A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE CONCEPT OF "UNDERSTANDING" IN THE PSYCHOLOGIES OR WILHELM DILTHEY, EDUARD SPRANGER, AND KARL JASPERS

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of the Requirements for the Degree
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by
Hendrikus Sjaardema

June 1939

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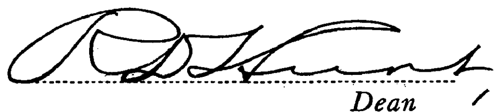

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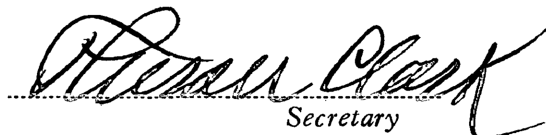

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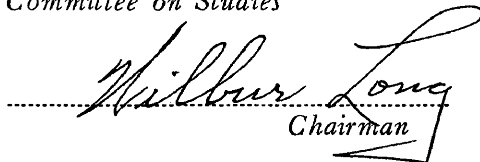

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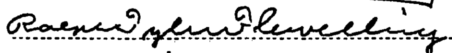

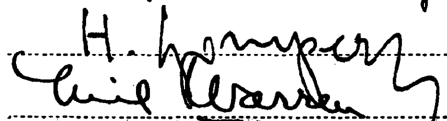

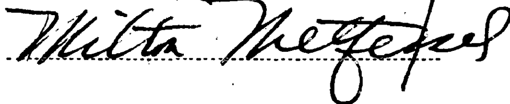

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CHAPTER I

ASSOCIATION PSYCHOLOGY IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The name "association psychology" designates that type of interpretation of mental life employing association as its chief explanatory principle. While the phenomenon of association has been known since the time of Aristotle, only recently has it been employed to explain memory. This type of psychology roots in the systems of Thomas Hobbes,[1] John Locke,[2] and George Berkeley,[3] but first became prominent during the eighteenth century with David Hume,[4] Priestley, and above all, Hartley. A second period of association psychology came in the nineteenth century with its main figures of James Mill,[5] John Stuart Mill,[6] Herbert

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[1] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 1651.

[2] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, 1690.

[3] George Berkeley, *Essay Toward a New Theory of Vision*, 1709.

[4] David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739.

[5] James Mill, *Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind*, 1829.

[6] John Stuart Mill, *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, 1865.

Spencer,[7] and Alexander Bain.[8] The revival of physics in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was beyond doubt one of the main factors in the development of this school of psychology. To a great extent this is due to the fact that the majority of these psychologists studied natural sciences at the same time: Locke had worked in the field of medicine, Hartley was a physician and physicist, Priestley was the discoverer of oxygen. This influence of physics is manifest primarily in what may be termed the analytic-synthetic method of these associationists. In this method, introduced into psychology by John Locke, analysis is used to discover the final elements, to which all mental processes may be reduced; and when once these elements are found, synthesis is employed to build up the higher processes out of them.

The analysis of the associationists disclosed that these "elements" are sensations, conceived as real "psychic atoms" qualitative by homogenous and inert. Furthermore, they are constant and maintain their identity and individuality; change in their nature is excluded. Such

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[7] Herbert Spencer, Principles of Psychology, 1855.

[8] Alexander Bain, Senses and the Intellect, 1855.

a sensation can disappear and reappear again. The later reappearance is called a "representation" or, by Hume, an "idea." It is assumed that the distinction between sensation and representation is of a quantitative nature only.

Association is the force that binds the different sensations and representations together. The term "association" reminds us again of physics. Claparede[9] compared association with a rope holding the different sensations together. This analogy is quite correct, for the mechanical character of association has always been emphasized. When two sensations appear simultaneously in consciousness they are considered to be automatically connected by association. This bond is due exclusively to the accidental simultaneity of the two elements in consciousness; it is only an external connection. Just as a rope does not change the individuality of the connected objects so association leaves unchanged the character of the joined sensations.

Furthermore, a simple mechanical repetition of these simultaneous elements will be sufficient to increase the strength of association. This principle of association

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[9] E. Claparede, _L'association des Idees_, 1903.

is used to explain the structure of the human mind. The higher processes, feelings, emotions, and will are nothing but complex compounds of sensations, bound together by associations. Association was used not only to explain the structure, but also the temporal course of consciousness. According to the theory when two sensations happen to occur at the same time, they become associated in the mind. Later on, when one of them appears again, it automatically drags the other one to the surface of consciousness. This phenomenon of reproduction, due to previous association, is often compared by the associationists with Newton's law of gravitation.

Once in a while it will happen that a sensation comes to the surface when it is associated with more than one other sensation. In such a case a struggle will ensue between these sensations each of which tends to come to the surface. The outcome of this conflict depends on the strength of the association between the first one and each of the others. By hypothesis the "strongest" one wins, like a puppet on the miniature stage, will appear in consciousness. For such a system of psychology, causality is the exclusive principle of explanation. It is easy to see that the associationist psychology may be classified among the natural scientific and the mechanistic systems.

In the same way as physics, this psychology works with qualitatively homogeneous atoms possessing only acquired, communicated motion. Therefore, mental life is not different in principle from dead matter. The two factors, elements and association, complete the mechanistic picture. While the above sketched traits are common to both periods of associationism, there is an important difference between them. The psychologists of the second period, notably, were aware that the ideal of mechanism could not be reached, and consequently resorted to the less mechanistic chemistry as a principle of analogy.

Herbart, beginning with an analysis of experience, claimed that all mental states, even the most complex ones, could be reduced to sensations. These sensations he considered as the building stones, the elements of mental life, out of which the mental life constructs itself, through their combination into larger wholes, and so on. Each element was considered to possess a certain activity in the same way as physical atoms possess the powers of attraction and repulsion. These mental elements may act in two different ways. Either (1) they may combine themselves into wholes, resulting in composite ideas, or (2) they may struggle with each other. Broadly speaking it may be said that Herbart considered the soul as the battle

ground of sensations and ideas.

Similar to Herbart's psychology is the main work of James Mill, Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind, appearing in 1829, thirteen years after the appearance of Herbart's Textbook of Psychology. James Mill likewise reduced mental life to what he believed to be sensations. In perception these elementary sensory particles are put together to make a singular perceptual whole.

As an associationist, James Mill differed from his predecessor, Hartley, in accepting but one associative law, that of "contiguity." This principle was conceived very much in the same way as "attraction" in the field of physics. In such a system there is no place for activity, except as an inherent, mechanical power of the elements. John Stuart Mill, his son, reacted against his father's rigid associationism, and conceived the mind as active, capable of making new syntheses. He selected chemistry, which had become increasingly popular, as the field from which he could borrow his analogies. Nevertheless, while he failed to free himself of his father's merchanical interpretation, his system of logic he revealed a doubt as to whether mental chemistry could explain the creation of "belief." At the same time he emphasized the importance of attention, which he considered to be dependent on the

laws of association. Although he never made a thorough-going investigation of this subject, he was not satisfied with any of the laws of association.

Another psychologist of this school was Herbert Spencer, who when still living in London, came in contact with John Stuart Mill. His main interest, however, was the application of the evolutionist hypothesis to mental life. Spencer is not entirely specific as to the ultimate elements of consciousness. Perhaps he considered the "nervous shock" as being that ultimate unit. Feelings, then, are composed of a rapidly recurring series of these. Feelings, together with the relations between them are the components of mind, and are of two types: sensations, peripherally initiated, and emotions, centrally aroused. Vivid feelings,applying the associationist doctrine, tend to cohere with all preceeding faint feelings similar to them. The results of such unions are "ideas," and the totality of all segregated feelings is called "mind." Minds differ from one another according to their respective degrees of integration and composition; the evolution of mind consists in a steady increase of such syntheses. The cohesion of feelings is proportionate to the frequency with which they have followed one another in experience. In terms of this principle he traces the evolution of will, memory and reason.

