of possible progress to 'coherence and integrity', and in his view, internal harmony of personality can be fostered so as to prevent the upsurge of the 'wild Brontë-like "other self"', and would enable us to trust our passions.[9] This approach confirms the contention that we should consider ways of training our habits of thought and feeling, in order to bring to mind the polarities of the psyche. It should be noted, however, that a distinction can be drawn between the 'emotion' of despair, and the affective 'mood' of depression. The emotion can, to some extent, be controlled by directing thoughts in a different direction and encouraging other feelings. The mood registers a state of mind which may be partly

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[6] This realisation gave rise to the James-Lange theory which states that 'the bodily changes follow so directly on the perception of the stimulus, that our feeling of these changes as they occur IS the emotion'. Oakley, J. (1992) Morality and the Emotions, Routledge, p.190, and Dictionary of Psychology, Penguin, p. 237.

[7] Oakley, op. cit, p. 190.

[8] Letwin, O. (1987) Ethics, Emotion and the Unity of the Self, Croom Helm, pp. 124ff.

[9] Ibid, p. 128. Compare also Jung's insistence on recognising and integrating the *shadow*. Failure to do so is well illustrated by the novel, Stevenson, R.L.S.(1886:1924) The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Heinemann.

controllable in as much as it is consequent on feelings and negative cognitions, but it may also be global and physically more deeply seated, and therefore less easily addressed. Mary Louise Bringle draws attention to the similarity of those who recommend exerting the will to change patterns of thought with the advice given by Evagrius and Cassian to monks suffering from *accidie*.

b) Cognitive therapy

Cognitive therapy, which was initially systematised by Aaron Beck, is now widely used as a means of training feeling through rational thought, restructuring the assumptions on which judgements have been based. Beck summarises ways in which distortions need to be altered because there is 'faulty processing of information'. For instance there may be:

1. *Arbitrary inference* which means drawing a conclusion without evidence, perhaps about someone else's behaviour or judgement as it relates to the client.

2. *Selective abstraction*, which focuses on a detail and leaves most of the situation out of account.

3. *Overgeneralisation* from a single incident which is not typical.

4. *Personalisation* of neutral situations by applying circumstances to the self in an unwarranted way, perhaps by demanding something impossible, such as 'I can't be happy unless everyone likes me'.

5. *Magnification or minimisation* without a sense of proportion.

6. *Absolutistic dichotomous thinking* in polarities so that everything has to be black with total disaster imminent, or ideally white.[10]

It should be noted that these distortions of thought all represent extreme positions which need balancing by their opposites. Beck uses techniques that modify negative and self-condemning thoughts showing that, in practice, many people can avoid thinking of themselves as helpless victims and worthless. Cognitions which tended to be automatically pessimistic are replaced by new constructive patterns of thought, re-attributing the false reasons for habitual assumptions, so that previous poor self-concept is replaced by a more realistic view.[11] Loss and failure are frequent precipitants of depression, and by altering the conceptual frame or context in which

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[10] Beck, A.T. , et al. (1979) Cognitive Therapy of Depression, Guildford Press, NY, p. 14.

[11] Ibid, pp. 244ff.

they seem to be insurmountable problems, a new perspective is gained on loneliness, self-reproach and self-blame and other disturbing thoughts. Motivation is, however, needed for this therapy which is only suited to those who do not suffer from a paralysis of will as part of their illness. Beck also recognises the heterogeneous nature of depression, and he recommends that medication should be given as well as cognitive therapy when appropriate; each treatment makes the patient more accessible to another type.[12]

Dorothy Rowe, another cognitive therapist, describes the same tendencies in more popular language, concentrating on the common problems of anger and guilt, and the vicious circles which they engender in depression. The need for feelings of self-worth and courage, which can break this self-perpetuating negativity, is stressed. From her clinical work she lists the recipe for depression in the following beliefs:

a) No matter how good I appear to be, I am bad ,evil,

   unacceptable to myself and to other people.

b) Other people are such that I fear, hate and envy them.

c) Life is terrible and death is worse.

d) Only bad things have happened to me in the past and

   only bad things will happen in the future.

e) Anger is evil.

f) Never forgive and never expect to be forgiven. [13]

It is very different from the basic tenet of Christianity, which holds that we are created to glorify God and should feel ourselves loved, forgiven and worthwhile. Rowe summarises it further by saying that 'to give up being depressed you have to give up the advantages of being depressed' which are 'certainty, pride, taking things personally and hanging on to hopes.'[14] Her suggestions for escaping from the prison of depression include, among many others, accepting and valuing the self, taking risks, being interested in other people and not being envious. Rowe's many books refer to the imprisoning experience of isolation, self-hate, anger, guilt and fear. Release comes not only through more realistic thinking but also through the experience of forgiveness of

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[12] Ibid, pp. 354ff.

[13] Rowe, D. (1991) Breaking the Bonds, Fontana, Harper Collins, p. 89.

[14] Ibid, pp. 106-7.

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the self and of other people. The excellence of her books with their sound Christian assumptions is only marred by her prejudice against medication and her sweeping condemnation of psychiatrists.[15]

Cognitive therapy seeks to clarify the real situation about the inner and outer world, using a God-given faculty to correct distorted thoughts and seek truth. The search for reality about ourselves and the world in which we live is an important part of our spiritual task. It involves the reconciliation of many of the polarities in our thinking - a fact which is patently obvious when dealing with the tendency to absolutise or exaggerate situations. An appreciation of truth paves the way for God's healing, forgiving energy.

B. SYMBOLIC - THE SEARCH FOR BEAUTY

The ability of art and <u>beauty</u> to enlarge the understanding of the psyche, and heal its divisions, occurs mainly because of the symbolic messages they portray. Symbols bridge the gap between the conscious mind and the unconscious, so that repressed memories relegated to the *shadow* can be recalled and integrated.[16] The value of art, therefore, lies in the symbolic content which integrates opposing complexes, as well as in its creativity and beauty.[17] Barbara Baumgarten describes art as 'an imaginative coherence of incompatibles that require our surrender into its event'.[18] She also says, using Tillich's metaphor, that

> 'in the Kingdom of God, the polarities of life are held through love in a dynamic yet harmonious tension ... the equilibrium of opposed impulses that art presents speaks to our deepest knowing ... we may recognise an essential unity of things as we participate in a work of art ... which embodies a dynamic harmony of extraordinary

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[15] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 346.

[16] For full discussion of the bridging capacity of symbols see <u>Transitions,</u> pp. 40ff.

[17] When I ask 'which qualities suggest beauty?', the answers fall into two groups. The first group suggest inherent complementarity of contrasting elements with words such as harmony, balance, integrity, completeness, composure, elegance and serenity. The second group look for contrasts from their own condition with words such as grandeur, splendour, perfection, purity, simplicity, ineffability, goodness and truth - all of which are qualities we can attribute to God. It is as if the world of beauty mirrors Him and declares His presence in two ways: one which is immanent uniting polarities within the world, the other which transcends our own potential and is accessed by contrast. All agree that there is an aspect of beauty which commands attention, taking one 'out of oneself', beyond the mundane - for there to be an impact, an element of epiphany is necessary. Art wakens in us a new sensitivity in addition to its symbolic value.

[18] Baumgarten, B. D.B.(1994) <u>Visual Art as Theology,</u> Peter Lang, NY, p. 239.

meaning'.[19]

In other words we are asked to participate in something beyond ourselves by surrendering to the power of an image. It may be said that art is an essential means of holding the polarities of spirit and matter, of reason and intuition, and of the unconscious and consciousness in harmony and balance. The artistic sense may therefore play an essential role in healing our divided nature through symbols, dreams and imagination.