Thinking, according to Spencer, consists of impressions and ideas combined by means of incessant "internal" (that is, physico-chemical) changes. It appears that Spencer, who has been previously satisfied with a purely associationist account of mind, introduced a new element in his explanations, that of "internal changes," an innovation not entirely consistent with the rest of his system.

Among the French associationists, should be mentioned Hypolyte Taine, who, like Spencer, was influenced by Comte. In 1870 appeared his book De l' Intelligence, written in the spirit of the associationist school. Taine treats human intelligence as a mechanism which has a specific purpose in the evolution of humanity. Evolution is the result of a conflict between the elements. In the field of mental life there is a similar struggle between the different psychical elements (or atomic sensations). The result of this struggle is sense-perception. Here we meet the characteristic outlook of associationism. The view that elements of the mind are independently active and establish their own relations with the environment. Sense perception is associated by Taine with movement or action. This type of psychology, he asserted forms the authentic basis of the philosophy of history and metaphysics. This

suggestion was adopted by Karl Lemprecht.[10]

Lamprecht, although he was Wundt's colleague at Leipzig, was really a follower of the associationist school of psychology. For him history was nothing but "applied psychology." The history of Germany, for instance, is a sequence of periods of "psychic dissociation" and "synthesis." In an epoch of psychic dissociation men are overwhelmed by a vast amount of new stimuli and sensations that cannot be synthesized. As a result of this situation arises a condition of dissociation or, in other words, a naturalistic attitude. Essentially he accepted the sensationalistic doctrine that the fround of the great movements in history are finally a vast amount of new stimuli causing a similar amount of new sensations. Lamprecht's importance lies in this application of sensationialistic psychology to the philosophy of history.

The leading ideas of the psychologists belonging to the associationist school are:

1. The mind, or consciousness, is built up of elements in the same way as physical bodies are built up of atoms.

2. These elements or sensations are the active

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[10] Karl Lamprecht, Moderne Geschichtswissenschaft, 1905.

powers in the mind.

3. These sensations are caused by external stimuli.

4. The powers bringing together and separating these sensations act according to the "laws of association."

These psychologists were obsessed with a desire to adopt the methods of natural sciences, particularly the experimental method, with the ideal of extending causal explanations into the field of psychology. The sensationalistic theory of the mind, which was nothing but an analogy derived from physical mechanism, provided an apparent theoretical basis for this procedure.

The outstanding nineteenth century psychologist who opposed the purely sensationalistic derivation of consciousness was Wilhelm Wundt.[11] Wundt observed that the associationists, because of their concept of the mind as a passive mirror of the objective world, failed to explain "active subjectivity." The associationsts conceived of consciousness as consisting of one type of elements, the sensations. Wundt now proposed that consciousness consists of two classes of irreducible elements: sensations and feelings. That feelings are different from sensations, he held, is proved by the fact that while sensations

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[11] Wilhelm Wundt, Grendriss der Psychologie, 1896.

are derived from the stimulation of sense-organs, the physiological phenomena accompanying feelings are of central or internal origin. Feelings, however, were not only important as independent elements of consciousness, but they also enter into union with sensations. These unions are not entirely of the nature of associations, for Wundt states that there is not a one-to-one correlation between specific sensations, which are externally aroused, and accidental feelings which have a different meaning for the organism under different circumstances. The sensation "red," for instance, may under certain conditions become related to a feeling of fear, but under others it may possess the meaning of joy.

Wundt attempted to make the higher experiences comprehensible in terms of these two elements by a resort to "constructs" which give a more complicated picture of mental life than that of the sensationalists. When sensations are predominant, the "constructs" are called "ideas" or "images"; when feelings are predominant, they are called "emotions." These mental constructs, again, are interconnected in most diverse ways. When consciousness remains passive in the connection of ideas and emotions, Wundt spoke of "associations"; if active, he referred to "apperceptive combinations." It is at this point, by

introducing the possibility of "activity" in the individual mind, that Wundt differed materially from associationist psychologists. For, if consciousness is active, or can be active, it is no longer determined completely by the outside world. Consciousness is no longer a mere summation of sensations, or a mere battlefield where sensations determine the outcome of their struggles. While Wundt in his early days largely adhered to the Herbartian conception of association, later the active process of "apperception" began to play an increasingly important role in his system. Thus in Wundt we see associationism developing, freeing itself from the bonds of a mechanical interpretation of mental life, to emerge with the insight that the mind is an activity in and for itself.

A third element was introduced into atomic psychology by Franz Brentano, the founder of the school of Act-psychology.[12] Brentano distinguished three fundamental classes of elements, namely, ideas (perceptions, concepts, experiences of memory and of imagination), feelings, and judgments. His distinction between an idea and our consciousness of that idea, considered as two aspects of one and the same act, constitutes a radical departure from sensationalism. In the act of seeing a light, for

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[12] Franz Brentano, Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkte, 1874.

example, "light" is called the primary object, and "seeing" the secondary. Such a distinction is of course entirely foreign to the sensationalists who were interested exclusively in sensations and ideas as such and disregarded altogether the organism possessing them.

Brentano's third type of element, the judgment, is not to be understood in the logical sense, as a mere combination of concepts. A judgment, rather, appears concomitant with an idea, in which the latter is affirmed or rejected. In such an act of affirming or rejecting an idea, there is also the consciousness of the act. These three acts, he held, together build up consciousness. To do justice to Brentano, however, it must be admitted that his three elements are not considered as three substances; rather are they conceived as three aspects of one mental act.

After Brentano introduced the idea of three fundamental elements, other psychologists started to find new elements. Alexius Meinong[13] and Alois Höfler,[14] for instance, distinguished four elements, ideas, judgments, feelings and will.

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[13] Alexius Meinong, <u>hur Psychologie der Komplexioner und Relationen</u>, 1891.

[14] Alois Höfler, <u>Psychólogie</u>, 1897.

When psychologists were laboriously attempting to divide consciousness into various elements, three great names appeared on the horizon and introduced a new trend in the field of psychology. These three critics of the psychology of the nineties were William James, Henri Bergson and William Dilthey.

William James, whose influence was profound both because of his criticisms and creative work, laid emphasis upon one manifest weakness of sensationalism, its entire neglect of the human personality that possesses sensations.[15] These elements and their combinations, he contended, comprise one personal consciousness of constantly changing states. These states are not independent entities; they are rather absolutely unique, and always part of the one consciousness. We may have two experiences of the same object: the two experiences are nevertheless different. There are a thousand and one different "shades" or tones, or feelings, and each of them profoundly influencing our perception. There is no such a thing as an "idea" which exists by itself. Secondly, James ridiculed the earlier psychologists for trying to isolate the elements of consciousness, a process he termed "domino psychology." Consciousness is not a brick building, with the sensations

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15 William James, Principles of Psychology, 1890.

as building stones, it is a stream in a constant flow. Sometimes the stream will meet an island or a rock, and slow up for a while. Such a place is the occurrence of a sense-perception, which can be held for an indefinite time. In the moments between such occurrences of stemmed consciousness appear evanescent thoughts of relations. These fleeting thoughts of relations, so different from the former concept of association, although of short duration, are extremely important, since every state of consciousness is surrounded by a "halo" of relationships, called "psychic overtones" or "fringes." Another charge made by James against prevailing psychology is that of "passivism."

According to Herbart and his followers, the mind is a container of ideas, or a mirror reflecting everything which happens to pass it. To James, however, such a concept is utterly absurd. Hundreds of impressions are continuously attempting to invade the mind, and there is operative a principle of selection, determining which shall come into consciousness. This selective principle is the mind's interest and habits of attention and consequently our impressions are almost entirely conditioned by them and are not purely objective. Furthermore, who really is selecting the sensations and states of consciousness? They cannot select themselves, since they are but products of mental

acts and not active in themselves. Back of all our mental acts is the one and only source of their existence, the active thinker: the self, which governs and guides every single act. Investigating this self, the only active agent of consciousness, James discovered as its very core and nucleus the sense of activity.