Early Christian and medieval art used pictures and symbols to teach and inspire. There are many mandalas[20] in our churches, but the form which is most relevant to the meetings of contraries is the mandorla.[21] This form is an elliptical or almond shaped area such as that which occurs when two circles overlap. It now usually contains a representation of Christ in triumph, emerging from the meeting of darkness and light. The two circles (when they have been retained) represent opposites with good and bad images, both of which are resurrected in the mandorla. The *shadow* enters into the mandorla and does not make it grey or stark, but is redeemed. By the sixth century, in Church art, the figure usually represented Christ, either transfigured or ascending, or the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.

Tillich, for whom art was an important means of communication, distinguishes between the form of a work of art which is likely to be culturally determined, and its import which gives it significance and spiritual meaning.[22] He was particularly captivated by Expressionism, in which he found symbols which drew together the externals of life and his religious experience[23] - The symbols of the Cross are, for instance, to be found in works such as Picasso's 'Guernica'.[24] The meaninglessness, isolation and despair which are part of the truth become more evident in Expressionism than in naturalistic or idealistic art, both of which he considers, can become divorced

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[19] Ibid, p. 238.

[20] Mandala is a Sanskrit word for a geometric figure of a square in a circle, or a circle in a square which is used in Eastern meditation. Jung found that such figures frequently occur in dreams where they signify potential wholeness of the Self, with opposites reconciled and held in creative tension.

[21] Osborne, H. ed. (1970) The Oxford Companion to Art, OUP, p. 684.
Graham Sutherland's tapestry in Coventry Cathedral is a mandorla.

[22] Tillich, Culture, p. 68.

[23] Baumgarten, op. cit, p. 230.

[24] Tillich, Culture, p. 75.

from reality. Baumgarten analyses the characteristics which Tillich finds helpful, including the portrayal of the brokenness of humanity which becomes evident when subconscious images are brought to light.[25] The reorganisation of familiar objects makes their disjunction strangely disturbing so that estrangement and anxiety becomes visible in both art and the theatre.[26] The import in these paintings is of more value than the form, but if they express only the negativity of existence, they are unbalanced. Darkness and alienation have to be acknowledged, and then made acceptable and coherent within a totality. The *shadow* with which we contend in ourselves and in society is not the whole picture of life as some Expressionist art might suggest, though there may be value in exaggerating it and so shocking us into recognising its existence.

Tillich describes an intense experience of a different and possibly more positive kind which occurred while he was looking at a painting of Botticelli's <u>Madonna and Child with Singing Angels</u>. He had, however, some difficulty in integrating such an experience into his system, for he says that 'I felt a state like ecstasy. In the beauty of the painting there was Beauty itself. It shone through the colours of the paint as the light of day shines through the stained-glass windows of medieval church. As I stood there, bathed in the beauty its painter had envisaged so long ago, something of the divine source of all things came through to me. I turned away shaken.'[27] Baumgarten says that 'in Tillich's view, artistic forms are immanent sacramental symbols: they make the transcendent present in their material form'[28], but she is of the opinion that Tillich could never quite articulate nor understand why a naturalistic painting such as that of Botticelli's should have such an effect.[29] Its 'ecstatic power' was beyond the categories he considered valid and which could be found in Expressionism.[30] Tillich himself, however, points out that beauty, like any aesthetic experience, can never be defined or limited because it points towards something which is ultimate and infinite.[31] Our

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[25] Baumgarten, <u>op. cit</u>, p. 198.

[26] Tillich, <u>Courage</u>, p. 144.

[27] Tillich, quoted in Brown, F.B. (1990) <u>Religious Aesthetics</u>, Macmillan, p. 91.

[28] Baumgarten, <u>op. cit</u>, p. 234.

[29] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 230.

[30] <u>Ibid</u>, p. 231.

[31] Tillich, <u>ST3</u>, p. 256.

experience of ultimacy in art points towards God for whom no definitions are appropriate.[32]

Tillich talks, as Jung does, of 'the coincidence of conscious and unconscious activity' through the symbols of art which are 'purposive without having been purposively produced'.[33] Art, like the 'Spiritual Presence', removes the 'subject-object' barrier so that observation is replaced by 'insight and participation'.[34] The concept of participation in the divine and self-transcendence through the revelations of art is sacramental, but Tillich is reluctant to express certainty in this area, saying that the aesthetic function 'anticipates something that does not yet exist', so that 'the aesthetic function oscillates between reality and unreality'.[35] He could not totally grasp the truth that 'the God in all things' might reveal himself in this way. Baumgarten considers that this problem occurred because Tillich could not surrender to the power of new symbols which could effect change at a different and unconscious level of reality, but rather recognised and welcomed only those symbols which already rang true to his conscious experience.[36]

Depression may eventually lead to new creativity which can help people to recovery. Emmy Gut, a psychoanalyst with a wide experience of depressed people, stresses that 'art' in some form very often helps to integrate conflicting experiences, and reconciles people to their present situation.[37] Her patients learnt to express their deepest, and often previously unrecognised feelings, through the symbols that came into consciousness, so that they could lay to rest many anxieties whose origins were previously obscure. Bridging the gap between opposites in the conscious and unconscious mind, through art and symbol, leads to 'tensile strength' (Bringle's term).[38] There is then energy for further creativity, and often for better relationships. Anthony Storr[39] and Antony Clare[40] also give numerous examples, and extensive bibliographies

[32] Tillich, Ultimate Concern, p. 44.

[33] Tillich, ST3, p. 258.

[34] Hofstadter, A., and Kuhns, R.(1964:1976)   Philosophies of Art and Beauty, UP, Chicago, p. 357.

[35] Tillich, ST3, p. 65.

[36] Baumgarten, op. cit, p. 236.

[37] Gut, E. (1989) Productive and Unproductive Depression, Tavistock/Routledge, p. 3.

[38] Bringle, op. cit, p. 174.

[39] Storr, A. (1972) The Dynamics of Creation, Penguin, pp. 102ff.

[40]. Clare, A. (1993:1994) Depression and How to Survive it, Arrow books, pp. 120ff.

describing the tormented lives of many artists and poets, who might have been mediocre had they not lived with so much tension, but whose creativity enabled a richer and more fulfilled life.

Chaim Potok's novels are a good illustration of the symbols which can be used to explore and reconcile disturbing tensions. In his writings evil and suffering are integrated when some kind of complementarity is discovered. The tensions which he describes stem from firmly held beliefs in closely knit exclusive communities of strict Jewish Hasidism.[41] Conflicts between strict Jewish orthodoxy and modern society become intolerable to many of Potok's adolescent heroes. In My Name is Asher Lev Potok portrays sensitivity to the suffering of the world through a very young artist, Asher Lev, who has an exceptional creative gift, and who, at very early age, learns to admire and copy art such as Picasso's 'Guernica'.[42] As a child he suffers from a number of deprivations in spite of a warm and caring family. He is upset by his knowledge of pogroms and is hounded in his sleep by the demands of a thunderous mythic ancestor. His mother's severe depression and later her preoccupation with study leave him isolated, and his father is also absent, working to rescue Russian Jews. Asher himself becomes depressed when still a child, and his pictures tend to be gloomy, not pretty, as he searches for means of portraying the mood of 'ice and darkness inside him', symbolised by the 'street crying in the rain' and 'the cold darkness' of Siberian ice and snow.[43] His uncomprehending parents take him to see doctors including a psychiatrist, and, because of the unusual lines and planes in his drawings, an eye specialist![44] All to no avail, because his main problem is a need to give priority to an expression of his feelings through art. He has to reconcile his creative gift and the emotions it arouses with the whole of the present reality, including the impossible demands of his family, and when he stops drawing he becomes more withdrawn and depressed. By the time he is adult, the divisive effect of his art in a rigid society becomes too threatening for him to remain with his family, though he loves them and is faithful to their practices. He has to leave Brooklyn and continue to paint in Paris.