The second critic of the analytical psychology, Henri Bergson, attacked this type of science at what was considered to be its strongest point, namely, the differences in intensity of sensations.[16] Researches in this field had resulted in the laws of Weber and Fechner. According to Bergson this concept of intensity has a double aspect. In the first place, as directed toward the source of the incoming stimulus, it is an estimation of the stimulus-quantity by means of a quality of the reaction. In the second place, as directed toward the inner experience, the concept of intensity means the greater or smaller multiplicity of mental acts. Although Bergson's terminology may be difficult, the fact he refers to is obvious. We know quite well what is meant by a difference in brightness between two lights, but the conclusion that therefore the difference between the two light-sensations is a quantitative one is entirely unwarranted. This error was exactly

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16 Henri Bergson, Matiere et Memoire, 1896.

the deduction Weber made when he elaborated Fechner's law. Weber stated that those differences between two sensations of two stimuli that can just be distinguished as being different in intensity are quantities. This is manifestly not the case, and Bergson is correct in attacking the older psychologists on this confusion.

Bergson's second charge is that the older psychologists ascribe temporal characteristics to conscious states, when in their very nature, they belong to the realm of "duree." Our states of consciousness flow from one to another in a continuous stream, so that it can hardly be said whether they are unities or pluralities. As soon as we lift one of them out of its environment, we disturb it by that very act. For "duree" is the very life of our conscious states and as soon as we attempt to isolate them, we tear them apart. This continuous flow is projected outward by the self into a spatial, static world, where it serves our practical needs. A strenuous objection must be raised, however, when that projection for practical needs, is used to explain consciousness. We may study the objects of our sensations as separate entities, but we must never forget that our sensations of them are entirely different. And it is just this grave error, according to Bergson, that all previous psychology had committed.

The third of the three chief critics of atomistic psychology in the nineteenth century is Wilhelm Dilthey, but since his method of "understanding" is the subject of this investigation, we will consider his criticism in the following chapter.

CHAPTER II

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF "UNDERSTANDING" AS DEVELOPED BY WILHELM DILTHEY

Among the important critics of the psychology of consciousness, about the year 1890, Wilhelm Dilthey is the least known in the United States. This is due in part to the fact that he expressed himself in obscure language and used a terminology peculiarly his own. In order to make clear his meaning, therefore, we shall have frequently to resort to a term which in fact is not an exact translation of the one used by him.

Dilthey opened his attack on traditional associationist psychology with his lecture entitled "Ideas on a Descriptive and Analytical Psychology."[1] Like James and Bergson, he directed his attack toward the point where traditional psychology felt itself strongest. In his day the natural sciences presumed to be purely empirical and free from hypotheses; and psychology claimed to rank among them and to be equally free from theoretical assumptions.

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[1] Wilhelm Dilthey, "_Ideen ueber eine beschreibende und zergliedernde Psychologie_," _Gesammelte Schrifte_, Vol. V (Leipzig: B. G. Teubner). Hereafter referred to as "_Ideen_," G. S. Vol. V.

One of Dilthey's biting and telling charges against associationism and atomic psychology in general was that these systems were essentially theoretical and fundamentally not empirical at all. Such a charge would be readily admitted in our days. In Dilthey's time, however, his criticism created a scandal, for it undermined the foundations of psychology as a natural science.

Dilthey pointed out that, while psychologists were supposedly presenting a factual description and analysis of the actually given mind, they were merely constructing theoretical systems on the basis of a hypothetical view of the mind. Voicing the same objection as James and Bergson, he contended that the traditional psychology was attempting to build up consciousness by means of a limited number of quantitative elements or sensations, and the like, that were in fact hypothetical entities, never actually experienced. The relationships of these so called elements were likewise hypothetical.

Dilthey rejected this questionable concept of association and attempted to replace it by a real, experienced relation. According to him, we experience the affiliation of two thoughts, before we become aware of them as separate entities. For instance, take the judgment, "The water is clear." Before we make this judgment we have

an experience of the relation between "clearness" and "water." Reflecting upon this singular impression, we analyze it, and express it in the form of the above judgment. Reflection upon singular impressions, leads to and ends in the complete judgment. Before any "elements" enter into our consciousness. They, together with their relations, are given to immediate consciousness as an indivisible or organic whole. Consequently sensationalistic psychology, in resorting to the principle of relying upon a mere hypothesis. And since Dilthey recognized only those relations that are really given in experience, he contended that his psychology was more scientific and more empirical than that of the associationists. In his own words:

> My psychology is purely empirical for I start out with that which is really given in experience, prior to anything else, i.e., the relationships between mental contents, while you associationists start out with hypothetical elements bound together by equally doubtful associations.[2]

These relations, which are dynamic in nature, do not exist in experience as single elements, but are supported by the totality of mental life. Not only is the relation between two events given in experience, but also the connection of a single occurrence with the totality of

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[2] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Ideen," G. S. Vol. V., p. 28.

of mental life.[3] By this is meant that in experience the "why" of an act is given before the act itself. I experience the process which gives rise to a certain mental act; and therefore I do not have to explain the cause of this mental act, since its development, its coming into being, has been given already in experience and needs no explanation. Such experience of a relation is called "Verstehen" or "understanding." This act of "understanding" is so directly opposed to the "explanation" of the traditional psychologists, that it soon became customary to designate Dilthey's psychology as "understanding" psychology. This may be clarified by resorting to Dilthey's own words:

> We explain by means of purely intellectual processes, but we understand by means of the co-operation of all the powers of the mind in comprehension. In understanding, we start from the connection of the given, living whole, in order to make the part comprehensible in terms of the former. What we experience in our consciousness of the relationship of a single event to the totality of mental life makes it possible for us to understand a single sentence, a single gesture, or a single act.[4]

This distinction between "explanation" and "understanding" was basic for Dilthey; it covered the fundamental difference between knowledge, in the field of physics, and knowledge in the field of psychology. Using the method of

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[3] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Aufbau," G. S. Vol. VII, p. 81.

[4] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Ideen," G. S. Vol. V., p. 28.

"explanation" in the field of psychology means borrowing a method from the physical sciences. In the field of physics, this method is quite applicable, for we observe nature with our external senses. In this type of observation, the external objects are given as separate entities, without any perceivable connection. In order to arrive at a relation between external objects, we have to conceive a hypothesis of a possible relation, and then attempt to verify it. Such a relation is generally supposed to be causal in mind, the one object being considered as the effect of the other. In verification it may turn out that our hypothesis fits the facts, or again it may be that our facts contradict the hypothesis. In the latter case, the hypothesis has to be replaced by another one. Such a procedure, legitimate in physics, is not only unnecessary in psychology, it is absolutely illegitimate, since the very nature of the object has shown that the parts of mental life are not given separate entities.[5]

Dilthey arrived at the same general view of mind held by James Bergson. The human mind was not, as the older psychologists thought it to be, a passive container of inactive single entities. Our mental life is a purposive

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[5] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Beitraege zum Studium der Individualitaet," G. S. Vol. V., p. 281.

totality, an intentional whole, in which every single act is imbedded in the total structure.[6] When we attempt to analyze this totality, we forcibly separate one part from the rest, and often arrive at the conclusion that our experienced relations are contradictory in the light of our reason.[7] Likewise, when brought before the court of our reason the experience of our "self," which unites the simultaneity and succession of separate events, becomes self-contradictory. The main distinction between Dilthey on the one hand, and James and Bergson, on the other, lies in the fact that Dilthey spoke about a structure, a purposive whole of the mind, while James and Bergson prefer to consider the flux of consciousness.