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[41] Hasidism started in Poland in the 18th century, spreading to Russia, whence Potok's communities came as refugees to the U.S.A.. Some of the mysticism of the Kabbala was incorporated into Jewish orthodoxy, but it has been mainly perpetuated though closely knit exclusive communities who follow the ancient rituals and customs.

[42] Potok, C, (1972:1973) My Name is Asher Lev, Penguin, p. 174.

[43] Ibid, p. 41.

[44] Ibid, p. 109.

As a young man, Asher paints two startlingly original interpretations of the Crucifixion in order to depict the suffering of his family, the Jewish community and the wider world - 'there was no aesthetic mould in his own religious tradition into which he could pour a painting of ultimate anguish and torment'.[45] Asher uses his mother as a symbol of suffering, placing her on an unmistakably Christian Cross, in the form of a window frame, through which she looks onto the world and upwards towards 'the Maker of the Universe'. She is portrayed between her husband with an over-large attaché case on one side and her son with a huge palette on the other. She is torn between her love for a husband often in danger, and her incomprehensible artistic son. These pictures, which like all his paintings are extremely valuable and well publicised, are a blasphemy to most of his community, causing him to be ostracised. His life is threatened, and he has to establish himself in Europe.

Potok unfolds the turmoil of unconscious influences affecting the artist, reconciling the strengths of the community and his own creativity with the narrowness of this particular Jewish perspective. There are many other polarities such as his need for solitude and the demands of society, and the tensions between goodness and suffering, and between love and duty. He only maintains his integrity and his sanity by recognising the opposites, keeping alive the tensions between them and expressing them in the symbols of his painting. The main characters in most of Potok's books look inwards to discover meaning, purpose and relief from misery and conflict - in Jungian terms, they face and integrate their *shadow*, both corporate and individual. Gert Buelens, commenting on another work of Potok, says that 'everything is entwined with everything else, good and evil, beauty and ugliness, light and darkness, right and wrong'.[46]

The antitheses in life have to be reconciled if conflict is not to destroy us, and the light gives meaning to the darkness, in particular, helping to find hope in our dark moods.[47] Symbols are important in the spiritual journey, helping to reconcile warring feelings by bringing painful unconscious feelings into the conscious mind, where they can be dealt with in the light of reality, instead of sapping energy and leading to

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[45] Ibid, p. 288.

[46] Buelens, G. (1985) Studia Germanica Gadensia, 'Aspects of the American Novel', p.30.

[47] This is not, as Buelens suggests, a dualistic view, because the simultaneous incorporation of two antithetical sides gives a unity and meaning to the whole of Creation - it is the total reality.

depressed mood. In this way the totality of life can be integrated, and God recognised in places where he was previously thought to be absent.

Therapy through the symbols of art, myths, dreams and other images, enables change at a deeper level than cognitive therapy. There are many people who have a very good intellectual grasp of the flawed thinking which mars their mood, but whose feelings can not follow their reason. Greta, for example, believed with her mind, but not with her heart, that God is compassionate, loving, and forgiving and would argue fiercely for her faith. Her early experiences were disastrous in that both parents despised and rejected her, so she became angry, self-hating, and depressed, unable to think in terms of forgiveness, either for herself or other people. The huge gap between her religion and the realities of life, and between her intellectual and her affective view of God, could only be bridged by slowly finding symbols which reconciled her life with the standards she had adopted - a slow and painful process.

C. THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION - THE SEARCH FOR GOODNESS

The search for truth and beauty has been seen to have applications in the spiritual life and in the therapy of depressed mood. A third transcendental of the ancient world, goodness, will be considered in the context of the self-giving love of Christ and the forgiveness which is offered when we fail to live up to our calling. Virtues, such as the 'fruits of the Spirit' listed by St Paul, 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control'[48], are clearly preferable to the anger, resentment, self-absorption, misery, restlessness, lethargy, anxiety, self-pity and guilt so often found in depression, but they cannot usually be accessed quickly for an emergency. The gradual establishment of health-giving habits of mind and spirit may take a life-time, but a late start is always possible if there is the initial will to change.

As Evagrius discovered, spiritual values and practice can percolate into every aspect of life - indeed it is the Christian vocation to allow them to do so. Conversion (metanoia) means turning around with a change in value judgements, particularly about oneself, with repentance and self-acceptance (because of God's forgiveness) as the first steps. Even though many of the negative thoughts, including guilt, may be built into the fabric of a depressive illness, there is an element of freedom which can enable

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[48] Galatians, 5:22.

renunciation of unreal values and defensive thinking and accept the love which is offered.

Mind and spirit, cognitive therapy and religious practice can work together to recognise a real self of worth, freed from unnecessary guilt. One approach does not exclude another, nor does Christianity have a monopoly of the Spirit. There are many religions with many routes to God, and most of them would have parallel ways of approaching some of the fundamental considerations on which this thesis is based. If, by whatever means, 'love, joy and peace' increase, there is less danger of the destructive feelings which occur in depression predominating. In other words, health of soul and mental health flourish together, but it is rarely a quick or easy option for the person who is suffering.

Acceptance of oneself, and acceptance of reality, as it is, with all the negative and difficult parts, is a major task for everyone. Gerard Hughes in a spiritual autobiography recounts his journey from reliance on an exclusive and rigid hierarchical structure within his Church, to working with 'Catholics, Protestants and Pagans'.[49] He learnt that God's Spirit is found in peace activists, Aborigines, communists and, indeed, in a host of unlikely places in various parts of the world, but, in spite of these encouraging signs, he found himself profoundly depressed. This mood was triggered by despair over the Church's lack of concern about nuclear arms, but it had deeper roots in what he calls 'a subtle egoism', complacency and self-importance.[50] There are few, if any virtuous people who do not, similarly, rely on their own judgement, strength and ability 'to save the world'. For Gerard Hughes it was depression and despair that helped him to realise the value of acknowledging inadequacy, with thankfulness that one has been given helpful attributes. He says that 'the experience of inner darkness which, at the time, felt totally destructive, is now, in memory, a creative energy', and he talks of the layers of consciousness which may be revealed by reflecting on emotional pain - 'further layers which have not yet acknowledged God's presence in all things'.[51] Despair, according to Kierkegaard, is the central sin of not trusting God's love and forgiveness, and wishing, in desperation, that 'one were not'.[52] It is lack of trust and

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[49] The answer given by Jerome Nadal, a contemporary of Ignatius, when asked to whom should the Exercises be given. Hughes, G.W. (1997) God, Where Are You?, DLT, p. 143.

[50] Hughes, Where?, p. 211.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Kierkegaard, S. (1849:1989) The Sickness Unto Death, Penguin, p. 50.

humility which causes forgiveness to be side-stepped, feelings of worthlessness to persist, and consequently a false self to be built up in compensation. Trust in God as the foundation of all our concerns can eliminate self-inflicted anxieties, and the hidden realities of our relationship with God give a different dimension to complement and transform our darkness.