In order to understand this difference we have to bear in mind, that Dilthey's "experience," was not identical with James' stream of consciousness, for his "experience" is to be considered as originally pre-conscious, entering into consciousness only partially, while the latter's stream consists entirely of conscious states. This procedure of elevating our immediate experience to the conscious level is called "understanding." The

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[6] Wilhelm Dilthey,"Ideen," G. S. Vol. V., p. 84.

[7] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Fragmente zur Poetik," G. S. Vol. VI., p. 318.

apparatus of "understanding" is our "inner sense" as contrasted with our "external sense" which gives us our external objects. We may say therefore, with Dilthey, "We explain nature. we 'understand' mental life."[8] This immediate experience, however, besides being a structure is also a stream, and one that must be considered as a stream of life itself.[9] It is not Dilthey's intention that this statement be regarded as having metaphysical implications. Life (Leben) and immediate experience (Erleben) are two sides of one and the same thing, a unity that is the source of our physical and mental being. Life and immediacy, concrete experience, escape adequate scientific formulation because they can never be entirely expressed in rational terms.

Life, however, is not merely a classterm denoting living organisms; rather the living things are modes of the one and universal life. Although foreign to Dilthey's vocabulary, his view may be characterized as dynamic or biological pantheism. While his metaphysical system is left very vague, it appears to approximate closely that of Henri Bergson.

It should be noted, however, that Dilthey lays little emphasis upon metaphysics. He claims that his

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[9] Ibid., p. 319.

psychology is a purely empirical science of experience independent of hypothetical assumptions. Such a viewpoint makes life the ultimate authority. In immediate experience the subject and life, or reality, become identical; therefore, the possibility of error is excluded. Thinking about this immediate experience and the analysis thereof are the factors which introduce the possibility of error. In immediate experience we possess a fundamental and original attitude towards reality and its value, while discursive thinking, which can be based upon immediate experience (*Erlebnis*) as well as upon immediate sense-experience, is a secondary attitude toward it. In the metaphysics of Dilthey, as in the philosophy of Bergson, immediate experience is an intuitive contact with life, with reality, while sense experience is purely phenomenal. Organism (*Leben*) and immediate experience (*Erlebnis*) are two sides of one and the same thing, life. Dilthey's expression of this identity of organism and immediate experience of life is extremely ambiguous, and confusion arises through the fact that he uses the word "life" to denote the one unity underlying organism and immediate experience, and also to indicate the living organism as a

phenomenon appearing in space (Leben).[10] Life, then may be said to have an inner and outer side. The inner side of life is experience, the outer side is the organism. While inner experience (Erlebnis) and phenomenal organism (Leben) possess a different metaphysical and epistemological status, both are intentional totalities and in both we understand the fact in terms of the whole. But, whereas in the inner side of life (Erlebnis) the relation of part to whole is given intuitively, in life externally perceived as organism, the parts are given as separate entities and the relations have to be assumed or imposed by means of conjecture.[11]

Every separate action, therefore, can be comprehended in two ways: (1) perceived by our senses, we are able to "explain" it in terms of cause and effect. (2) Apprehended by our inner sense, we may "understand" it as a psychic experience in the total structure of our inner life. An example may clarify this distinction. A child stumbles on the street, and a man runs toward her and brings the child safely to the sidewalk. This action can

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[10] This confusion is still increased when we become aware of the fact that the word "life," by Dilthey may also indicate; (1) the inner relations between the mental acts within the personality structure. (a. Dilthey, "Das Wesen der Philosophie," G. S. Vol. V, p. 409) and (2) the living and knowing subject. Dilthey, "Vorrede," G. S. Vol. V. p. 5.

[11] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Ideen," G. S. Vol. V., p. 180.

be explained as a result of a light-stimulus reaching his eye. But if we "understand" his deed, we experience his fear that the child might get hurt, his urge to prevent such an accident, and therefore we experience his running toward the child in a way, as if we were doing it. In common-sense language this procedure resembles closely the interpretation of an action. Several difficulties arise, however, for, are not plants and animals likewise to be considered as living organisms? Dilthey's theory seems to require that plants act with a purpose. Secondly, Dilthey seems to forget that one and the same action does not always serve an identical purpose. Let us take, for instance, the case of a person, who is telling a story. One of the members of the audience laughs. This action may mean that he is amused, but it may signify contempt just as well. If we "understand" that person's action as an expression of amusement, we may be entirely mistaken. Dilthey seems to have no eye for these difficulties, and this is rather dangerous, since he assumes that our "understanding" of someone else's mental life is self-evident.

Recapitulating, for Dilthey a human being may be considered from two points of view. First, he may be regarded as a physical organism. In this case the study of man will constitute part of natural science, biology or

physiology, and his actions can be explained. Second, he may be considered as a mental being. In this case, his action becomes an object of psychological investigation, and may be "understood."

Returning now to Dilthey's view of mental life we have to consider two of his novel concepts, Strukturzusammenhang and Erworbene Zusammenhang. These words, which have been translated as "structural interconnection" and "acquired interconnection," denote essential aspects of our mental life. By structural interconnection Dilthey means the primodial set of relations in the virgin mind prior to all sensory experience, that serve to unite isolated mental acts into the organic totality of an individual mind. The principal characteristic of this structural interconnection is that it is an intentional whole, i.e., every single experience depends for its existence on the purpose it serves for the total individual mind. In brief, this primordial set of relations, common in kind to all human beings, may be described as a structural or biological nexus. For whenever the person experiences anything valuable to him in pleasure or pain, he responds by attention, by a selection and revision of impressions, by conations, by acts of will, by a choice of goals, and by casting about for the means to

achieve his ends.[12]

This purposive tendency is three-fold, namely, toward the objective mastery of reality, the determination of the values of life, and toward the realization of practical aims.

By acquired interconnection is meant a purpose, socially conditioned super-individual nexus, that develops with the individual in his growing adaptation to society. While structural interconnection guides the totality of mental life in general, the acquired interconnection is active in every single mental event, and for all practical purposes only this latter nexus is important. It must be understood that this acquired interconnection is not mechanistic, or deterministic in character, for acts originate in the totality of mental life. But a person, in the course of his career, has acquired a stabilized set of habits, which have to be understood not only in the light of his individuality but also in that of his social and cultural environment. In brief, our former experiences in varying degrees still function in the present experiences and acts. This concept of Dilthey has been studied extensively in the last decades under various names, such as "secondary function" or the "unconscious."

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[12] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Ideen," G. S. Vol. V., p. 264.

It might appear auperficially that in this conception, Dilthey has revived the old notion of association, but this is not the case. For sensations or external objects become coherent only in one organic experience as a totality, that involves the recall of a certain amount of ny past experiences. This revival not only influences the resulting picture, but it influences still more profoundly the "feeling tone" and other related experiences.

One question remains to be asked. Since, according to Dilthey, the relations between mental events are given prior to these events themselves, how does this distinction compare with Kant's doctrine of form and content of experience? Take, for instance, the example of judgment, "The tree is green." According to Kant, the form of this judgment, as expressed in the word "is," is _apriori_, while the sensory contents of "tree" and "green" are given _aposteriori_ by experience.

According to Dilthey, the relation, as expressed in the word "is" is given in immediate experience, prior to incoming sense impressions of, e.g., tree and green. There are, however, important differences, for one thing, Kant is interested in what is universally present in experience, while Dilthey's relations are experienced by one individual only. Still further, Kant's forms are actualized at the

instance of sense-experience, while Dilthey's relations exist without regard of and prior to sense-experience. And finally, Dilthey's relations, that hold together the separate parts of our mental life, and mold them into one unified structure, are not necessarily apriori in Kant's sense. Dilthey begins with the assertion that these relations are given in immediate experience prior to anything else. They are apriori as forming the basis of all experience, but not in the Kantion sense, that is, they do not possess an inner truth, independent of all experience. Dilthey is not analyzing experience in a universal sense, he is presenting a description of an actually given, individual mind. His attempt to give an epistimology, underlying the culturalsciences, turns out to be an analysis of the human mind.[13] As a matter of fact, Dilthey's relations are essentially aposteriori. He himself is aware of the difference between his "relations" and Kant's "forms" in experience. Kant's "forms" of experience, he states, really embody a hypothetical assumption, while his own internal relations are actually given.[14] Dilthey distinguishes "forms" of experience also,

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[13] It would be interesting to investigate to what extent Dilthey himself was prejudiced by hypothetical assumptions in this analysis; this accusation was directed at J. S. Mill, but a consideration of the problem in question will be reserved until after the discussion of Ebbinghaus' answer to Dilthey's criticism of atomic psychology.

[14] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Beitrage," G.S. Vol. V., p. 282.

but they are different from his relations. The relations are given in the first place, followed by the separate contents. When the individual attempts to analyze this given experience, he introduces the "forms" of judgments. These forms are not prior to experience, but are used in order to elevate immediate experience to the rational level, and they are determined not by a hypothetical reason, but by the given mental contents.[15] In view of the individual's mental life the relations exist psychologically prior. Later on we conceive this raw material in a definite set of forms. However, according to Dilthey, these forms are not entirely apriori. To him it appears as if the nature of our sense material determines the form of our conception.[16] On this point, however, he vacillated and never made clear to what degree these forms were apriori and how far they were determined by the nature of our sense material.

I. HERMANN EBBINGHAUS' ANSWER TO DILTHEY'S CRITICISM OF ASSOCIATIONISTIC PSYCHOLOGY

In 1896 Hermann Ebbinghaus wrote an article on explanatory and descriptive psychology in reply to Dilthey's

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15 Ibid., p. 282.

16 Loc. cit.

criticism of psychological atomism.[17] He started by calling attention to the indisputable vagueness characteristic of Dilthey's writings. He next proceeded to note an inherent ambiguity in Dilthey's monograph concerning the relation between "explanatory" and "descriptive" psychology. On this point, Dilthey had come to the conclusion that these two varieties of mental science should co-operate, explanatory supplementing descriptive psychology.[18] Is this approachment, Ebbinghaus asks, not in contradiction with his destructive criticism of explanatory psychology as such?

Although Dilthey never answered this challenge, he could easily have done so, at least in part, for if the one type of psychology merely supplements the other, starting out where the other leaves off, the criticism loses a great deal of its pertinence. Explanatory psychology, as a supplementary discipline, in Dilthey's usage will be

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[17] Hermann Ebbinghaus, "Uber erklaerende und beschreibende Psychologie," Zeitschrift fuer psychologie und Physiologie der Sinnesorgane, Vol. IX, 1896, p. 101 ff. Hereafter referred to as: Ebbinghaus, Erklarende Psychologie.

[18] Dilthey uses the following words to designate his own type of psychology: Descriptive Psychology, Realpsychologie, Geisteswissenschaftliche Psychologie, Strukturpsychologie, Verstehende Psychologie. He uses the following words to indicate the contrasting school of psychology: association psychology, analytical psychology, Naturwissenschaftliche Psychologie, sensualistic psychologie, atomic psychology.

different from the former type of science bearing that name. Whereas the former type used the hypothetical sensations as its basis, Dilthey's new explanatory psychology will have as its building material the real mental events as given by understanding.

Nevertheless, to a certain degree Ebbinghaus' criticism has weight; if Dilthey agrees that atomic or explanatory psychology has scientific value, he thereby admits that his own descriptive psychology alone cannot replace it. And in this case there would seem to be no point in his complete rejection of it.

Ebbinghaus agrees with Dilthey's positive thesis, which he summarizes as follows:

1. Unity of mental acts in the service of attainment of satisfaction and happiness. (Dilthey's purposive senses or _Strukturzusammenhang_.)

2. Coherence of the development of the mental life. (Dilthey's identity of the self during development.)

3. Influence of past experiences (Dilthey's _erworbene Zusammenhang_ or the pre-conscious.)

While coming to the defense of associationistic psychology, Ebbinghaus is not unmindful of certain valid criticisms against it. He admits that the enormous progress of experimental psychology in the last few decades made the

psychologists over-confident of the possibilities of this new procedure, and he concedes that the newer psychology has followed too slavishly the example of physics. This, however, can be explained by the fact that biology had not been developed to such an extent as physics.

He even agrees with Dilthey's contention that we should not overlook the given unities in mental life and calls attention to the "Gestalt" in sense perception, and to the unities of the self and of consciousness. Finally he agrees with Dilthey in the existence of a general, purposive nexus in mental life. Biological science he notes, has sharpened the psychologist's eyes for such a purposive nexus, that is present in every living organism. But Ebbinghaus does not agree that this criticism strikes the traditional psychologist unawares. The associationist knows that, driven by his desire to follow the example of physics, he has traditionally disregarded these unities of mental life; but for some time he has been moving away from this error in the direction that Dilthey points out. Dilthey's criticisms then, are a little late; in short, they contain nothing new. Two of Dilthey's criticisms against atomism, however, are given special consideration. These are: first, the contention that traditional psychology attempts to build up mental life out of a limited number of elements; second, that, with these

elements as building stones and association as cement, these psychologists erroneously try to erect a mechanical mind structure.

In reply to the first charge Ebbinghaus bluntly states that Dilthey does not know his psychology: "I do not know, who of all the Associationistic psychologists has bound his hand in such an unintelligible way."[19] None of these scientists, he contends, state explicitly the number of elements used to construct the totality of mental life. This rebuttal, however, reveals that Ebbinghaus misunderstood Dilthey; for when the latter referred to the limited number of elements, he did not mean to imply that the associationists considered mental life as consisting of a certain definite number of sensations. There would be no point to such an argument. Dilthey meant that some of these scientists attempted to build up mental life out of one type of element, that is, sensations, while others conceived psychic life as consisting of two or more types of elements.

With respect to Dilthey's second and main charge that associationistic psychology uses these elements of mental life, following the example of physics, to build up

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19 Hermann Ebbinghaus, <u>Erklärende Psychologie</u>, p. 180.

the human mind as a mechanistic structure, Ebbinghaus grants that this was correct in so far as Herbart was concerned; but he denies that the others, James Mill, James Stuart Mill, Taine and himself were guilty of such a mechanistic tendency. This denial, however, is contained in a simple statement, and lacks adequate support of explicit quotations. Ebbinghaus merely declares that the mechanistic explanation is not the only one possible to association psychology, but he does not enumerate any alternations. Dilthey at least is entirely justified in accusing the traditional psychology of a mechanistic trend, in which elements are the building stones, kept in place or moved by the forces of association in a purely mechanical way. Such exceptions as Herbert Spencer's "inner drives" and Wundt's creative synthesis are not characteristic and in no way disturb the general conclusion that the Associationist school as a whole exhibited a mechanistic trend in their explanation of mental life. Association was treated as if it were similar to the force of gravitation, and sensations were considered in psychology as atoms in the field of physics. These sensations were pictures of the natural objects and they were regarded as independent entities in the same way as these objects. All these elements together form the human mind. This totality of mental elements, therefore, is a picture of the external

world. The content of this mind is determined by the content of the outside world. The combination of different elements depend upon the relations among these objects themselves, and between the objects and the perceiving organism. In such a system, we have nothing else but blind forces and natural objects operating according to physical laws. Certainly this cannot be a correct picture of the human mind, conceived as acting independently of external things. Dilthey himself stated that to a certain extent Wundt should be excluded from his criticism, since he accepted a doctrine of creative synthesis in the human mind, a viewpoint incompatible with an associationistic system.