2. A MODEL OF RECOVERY

The model described in Chapter 3 incorporates various causative factors in depression and depressed mood. A parallel model of recovery places spiritual health as a foundation which can penetrate into all the other aspects to make them more effective. The incorporation of the spiritual aspect into a model of recovery can be expressed diagramatically. The process is illustrated by the increasing healthiness between positions a. and positions b. in Figures 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10. Spiritual vitality (*New Being* in Tillich's terms) allows Grace to cause the increase of qualities that conquer the morbid thoughts of the *logismoi*, so that *accidie* diminishes. Guilt is absolved through contrition and forgiveness, and a spontaneous realism about the self and the world enables past and present difficulties to be faced with vigour. The transformation of the *logismoi* into the 'fruits of the spirit' depends on forgiveness and self-acceptance, - not by trying harder. This understanding is, in itself, a paradox of the Gospel because it is through our weakness that we can become strong.[53]
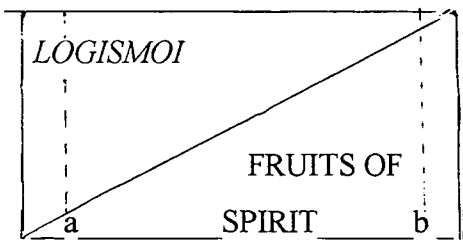
Figure 5. Spiritual Growth.
The *logismoi* have less hold as the fruits of the Spirit increase.

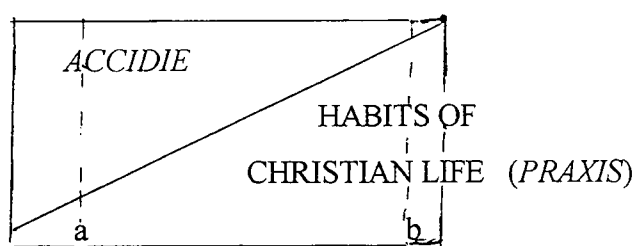[53] 1 Corinthians 1:25 and 15:43, 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Fig. 6. Christian Life and *Accidie*

As one grows, the other diminishes.

Guilt is an overwhelming problem in depression (whether for real or imagined sins), and it diminishes when there is contrition and forgiveness, as figure 7 illustrates. When someone accepts their weakness, freedom from guilt (being forgiven) and resentment (forgiving) means that the energy tied up in defensive conflicts is liberated, so that there can be progress and growth of mind and spirit together, as illustrated in Figure 8.
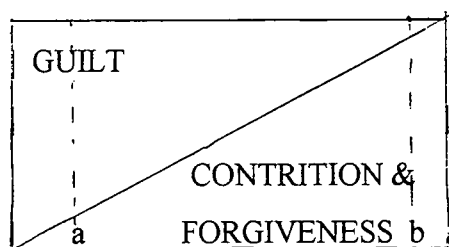
Figure 7. Guilt diminishes as forgiveness is received.
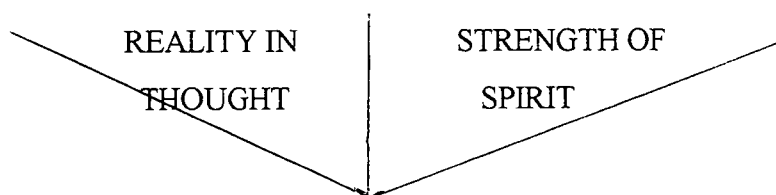
Figure 8. Reality, truth and strength grow together.

There is a knock-on effect from new interior strength. External difficulties may be seen in a different perspective and more easily surmounted so that, though the tyrannies of everyday life may remain a heavy burden, there will be greater fortitude and more inner resources to deal with them. Spiritual awareness is also likely to provide extra motivation to change any circumstances that can be tackled. Figure 9 illustrates an inverse relationship in incapacity because of external problems when these problems are seen in the light of growing interior strength.

Fig. 9. Transforming the Present Situation.
Interior strength reduces the effect of exterior problems.

When the effect of the present situations which triggered depression has been modified by a balanced co-operation of thought and spirit, the i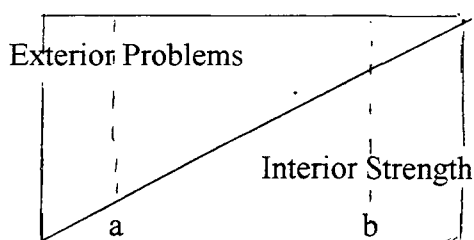ndividual is in a better state to look at the traumatic legacy of the past. Repressed feelings will be more easily tolerated, and reality will be seen in a different perspective. It is commonly found by psychotherapists that, in many cases, psychological treatments can make physical treatment unnecessary. It is therefore likely that, in addition to a psychological interaction with the somatic and biochemical aspects of depression, there is also an underlying spiritual effect, as suggested in Figure 10. The reasons for lasting guilt, anger and fear will be more accessible and can be faced more readily. So far it has been proposed, in this schema, that all the psychogenic elements in depression can be influenced by spiritual growth.
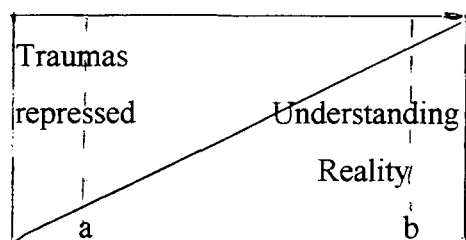

Figure 10. Mind and Spirit help to heal the memories of the Past.

It is also proposed that there may be an underlying spiritual effect which can enable better resistance to biological vulnerability. Health of body, mind and spirit are interdependent. Medical treatment may remain necessary, but the whole fabric of life is affected by spiritual freedom and the renewed energy that it brings.
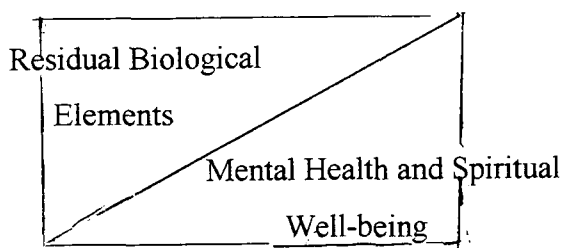
Figure 11. Psychosomatic Reversal.

The summary Diagram in Figure 12 shows the aetiological factors on the left hand side with their mainline treatments. This part of the scheme is the information given in Figures 1 and 2 - shown so that it can be read proportionally, according to the position along the bottom line. For example, the present situation is aggravated by internal and external factors which are mainly internal in position a., and mainly external in position b.

At the bottom of the diagram, the transformation of the *logismoi* into the fruits of the Spirit is represented. This change is dependent on the reconciliation of opposites, notably through forgiveness, and integration of the *shadow*. New energy can then percolate into the psyche and affect all the causes of depressed mood - a process which is shown on the right hand side of the diagram. Thus, there is more strength to deal with the external situation, to face the conflicts from the past and to gain the mental and spiritual health which can also affect bodily function.

The diagram has some additional features which have not been discussed so far, including an analysis of the *logismoi*. Although all the *logismoi* work to destroy faith, hope and love, they can be grouped according to the virtue which is most at risk, and which is therefore most effective in dispelling the temptation. The relevance of these temptations and virtues to our relationships with God, with others and with ourselves is implicit in this document, and the transforming effect of prayer, symbol, myth and paradox is discussed more fully in Transitions. [54]

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[54] Transitions. pp. 111ff.