Ebbinghaus also criticized Dilthey's theory about relations claimed to be given in immediate experience. Take, for instance, the case of my observing the behavior of a rat running towards his food. How do I know that the rat has such a purpose in mind? I put myself in the rat's place, realize my desires for food, and what I would do to reach it. This, finally would be my understanding of the act; running toward food. But, demands Ebbinghaus, since every associationist would do exactly the same, what is new in Dilthey's method?

Ebbinghaus, however, is forgetting an important point. In the first place, the final explanation of the associationist would be in terms of the food, causing a complex of sensations, that, combined with representations of the needed actions and possible satisfaction, again would cause the rat to move in that direction. The final understanding of Dilthey would be that the rat obviously can act in a successful way to realize his purposes. That is the difference of two world-views. Ebbinghaus is attempting to give an explanation of the observed actions in terms of cause and effect. This attempt originates in the assumption that mental life can be expressed in terms of mechanic associations of the elements. Dilthey denies the possibility of such a procedure, using the example of causality. In the field of physics, we arrive at a causal relation between two events by means of inference after a repeated observation of the one following the other in time. This inference, which at the most achieves a hypothetical probability, is out of place in the field of mental life. Here we experience ourselves as the real causes of our decisions and feelings; therefore, no inference is necessary. A mechanistic explanation of mental life disregards the human mind as an ultimate free cause, does not take in account the most certain conviction of

human beings, and is therefore inadequate to give a true life picture of the mind.

While this viewpoint of Dilthey's can be accepted as a general truth, it is not certain that the living being acts as such a final cause in every single action. The possibility remains that, whereas human beings are free to act, they nevertheless may deliver themselves into the heands of physical necessities. In every separate case, therefore, Dilthey will have to prove whether the individual in question acted as a creative subject, or was merely moved by physical causes. If he gives a description of a certain mental act, arrived at by means of understanding, there is no certainty that his conception is identical with the experience of the other individual who was acting. Take, for instance, the case of a man moving his hand. Dilthey may experience this action as a friendly greeting, while it might have been an involuntary movement, that is, one determined by physiological causes.

The result of Dilthey's understanding there is just as plausible as the result of an associationistic explanation. While the latter bases his results upon the hypothesis of "elements" and "associations," he arrives at his "understanding" by means of the hypothesis that human beings are creative agents. But, and this is important, Dilthey's

hypothesis agrees with the facts of mental life to a greater extent than the atomatic hypothesis. It is entirely against everyone's conviction to assert that his sensations force him to do something, to feel something. I know, and so does everybody else, that I myself am responsible for my mental life. I am not a wave on the ocean of sensations. Furthermore, while the cause of a mental event is frequently of little importance, it may be very important to know the purpose or reason of a certain action. Let us, for instance, take the case of someone who is suffering from neurasthenia. Some years ago, the patient suffered a nervous breakdown. Now it could be stated that the physiological condition, connected with his nervous state, was the cause of his neurosis; but an assertion, satisfactory as it might seem to a physicist, would not solve the main problem of a psychologist. For in attributing his mental state to a physiological cause, we are considering mental life as a phenomenal process. But the psychologist, in Dilthey's sense, is not satisfied with the explanation, what it seeks is the efficient cause of his neurasthenia; and this implies that he cannot consider mental life as a chain of phenomenal causes and results. To find his answer he will have to go back to the person's mental experiences, in order to find the real cause, to find the answer to his "Why"? Why did

the person take this attitude? Why did he loose his interest in life, in activity? This final answer could never be found by an associationist, for his own method stands in his way. Here there is the difference between Ebbinghaus' explanation and Dilthey's understanding. Ebbinghaus considers mental life as a phenomenal chain of events, while Dilthey regards it as an immediacy, given as it is. There is always something beyond the phenomena; namely, but there is nothing beyond immediate experience, for it is life, it is reality itself. Ebbinghaus failed to see how Dilthey's distinctions were related to his theory of the mind. As a result of this failure, Ebbinghaus misunderstood Dilthey completely, and the main charge of Dilthey against atomic psychology still stands unrefuted, and will remain a forceful argument against any type of psychology that attempts to give a mechanistic interpretation of the human soul.

II. CULTURAL SCIENCE VERSUS NATURAL SCIENCE

Ebbinghaus could have replied to Dilthey's demand for "understanding" by asserting that such a procedure was not scientific, since science knows no distinction between efficient and phenomenal cause. Such an answer, which fits in with Ebbinghaus' theory, would reveal a very limited use

of the word "science." Ebbinghaus used the word "science" to indicate "natural science" while Dilthey included "cultural science" as well. Dilthey was not the first one to make this distinction. Wilhelm Windelband had previously noted the need for two types of science governed by different goals. Natural sciences attempt to discover general laws, while cultural sciences seek a description of that which is singular and not repeatable. Mathematics and psychology, trying to find general laws, belong to the first group, while history, investigating that which has heppened once to one person, must be classified among the cultural sciences. The first group of sciences looks for universal rules, the second group for that which in its singularity once gave value to the things. Therefore he distinguishes between "nomothetical" and "idiographical" sciences. Several criticisms may be raised against this division. Nature, for instance, can be treated historically, as in the case of a star's biography. Geology must be considered as a nomothetical science; yet it speaks of events during the glacial period, and these events are supposedly nonrepeatable.

In general Heinrich Rickert agrees with Windelband.[20] He assumes also that the main objective of natural sciences

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[20] Heinrich Rickert, _Die Grunden der naturawissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung_ (Second edition, 1913).

is to establish laws or to arrive at universals. These, the nomothetic sciences, are not interested in individuals, but in the establishment of laws and types. All disciplines attempting to establish laws or general types are opposed to them are the disciplines that are interested in particular data, that is, the historical or ideographic sciences. The selection of facts, in the latter disciplines is guided by the principle of value. Facts which have bearing on value are the ones that will find a place in this type of science. In such a system, the ideographic sciences become dependent on subjective evaluations.

Wilhelm Dilthey, however, goes his own way. He attempts to do for the cultural sciences what Kant had done for the natural sciences. He wants to arrive at a knowledge and evaluation of things on the ground of an immediate experience, and also tries to find an objective method that will give scientific certainty instead of subjective evaluation. In short, he attempts to make the cultural sciences just as objective in their results as the natural sciences. Kant's _Critique of Pure Reason_ had bearing only on the knowledge of nature. Dilthey set out to accomplish the same with regard to our knowledge of the mind. Kant began with the subject, Dilthey begins with the human personality in the totality of the activities

and experiences, for he is not mainly interested in the formal side of knowledge. Furthermore, his theoretical viewpoint prevents him from starting with the knowing subject. Dilthey regards the experience of nature as being different from experience of the mind. The latter type is direct, immediate, and is free from the subject- object distinction. He therefore starts with that which is the basis for our knowledge of mental life, immediate experience. This life-experience, changing and growing with the individual's developing adaptation to his environment, is the basis for his belief in the reality of the outside world, and at the same time it is his real spiritual reality. All sciences, natural, as well as cultural, originate in this primordial contact with, and revelation of, life. For both types of discipline he wants an objective method. We are able to understand nature because we are part of it, because of the fact that we are in a constant vital relation with it. The relation between us and the object of cultural sciences is of an even more intimate nature. This object is the human mind itself, and we are not only in a vital relation with it, we, ourselves, are the human mental life. In immediate experience we possess our mind. It may be asked if, in immediate experience, we become aware of our own individual mind only. Dilthey, in

order to answer this question, distinguishes between general and individual experience. General experience is the result of a process within the individual mind.[21] Some experiences reappear again and again, they are found within the circle of our life to such an extent that we finally give them a general validity. But they cannot be expressed in scientific formulas, they do not lead to a scientific universality. Their validity depends upon the acceptance within a certain group of people. With general experience, therefore, Dilthey means those pronouncements, value judgments and propositions, which, within a certain group of persons, have become common property. They may be considered as a creation of a common life. As such they exercise a certain influence upon the individual life. These general experiences form the basis for our understanding of others. When somebody tells us about an events which happened to him we are able to understand him only when that expressed experience is already part of our own experience. The degree of richness of our own experience, therefore, determines the degree of possible understanding for other experiences. But the knowledge of other experiences enriches again our own mental life, since no one experience is exactly identical with any other. Therefore

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[21] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Ideen," G. S. Vol. V., p. 2.

the individual's mental life is interwoven with the experiences of others. We are, however, not members of one group only, but of several. These classes certainly consist only of individual members, but at the same time the group transcends the individual. The individual impresses his distinctive feature on the group, but the group leaves its impression on the individual. These groups receive their greatest development in the systems of culture, for example, religion, ethics, laws, science and economics. In these systems of culture we witness the greatest influence on the life of the individual. This influence may achieve such an importance, that the individual begins to subject himself to the rules that are imposed on him by the communal life. Every system, however, reverts to its constituent individual members, for every system is an objectification of individual experiences. Such an objectification may be described as something that comes into being, that can be understood only by immediate experience. This something is not immediate experience itself; it is an objectification of it.

If, for instance, somebody tells me that once up in the woods, while listening to the song of the trees, smelling the fragrance of the air, seeing the vast sky, he experienced a peculiar exaltation, a feeling of being removed from the world, I may reply: "Yes, I know what you mean, I had

the same thing happen to me." There is something between the two of us, something we cannot express completely in words, although we are very much aware of its reality. We are able to "point to" it, without giving it an accurate definition.

In this sense of a community of experience not completely amenable to verbal and intellectual formulation, Dilthey speaks of an objectification of mental events. This objectification is understood more completely the more we penetrate our own immediate experiences. This understanding of our own mental life becomes a complete object of knowledge only if two conditions are fulfilled:

1. Our understanding must expand itself to the total objectification of mind, which is achieved in history.

2. A better method of abstracting the spiritual from the different expressions of life must be established.

The object of cultural sciences, according to Dilthey, therefore, is the objectifications of the common mental experiences, of those general concepts, value judgments, rules, and the like, that may be considered as products of specific culture systems. On the basis of such an attitude it may be said that the totality of life can be comprehended only by the totality of our experiences, by our ability to partake of life. In history we encounter relations, systems

of culture as religion, philosophy, society, and the like, which resist complete mastery by our rational thinking. As a matter of fact their very nature would be denied if we could try to attempt such a rational comprehension. Just as history is immediately related to life, and in its manifold forms is expressing the different forms of life, so the cultural sciences, attempting to understand this historical world, must maintain an immediate relation with this life.[22] The understanding of the historical world must begin with the individual. He is the bearer of the historical consciousness of his time, and therefore, he alone is the starting point of the cultural sciences. Since cultural sciences start their work with the individual mental life, there can be no general validity of the kind that exists in the natural sciences. Such a validity is neither aspired to nor obtained. The individual carries within him the historical consciousness of his time. A complete understanding of him, will therefore, involve a complete insight into the spirit of his age. While the general experience of his group and age transcends the individual's private mental life, nevertheless it is in his immediate experience that the totality of life's

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[22] Dilthey forgets that, in every verbal or written expression of our understanding, we necessarily introduce logic and therefore remove ourselves from "life."

meaning is revealed.[23]

Summarizing Dilthey's system we have in the first place his conception of mental life, as a stream of experiences, determined by the following factors:

1. The purposive nexus (Strukturzusammenhang) which is inherent in all living beings as such.

2. The genetic nexus, determining the correlation of the different experiences during the development.

3. The individual nexus, resulting from the reciprocal relations between individual and environment.

The purposive nexus is a general determination of all mental life, the fact that life has a purpose to fulfill, that every mental act is directed toward something. The genetic nexus preserves the personal identity during the different stages of development, whereas the individual nexus is the influence of past experiences known or unknown on present mental acts or experiences. This individual mental life is interpenetrated by the general experience of a person's social group and age, which can be experienced in the products of culture.

Psychology being a cultural science uses the method of understanding. This method is twofold:

1. The understanding of the individual's own mental

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[23] In the original, Dilthey speaks of "Leben" and "Erleben" which expresses more clearly the close relation he assumes between the two.

life, as given in immediate experience.

2. The understanding of another's mind, the recognition that another experience is similar to ones own previous experience.

III. SOME IMPLICATIONS OF DILTHEY'S VIEWS

Understanding and immediate experience form the basis of Dilthey's psychology. In assuming this standpoint, however, Dilthey introduces a metaphysical hypothesis. As has been indicated above, immediate experience is identical with life. On the basis of this assumption Ebbinghaus accused Dilthey of replacing the associationist hypothesis with one of his own making; and an inquiry is justified to determine whether this charge is correct or not. A quotation from Dilthey might clarify the situation:

> We read in history about economic activities, wars, etc. Our minds become filled with great pictures. These stories convey a message from the world of history, which still surrounds us. The greatest fact of this information, however, moves in fields that are closed to sensual experience, but open to our experience. These events, which can be experienced only, really form the basis of external events. In order to penetrate those moving forces, we do not need a special attitude towards life, because these moving forces, immanent in the phenomenal, external things and events, are life itself. For every value of life is contained in that which can be experienced. It is in life that purposes find their origin, goals about which nature has no knowledge. The creative will produces evolution and growth. And again, life has its value, its purpose and meaning in this creative,

> responsible, sovereign spiritual world, which is within us.[24]

This legnthy quotation is significant for Dilthey's viewpoint. Beneath the moving ocean of world-events are the active powers of human minds. Human acts are at the basis of all that happens in the world. But we cannot explain it, we even have difficulty to express it. The only possibility to achieve a real and genuine understanding of these events is to identify ourselves with the leading persons, to feel as they would feel to experience as they would experience. And this realization beings Dilthey to say that this immediate experience is not directly conscious; we need an active process of reflection in order to achieve a complete awareness of it. Such reflection is active in the sense that it originates in our own will, but is passive as compared to thinking in the stricter sense. We give our immediate experience a chance to elevate itself to consciousness. Again, this must not be misunderstood to imply that some strange force acts within the human mind. In immediate experience we become aware of ourselves as creative agents, in such a way, that it appears as if it were given or revealed to us. This experience of revelation is a result of the fact that

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[24] Wilhelm Dilthey, "Aufbau," G. S. Vol. VII, p. 6.

life reveals itself as our inner being. The content of this revelation is inner experience, is the totality of values, actions and purposes, of the individual as a living being. In the process of growth, the individual mind, reflecting upon its immediate experience, adapts itself to the moral and spiritual order which is inherent in life. Such a viewpoint is not only closely related to that of Bergson, it also seems to be very similar to that of the American philosopher, Borden Parker Bowne, who writes:

> Thus the great catholic beliefs of humanity become expressions of reality itself, and as any theory of knowledge they must be allowed to stand, unless there be some positive disproof. Their teleological nature is manifest. They are not here for themselves; but for what they can help us to do. They are the expressions of life and also the instruments by which life realizes itself.[25]

Not only do we find a close similarity between the views of Dilthey and Bowne in the concepts of life, reality, and experience, but also in their distinction between phenomenal and efficient causality. Since these concepts form the basis for Dilthey's entire system, the significance of such an agreement increases in importance. These fundamental ideas of reality, life experience and causality, however, are theoretical assumptions, or if you wish,

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25 Borden Parker Bowne, Personalism (The Plimpton Press, 1908), p. 303.

hypotheses. Dilthey would deny this last statement, saying that since he discovered them in experience they are not products of thinking. But when Dilthey reveals his experiences to the reader, he no longer expresses "pure experience." A formulation of his concept of life, for instance, is a result of thinking and is expressed in judgments. His experience of "life" may be entirely correct, but his expression of this experience can be refuted. And unless the reader has not had a similar experience, nothing in the world forces him to accept Dilthey's concept of life or convinces him of its truth.