DEPRESSION

HEALTH

Possible Treatment

Body
Psyche

MEDICAL →

Biological Remnants
Mental & Spiritual Health

Past
Present Situation

DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY →

Traumas Exposed
Reality in perpective

External
Internal
a   b

COUNSELLING →

Exterior, some Problems Remain
Interior Strength

Distorted Thoughts
Spiritual Malaise

COGNITIVE →

Remaining Negative Thoughts
Growing Spiritual Life

FORGIVENESS

"Logismoi"
Fruits of the Holy Spirit

↔

"Logismoi"
Fruits of the Holy Spirit

energizing and transforming effects of prayer, symbol, myth and paradox

Self-hate
Anger
Guilt   Contrition
Self-worth

H O P E

Within self

Pride
Accidie   "Habits"
of Christian Practice

F A I T H

Avarice
Envy
Lust   Generosity
Compassion

L O V E

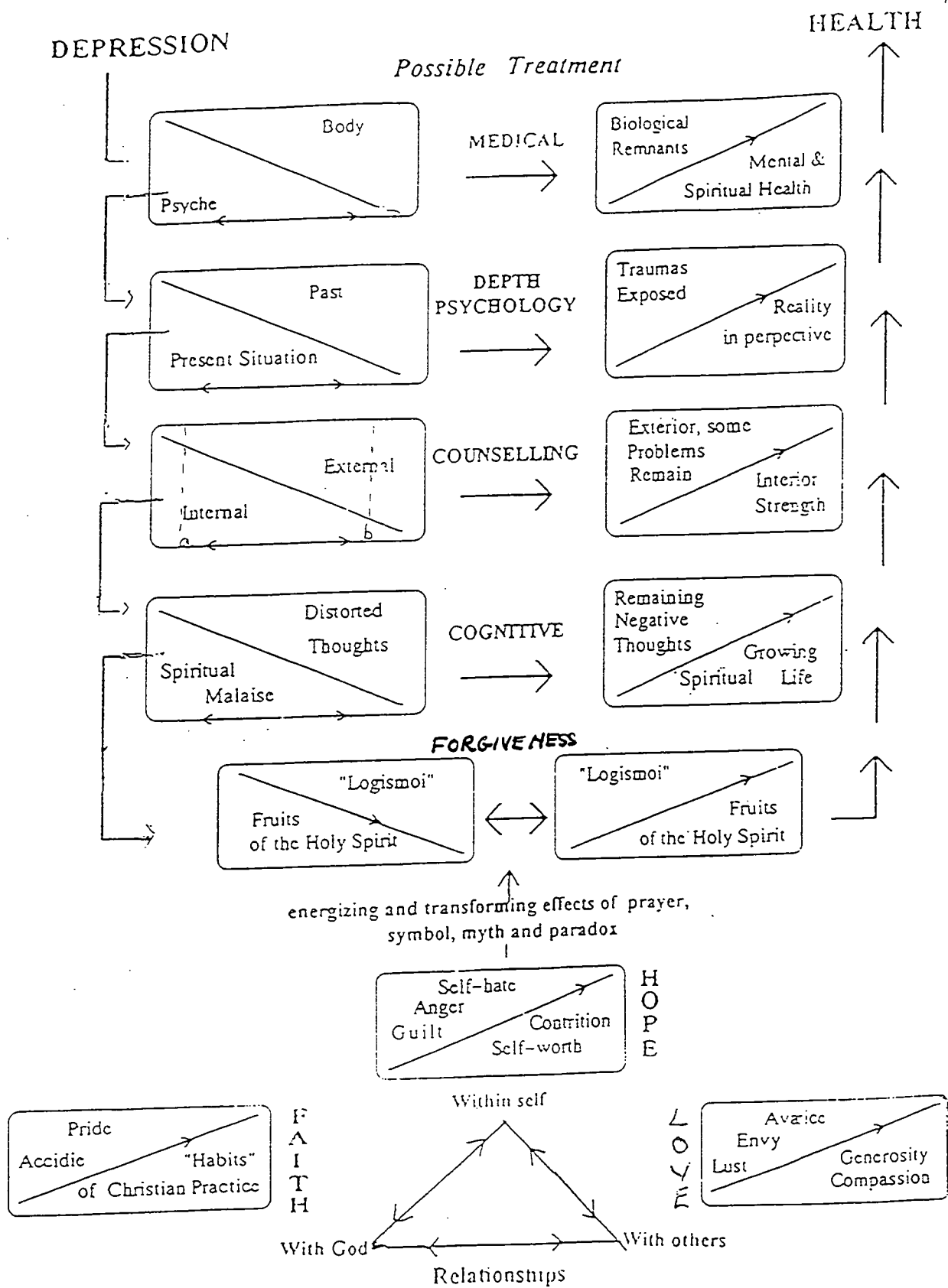With God   With others

Relationships

Figure 12. Summary Diagram.

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3. EXAMPLES

A. DISCERNMENT AND CONSCIOUS CONTROL OF MOOD.

The Ignatian type of discernment can be applied to moods which have arisen in ordinary people in ordinary circumstances, and it is not necessary to adopt the whole system in order to discriminate the causes of mood change. By taking note of those things which seem to give serenity because they are in accord with the demands of life, and those actions which lead to discontent, perhaps because some obligation is being disregarded, may be the first steps in a secular equivalent. The source of negative feelings, and the resources which have been given to combat them, can be determined by many people if they are willing to be reflective. Life is shattered and vitality lost in affective disorder, but some people record, with unusual insight, that there are times when they can choose life - when the dull security of apathy and depression could be avoided by facing pain and risk. A patient described to me the pit of oblivion, unreality and even stupor to which depression was calling her as a relief from fear and anxiety - the painfulness of remaining in touch with her feelings was driving her away from reality. The suffering of depression seemed to her to be an easy option compared with the decision she learnt to make, which was to face the difficulties as they came in an active stressful life. Sometimes she succumbed and sometimes she resisted the invitation to escape.

An ability to monitor and stem the direction of mood change is illustrated by Gerald O'Mahony, a Jesuit who has suffered at both ends of the affective scale, and was several times hospitalised for depressive or manic illness.[55] Awareness, in his case, springs from his training in discernment in the Ignatian model, but though his aims were guided by his spiritual background, much of what he says is applicable to anyone with a tendency to affective disorder. He recognised stages in the development of mania or depression, and during the early phases of elation or despondency he could use some of his insight to prevent the mood deepening and getting out of control. Desolation, consisting of restlessness, agitation and anxiety, occurred when he was heading towards either pole, whereas he found a state of tranquil courage and peacefulness at a creative

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[55] O'Mahony, G. (1993) Finding the **Still Point**, Eagle Press, Guildford, Surrey, p. 14.

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'still point' when the mood is stable and not heading towards either melancholy or elation.

O'Mahony's scale is a continuum of changing moods with consolation at the centre and he noted that swings of mood in either direction tend to begin with desolation. A feeling of being abandoned, lethargic and despondent occurs 'when he tries too hard', giving himself an impossible ideal to follow[56] - illustrating the danger of Karen Horney's concept of 'the tyranny of the should'. He found, however, that consolation could be maintained if he went gently against the general trend of his mood - making efforts to be out-going and active when he felt miserable and self-absorbed, or restraining himself when he was exuberant and over-sociable. Instead of feeling worthless and imagining there is no point in doing anything when on the way to depression, or wonderful and able to do anything when elated, he advises that we can learn to hear God's voice saying to the depressed person 'keep going, you are worthwhile' and to the hypomanic person, 'watch out and slow down'.[57] He writes from his own experience that he now knows that he has some choice, and that in the sea of his moods, they will get out of control if he takes no notice and does not make efforts against the tide. He did not learn this quickly, and like most people suffering from severe affective disorder, he had little insight into his early episodes of mania followed by depression.[58]

In a short spiritual biography which he likens to following the steps up the Gibraltar Rock, O'Mahony found that he had to go down before he started to climb, negotiating around precipices and cliffs and into a cave. It was not a promising journey. He says, however, that 'it is only when we think that we have nothing left, that we discover resources in ourselves that we knew nothing about ... God, having shown us our own weakness and taken away all our strength, gives us back a strength of a totally different quality from that which we lost'.[59]

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[56] Ibid, p. 16.

[57] O'Mahony, Still Point, p. 85.

[58] O'Mahony, G. (1989) The Other Side of The Mountain, Geoffrey Chapman, p. 94.

[59] Ibid,, p. 43.

B. DEALING WITH HELPLESSNESS IN DEPRESSION

We are fragile, dependent and vulnerable, but we should not remain helpless. Martin Seligman, in a classic psychological text, traces the role of helplessness in causing 'depression' in animals, as well as in human beings. He was aware of a range of people suffering from extreme poverty and deprivation, or caught up in major disaster areas, who lose all sense of their own worth and become depressed. He also stresses the terror which arises from unpredictability when recurrent pain cannot be avoided.[60] Robert Barton, in a parallel study, concentrates on the feelings of non-entity and lethargy when people, particularly in institutions, are reduced to helplessness by having their decisions made for them by people in authority. Their 'learned helplessness' has a profound negative effect on their mood.[61] A similar effect is found among the unemployed who can see no way of getting themselves out of the pain of their situation. God can use helplessness as we know from the life of Christ who entered into our weakness. Thomas Szasz warns, however, that the Christian ethos of humility and dependence can be enervating and debilitating - being 'poor in spirit' can lead to childish irresponsibility.[62] Such warnings are timely and we need to take heed lest we do not put our talents to work, using all the strength and autonomy we are given. St Paul was rendered helpless after his Damascus Road experience, but after he had been cared for by the local Christians he became untiring in working to spread the Gospel. Depression is, amongst other things, a defence against risk and exposure, in which feeling is numbed and activity curtailed, but the helplessness which is felt at times can develop into new strength as the two following case histories also show:

Kathleen was illegitimate, abandoned by her mother and brought up by her grandfather and his second wife as an only child. She had no one in the family to whom she could relate except occasionally a sympathetic aunt. She had to stand by, helplessly watching extreme violence in the home. She was exceptionally isolated, and the few contemporaries with whom she played only made her feel the difference between their

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[60] Seligman, M.E.P. (1975) Helplessness, W.H. Freeman, San Francisco, pp. 75ff.

    Seligman's work on animals (ethically questionable in many people's eyes) showed their lethargy, self-harm, isolation and inability to learn or make decisions after the anxiety of unpredictable and unavoidable electric shocks.

[61] Barton, R. (1966) Institutional Neurosis, 2nd ed., John Wright, Bristol.

warm family base and her own deprivation - she enjoyed going to a local shop as a child because at least someone noticed she was there and 'she was in their mind'. She was belittled by her grandfather who made her feel that she must be stupid, though it later transpired that she has an IQ in the Mensa range.

She married and had a son, but her husband left her when the child was 18 months old. Meanwhile, she had emerged from the rut of routine clerical jobs to begin professional training, and her career prospects looked very good until she had a serious accident which immobilised her. This disaster prevented her from giving adequate attention to the boy who was clumsy (dyspraxic), difficult, sensitive, lacking a role model, too attached to mother and unhappy at school. It very soon became apparent that he needed psychological help. Kathleen could think of nothing that she could do, and the authorities were less than helpful. She had no one to help her except her inadequate step-grandmother and a few distant friends - the only man to whom she could relate at an intellectual and cultural level had turned out to be psychotic and dangerously violent in their sexual relationship. She still hankers for his 'good side' which was so helpful to her.

Kathleen then suffered from depression over a number of years, lacking energy with chronic fatigue syndrome, unable to work and dreading even more isolation. She had been a victim so often that she always anticipated another disaster, and was dogged by the terror of impending catastrophe. More calamities then occurred, first of all the kindly aunt died leaving her again abandoned, and shortly afterwards, inconceivably, her son was arrested at the age of 15, charged with murder.

Mercifully Kathleen has a resilience which seems to stem from faith and a willingness to take risks. Her problem is how to deal with anger without becoming embittered. After a period of deep depression with physical repercussions, she is able to shout 'O God, Why?' and to view the world with some objectivity, forgiving a great deal of the way in which fate has dealt her blow after blow, genuinely feeling and saying good things about some of the people who were instrumental in causing her so much pain. She has the will to rise above her helplessness - seeking for God who will somehow or other make sense of her life. As she has maintained a great deal of sensitivity to other people's pain, it is likely that she will become a 'wounded healer' -

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[62] Szasz, T.S. (1962:1987) The Myth of Mental Illness. Penguin, p.182-187.

people already approach her with their problems. There is no happy ending as yet, but she is open to reality, and there is hope.

Like Elijah, in the Old Testament story, who felt trapped by circumstances and his own inadequacies, Kathleen is open to hear the voice of God. Elijah was also one of those who felt helpless and asks to die saying, ' it is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am no better than my fathers'.[63] He felt helpless and worthless, but he survived, and was stronger after this experience. He found God, not in the powerful forces of wind, earthquake and fire, but in the stillness, which one can presume was at the quiet centre of his being. It was after hearing 'the still small voice' (1 Kings 19:12) that he could make decisions and face the reality and risk of the task which was, perhaps, not as formidable as he expected - and he gained a helper in Elisha.

Another case history shows the complex nature of multifactorial depression and the powerful effect of spiritual experience. Anne who is now in her mid-forties suffers from Multiple Sclerosis. Six years ago Anne was severely depressed, her physical, mental and spiritual reserves were exhausted and she wanted to die; she was in kidney failure, had bed-sores and was wrapped up in her own pain and misery. She had every reason to give up what seemed to be an impossible struggle against isolation, impotence and pointlessness.

She is still confined to a wheel-chair, just able to move herself around the house and do a few tasks with the aid of special appliances, but she recently married for the second time, and she now says that her 'quality of life is fantastic'. There is constantly recurring pain from muscle spasms, feelings of being constricted due to sensory changes and she has to catheterise herself. Her expectation of life is short, and though she is much in demand to talk to Christian groups about her delight in living, she never feels able to make appointments for more than a month or two ahead as she may not be there to keep them.

Anne's history had been one of constant trial and loss. Her parents, both of whom suffered from depression, died when she was young - her mother when she was eight and her father when she was fourteen. As an adult she had horrific dreams relating to this period, which brought back memories of emotional upheaval and misery and her feelings of guilt lest she had been responsible. She did well at school however and

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[63] 1 Kings 19: 4.

became a laboratory technician, but she suffered from intermittent severe depression without any obvious immediate precipitating cause from her late teens onwards. When she was twenty-one she married a clergyman and they had two children, both boys. Her husband committed suicide a few years later. Meanwhile neurological symptoms started when she was nineteen with vague eye symptoms, loss of balance, incontinence, sensory disturbances and fatigue. These were intermittent, and were considered of no importance or neurotic, by the medical profession for the next ten years. She then became unable to walk without a stick and very quickly needed a Zimmer frame; the diagnosis only then became apparent. The children had to be adopted when it became obvious that Anne would never be fit enough to care for them adequately, but they were able to keep in touch with her. Treatment for the condition did little to help the progress of the disease and she was frequently hospitalised, reaching a seemingly hopeless stage five years ago; she was by then almost completely paralysed with kidney and chest infections and bedsores. In her misery she was ready to die and everyone thought she would. She continued like this for two further years.

A turning point came when, with the help of a concerned friend of no other significance to her, she gained the will to live. There was a distinct spiritual change linked to a stupendous effort to overcome physical weakness - she can recall a moment of spiritual awareness when she realised that God works through helplessness and vulnerability, where there is room for His grace. During the subsequent years there has been slow improvement with only minor setbacks. First came a will to live, and then the ability to wiggle her toes and manage similar physical feats. Eventually she could transfer to an electric chair and instead of an indwelling catheter she learnt to catheterise herself. Small but significant gains followed by little setbacks but a general trend towards improved physical function and a more cheerful outlook.

Multiple Sclerosis is an unpredictable complaint which runs an erratic course with fluctuations in mental as well as physical state but this change was beyond normal probabilities. Depression had increased her general deterioration and the various factors were interacting. She may indeed have had a natural remission but there was also an indisputable religious element in her continuing recovery from a situation which had appeared hopeless. She interprets her progress in the context of a Christian faith and her constant theme became the text, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness' (2 Cor. 12:9). Previously utterly debilitated and demoralised she had felt forsaken, wasted, unjustly treated, and there were ample grounds for

resentment and self-pity. When she began to look in the other direction towards God and to Christ in His suffering, she found a new impetus. There was no more self-absorbed complaining, but she finds an increasing awareness and sensitivity to the outside world. Simple things like the wrens courting in the hedge took on a new significance; new skills with the muscles that were still working were learnt; when people came with sympathy, she gave them the attention that made them feel that they, not Anne, were the only people who mattered; and perhaps the most difficult task was the ability to 'hold on', waiting patiently when there was no energy to do anything else. She has a very helpful husband who has also played a part in her present improvement, but grateful though she is to him, she attributes most of her recovery from depression to spiritual factors.

Anne discovered the sin of *accidie*, or as she describes it, of the 'laziness which stopped growth, development and exploration'. She quoted St. Thomas à Kempis that 'there are many lovers of Christ but not many to carry His cross', and felt that she might be sharing a bit of the burden by accepting the situation, though imperfectly. She said, 'there are times when I throw a little tantrum and drop the cross on someone else', and 'it is not at all easy, but God is in control of this whole outrageous bloody situation'. Physical aspects of depression such as loss of sleep, poor appetite and lethargy improved and so did her general health. Problems which had persisted from the long distant past lost their terror and her tendency to severe depression became much less. With her history of endogenous depression and early family disturbance, it would, however, be rash to forecast that there is now no possibility of a recurrence.

Anne had many factors contributing to depression with an inborn genetic tendency to endogenous depression, traumatic family experiences in early life, appalling losses later, difficult social circumstances and a horrific illness. It is no wonder that she did not find life worth living, and it is perhaps a miracle that from small beginnings she developed a will to live and a totally different habitual frame of mind. It was a religious understanding that turned the tide, making her refuse to continue in a cocoon of numbing depression, and she turned from resentment and self-pity to a willingness to accept and work with her situation. There was no sudden miraculous healing, but she slowly learnt not to circumvent the suffering as she turned towards fullness of life within her cage of disability. One of the major factors which accompanied the change was an increasing appreciation of her own worth even though she was so battered by circumstances, and this increase in self-esteem made her more accessible to those in the

community who wanted to help. She also became in demand as a counsellor and is constantly gaining new friends. Often those who suffer recognise similar mental and emotional problems in others more readily, and because they are able to empathise, they bring a redemptive element as 'wounded healers'.[64]

In these cases there was a deliberate effort to turn in a different direction while at the same time accepting personal vulnerability and weakness. Self-absorption turned into concern for other people, guilt feelings were transformed into repentance and love, and sufficient energy was regained to live creative lives. When the tensions of their lives were examined they were found to be full of conflicting values and incompatible desires which had to be transformed and reconciled. When analysed, the polarities were basically those that have been described by Tillich, such as the pull of the finite against the infinite, self-isolation pulling against participation, and a wish to maintain a secure sameness rather than risk change and relationship. Depression often came in these and other cases, when there was an unattainable ideal which bore little relation to the limitations of the situation, or to the values presented by the life of Christ. The battle to maintain self-sufficiency in isolation was impossible, but acceptance of weakness and failure was redemptive, because it led to a willingness to receive from others. Perhaps the most evocative clue about the Christian approach to our interdependence, is found in the Maundy Thursday story of the washing of the feet.[65] We are resistant to being beholden to other people, and we do not want to display our vulnerability with all the warts and corns - it humiliates us; nor do we particularly want to serve in distasteful ways. Intimate giving and receiving, which is at the heart of the Gospel, is not easy, but it helps our self-integration and therefore our mental health. John Fenton echoes some of these disturbing thoughts in a contemporary comment on the nativity as recorded in St Mathew's Gospel which he calls a 'celebration of poverty, humiliation and powerlessness ... God turns expectations upside down and gives authority to one who has none, and power to one who is made powerless ... what is visible is weakness; but, avoid it though we may wish to, that is where God's power is to be found'.[66] People have expressed to me the paradoxical fact that they have felt

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[64] Transitions, p. 216.

[65] John 13:3-10.

[66] Fenton, J. (1995) Church Times, Dec.22, p.9.

stronger and less depressed when they have accepted weakness and uncertainty, provided they remained able to trust the overall love of God. One good reason to maintain hope is trust in the goodness of Creation which, as Teilhard de Chardin puts it, is evolving, upwards and forwards through pain and joy. There are those who, as the psalmist says, 'going through the vale of misery use it for a well'[67], but for Christians the ultimate reason for hope lies in the Incarnation and the Resurrection.

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[67] Psalm 84:6 (AV).

CONCLUSION.

OFFERING WEAKNESS AND VULNERABILITY - THE COURAGE TO LIVE.

In this thesis, I have brought together sources, both psychological and theological, which support the fundamental need to reconcile opposites, as part of a pattern in the world reflecting a similar pattern in God, and enabling growth and progress so that nothing is lost and nothing wasted. Opposites in the psyche can separate to their respective poles, never meeting or modifying each other and leaving an enervating vacuum, or they can enter into aggressive conflict, using energy and doing damage to the whole psyche; alternatively one pole can submit to the other, causing imbalance or fanaticism. In a healthy situation, however, polarities can live together in creative tension, giving and receiving with mutual respect. Depression, which is an apparent contradiction of life, can be integrated into the divine pattern of reconciliation through Christ, who by His *kenosis*, takes us towards the divine fullness of Love.

To recapitulate: 1) In the first part of this thesis, the diverse nature of depressed mood has been explored through a historical understanding of its features in the early descriptions of *accidie*, and through medical, biological and psychological categories. An analysis of affective disorder using the fundamental polarities described by Tillich adds a theological dimension. Discernment, in the Ignatian sense, can be applied in three main areas where these polarities may be in harmony or discordant: in our relationship to the material world, in our relationships with other people and in our inner responses to God. Consolation, with its gifts of love, peace and joy, will occur when they are harmonious, desolation, *accidie*, anxiety or depression when they are not. This is because, in each of these areas, the basic polarities will either be in balanced tension which is creative, or in conflict which is destructive.

2) In part two, psychological polarities have been discussed in terms of false ideals, compulsions, and sin. The Jungian concept that integration of the shadow is energising is particularly relevant in depression, where lethargy and guilt are major problems. Neurotic guilt and low self-esteem also highlight the need for self-acceptance, so that negative

tendencies can be transformed by the presence of the positive aspects of life which are also present. The courage to accept oneself as loveable (despite a fragmented inner life), and to accept distressing circumstances, requires trust in a beneficent and compassionate God who forgives. Our knowledge of Christ increases trust in God's compassion and power to redeem and forgive the ways in which we crucify love. He carries all our extremes and contradictions so that they can be reconciled in God. Human brokenness is incorporated into the life of God by accepting the reality of our state with repentance, thus allowing an inflow of God's love and energy. The balanced expression of our opposing tendencies may then bring out the fruits of the Spirit.

A synthesis of frameworks provided by Tillich suggests that, when we have 'the courage to be', the work of the Spirit can be recognised by increasing self-awareness, increasing freedom, increasing relatedness and increasing self-transcendence.[1] These signs of the Spirit answer some of the problems presented by the polarities which affect our mood.

a) Depression usually results in irrational guilt, and increasing self-awareness helps us to realise the positive work of God in the dark negative aspects of our being. The reconciliation of negative feelings from the shadow enables potential energy to become available, and through this creative tension, the true-self can become active.

b) Depression is sometimes a way of hibernating, and refusing to be involved in a painful and uncomfortable world - refusing to take risks or to change because it seems terrifying or pointless. The balance between freedom and destiny, between spirit and matter, and between the finite and the infinite is lost in depression, but the increasing freedom and energy which come from forgiveness enable the risks of love which are needed. A depressed person or a depressed society can be lifted out of a morass of self-pity into the vitality of a life of 'exchange'. The implications for communities and nations is a subject for further research.

c) Depression is a way of stasis and helplessness when we cannot accept the tension between dynamics and form. Self-transcendence means change and integration for both individuals and communities. I have suggested that our hope should often be in a direction opposite to that which is usually assumed; we are least likely to succumb to negative mood

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[1] Tillich, ST 3, pp.231-236.

when we are in harmony with the pattern of God's self-giving love and vulnerability - bearing in mind the ultimate victory of Love.

d) Depression is a way of refusing to live with the tension between <u>individualisation and participation</u> and perhaps its most self-destructive features are suppressed anger, resentment, self-pity and the self-absorption which prevents meaningful communication with other people. Christianity can never be expressed in private, and the Christian life should be in a community where reconciliation through mutual forgiveness can lead to <u>increasing relatedness</u>. Reconciliation means sharing one another's burdens so that the powerful dynamics which are built into differences of personality are seen as complementary and used constructively. Our total interdependence means that 'gifts' can be exchanged without fear or mistrust, and without any wish to control. The joy that comes from sharing in the life of a community, giving and receiving freely, enhances freedom and trust so that the false expectations and self-judgements which are so often part of depressed mood become irrelevant. It is encouraging to learn that many people who have been depressed become more mature and sensitive to other people's needs.[2]

3) In part three, the emphasis is on theological insights which are relevant to reconciliation of polarities in the whole of life. The model of balanced opposites that remain in tension, leading to creative activity, is metaphysical, though it is mirrored in the physical and psychological world. It includes the ontological presupposition that the polarities we experience mirror those in God Himself who, through His *kenosis* and *plerosis*, is holding everything that exists in balanced and creative tension - even our fragmentation and destructiveness. The main thrust of this section enables us to understand, by analogy, something of the Trinitarian God who, as Creator and Redeemer, encompasses all opposites and brings them back to partake of Glory. He can be understood through our polarised world, and Balthasar gives insights into God's transcendent glory (undiminished and even increased by His *kenosis*) which complement Tillich's understanding of the

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[2] Examples from the staff of the Maudsley Hospital, London, are given in Rippere V. and Williams R. (1985) <u>Wounded Healer</u>, Wiley, Chichester.

contingent polarities.[3] Christianity thrives on paradox, particularly on the paradox that the suffering, weakness and humiliation of Christ are part of His exaltation, and that His agony, including feelings of god-forsakenness, reveal the power of the Godhead to heal our brokenness. Moreover, the journey with Balthasar has been more than ontological, when we considered the staggering truth that God allowed humankind to bring Jesus into the most excruciating suffering. Balthasar is right- it is a terrible beauty, but a beauty which, because of the Resurrection, also brings joy. Balthasar's insistence that Jesus reveals the nature of the Trinity has brought this beauty to enlighten our perception of the Godhead, giving new meaning to the familiar phrase that 'God is Love'.

There are many people who recognise the growth of understanding which has been found in dark periods. Every experience can be an opportunity to learn and progress - perhaps the darker the mood, the more vivid the contrasting light which can weave it into the pattern of life and give it vitality. Laurens van der Post writes of having to explore the depths of fear where life seemed paralysed and feeling 'naked and ashamed'. It was only when there seemed no hope that 'from somewhere beyond all conscious expectation comes a fading flicker of light and energy that, even if it does not produce the courage of a hero, at any rate enables a trembling mortal to take one step further'.[4]   The extremes invite their opposite and are therefore valuable in bringing into the arena possibilities which might never have been dreamt of - fright allows trust, doubt gives faith, guilt is transformed into initiative, isolation becomes a capacity for intimacy.   In weakness we learn our vulnerability and need, and so begin to look for ways of emerging into a new understanding of humility, and this means having the courage to face the realities of life, as well as the horrors within which are so often brought into consciousness in depression.

Means of recovery from depressed mood are numerous and often physical, but as the models in chapters 3 and 10 suggest, there are often fundamental psychological and spiritual components to be addressed. Forgiveness can be pivotal in transforming mood, bringing a new energy to deal with distorted thinking and the other underlying problems. There are many therapies which involve reconciling opposing elements in the psyche, but

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[3] Tillich also emphasised transcendence, but it is not central in most of his theology. For a fuller discussion see Lamm, J. in Bulman, R.F. and Parrella, F.J. eds. (1994) Paul Tillich: A New Catholic Assessment, Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, pp. 48-72.

[4] Post, L. van der (1985) The Lost World of the Kalahari, Penguin, p.171.

more fundamentally as Balthasar emphasises, reflective prayer can reveal the realities of our state, and take us towards the central events of the Incarnation where we can find the power of healing.

The reconciliation of opposites is a way of talking about Love, and, because of the Love which comes from the Trinity, we are born to live our lives with all the vitality and courage we can muster in exchanges with others in our community. We experience the bitterness of loss, anguish and death, but hope comes in accepting our relationship with other people and often, through them, with God. Christ turns the world's values upside down[5], and shows us that we may partake of God's Glory through the Cross, because Easter follows Good Friday. Throughout life we learn to accept the inevitable pattern of loss and death which, after a period of grieving, can be followed by rebuilding on what is left us, and reintegration into a different way of finding fulfilment, sometimes with the vigour of a resurrection experience. Similarly in weakness or depression we are called to learn that strength may come from vulnerability, so that, when we recover, we can live in a more sensitive and appropriate way.

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[5] As the Beatitudes also suggest by exalting those who are poor in spirit, mourning, merciful, persecuted and humble - Matthew 5:3-11

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