The same objection will have to be raised against his concept of mental causality. Let us agree on the assumption that man is a free cause of his own mental actions. Such a hypothesis allows me to "understand" a certain mental action as the result of an efficient cause, but it does not justify me in postulating that a human individual is always, at all times, a free cause. It seems that human beings are able to act as free agents, but that they can also be mere physical objects, moved by external causes. Unless psychology has investigated to what degree human beings are active subjects, and to what degree such a creative subjectivity can be negated, no general rule can be established.

Is Ebbinghaus justified, then, in saying that Dilthey's system is just as hypothetical as associationism? Associationism may reply that while its "mental atoms" are never experienced alone, but always in combinations, therefore, they may say that their science is equally empirical. Nevertheless, the two viewpoints are antithetical. Ebbinghaus is looking at mental life through the glasses of a physicist, and wishes to reduce it to measurable quantities. Dilthey studies mental life starting with assumptions that are common property, that is, that of myself as free and responsible. He, therefore, has common sense at his side. Furthermore, Dilthey does not consciously attempt to establish general laws. His assumption that human beings are creative agents is not a general law. It is in a certain sense, rather, a necessary assumption; for if I assume that a fellowman is not the active subject of his own deeds, I will fail to understand his actions as those of a living human being. The difference between man and a dead object does not exist any more. In other words, the concept of life necessitates the further assumptions of Dilthey, not as logical requirements but as the demands of common sense. One implication of Dilthey's viewpoint demands special objection, namely, his concept of the Christian religion.

Religion, in his view is a system of objectifications of common experience having much in common with philosophy. Gnosis, Neo-platonism and Mysticism he points out, are both theology and philosophy. And all the main concepts of metaphysics are already present in theology. The relation of the two is of such an intimate nature, that were philosophy, which is the self-contemplation of life, to cease to exist, it would re-appear in the self-contemplation of the religious nature.[26] In the hidden depths of the soul there remains always the smoldering flame of religious experience. In reality religious experience and philosophical consciousness are one. Religious experience grows where there is a "naive" consciousness in contact with the "invisible," which resists description. This clash with the "hidden darkness" increases and enhances the religious experience. Religion becomes here absorbed in a subjective experience. This religion has a need to create its own language, which is embodied in myth, cult and doctrine. But all of this is symbolic of that which is open to understanding only.

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26 Dilthey speaks often about "profound natures" (tiefe Naturen). We would call them people with a strong secondary function. Opposed to this type he recognizes the superficial natures. The experience of the intangible is for the profound natures only. Such a statement of course makes criticism extremely difficult; for if one would deny the existence of this irrational intangible something in the depths of the human soul, Dilthey could consider his opponent as one of the superficial natures.

Christendom, according to Dilthey, is the highest form of religion for it preaches a new form of community by which the "lonely soul of a beggar knows himself equal to a king."[27] Therefore, in Dilthey's system, Christendom becomes a historical phenomenon, a higher development of that which was offered in the Greek, Roman and Eastern world, and like all historical phenomena it is subject to the laws of continuity and relativity. Now in such a viewpoint as this, where religion is reduced to a subjective experience and a historical process, there is no place for a living God with whom we are able to come in personal contact. The relation between the humble "I" and the great "Thou," which is basic in the Christian religion, is transformed to an experience of identity with the divine. In other words a Christian Theism has become a religious pantheism. And the view of human beings worshipping their Lord and Master has been replaced by the idea of individuals as emanations of the Divine Essence, returning to it in self-contemplation.

This, however is not our main objection to Dilthey's psychology of understanding. Our final and principal charge against it is that it does not recognize a distinction between psychology and logic. Immediate experience is

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[27] Wilhelm Dilthey, Weltanscauung, p. 205.

a psychological datum. It is not known and cannot be known by logic because of its very nature. Logic deals with data that can be verified or determined in a rational way. A concept considered from the standpoint of logic must be definable in a manner that is non-ambiguous for the specific purpose at hand. But Dilthey's description of immediate experience excludes such a possibility. This immediate experience is the foundation of Dilthey's psychology, and his psychology is the basis of all the cultural sciences. Therefore, if this immediate experience is not open to a clear logical determination, the entire field of all cultural sciences is endangered from the viewpoint of logic. It is quite possible that a certain branch of science may include a vast amount of immediate experience and life, but this concept of life cannot be adopted among the fundamental assumptions, cannot be used as a category, as long as it is considered to be irrational and indefinable. And neither life nor immediate experience can be assumed as completely defined for they form an object of investigation in themselves.

But above all, how in this way, is the objective validity of the judgments within the cultural sciences guaranteed? For validity, after all, is a logical category. Immediate experience is subjective, belongs to the individual mental life. It possesses no general validity and it never

will. Therefore, if we start in the subjective mental life, we must remain within the boundaries of subjectivism. And no statement of Dilthey's that understanding is self-evident can rescue him from this predicament. It only demonstrates Dilthey's confusion of logic and psychology. For evidence is a logical condition, and Dilthey is talking not about evidence in the logical sense, but about evidence as a subjective experience, accompanying the act of understanding. But such a subjective conviction of an individual does not imply that he cannot be mistaken, either consciously or unconsciously.

It was Dilthey's purpose to give to the cultural sciences a logic and epistemology, in the way achieved by Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. But he gave neither logic nor epistemology. Instead he gave an admirable criticism of traditional psychology and proposed a set of assumptions underlying the psychological investigation or understanding of individuals. But Dilthey failed to create a complete science of the vast field of human mental life. That task he left to his followers.

CHAPTER III

THE CONCEPT OF "UNDERSTANDING" IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUARD SPRANGER

Eduard Spranger is a confessed disciple of Dilthey. There is, however, a striking difference. Whereas Dilthey is satisfied with the established fact that human mental life must be considered as a purposive structure, Spranger inquires into the nature of the intended purposes. According to him, they are not accidental concepts of the human mind but are members of a structure independent of personal minds.

Notwithstanding this difference between Dilthey and Spranger, it has to be admitted that he really was completing the structure of the foundations laid by Dilthey. Spranger distinguished two types of psychology; cultural scientific (*Geisteswissenschaftliche*) and natural scientific (*Naturwissenschaftliche*) psychology.

I. SPRANGER'S BASIC CONCEPTS

Spranger's distinction between cultural scientific and natural scientific psychology. As has been discovered in the first chapter, Dilthey already made this distinction. Spranger's distinction, although quite similar to that of

Dilthey is not identical with it. Spranger's concept of the difference between the two branches of science can be found in the following words:

> Cultural scientific psychology is occupied (1) with trans-subjective and collective creations of historical life, that concern individuals in superindividual effectual relations. (2) With ideal mental laws or norms according to which the individual mental life may be recreated in a critical-objective way or comprehended in understanding assimilation.[1]

This definition shows that, according to Spranger, cultural sciences deal with superindividual mental objects and laws. According to Dilthey cultural sciences seek a description and analysis of individual immediate experience. By means of our understanding this experience we are able to grasp the objectifications of mental events. Dilthey therefore, accredits to the object of cultural sciences only an existence in the individual mind, while Spranger speaks about mental objects and laws independent of individual minds. Whereas Dilthey studies the purposes as related to the mind of an individual, Spranger investigates the purposes as separate entities in their reciprocal relations. These mental objects, intended in the individual act, passes, according to Spranger, a separate existence, they form a world of their own, and the study of this world

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[1] Edward Spranger, Lebensformen (Nalle: Max Niemeyer, 1930), p. f.

as a structural totality is the object or cultural sciences. Although differing in their views as to the object of cultural sciences, Spranger and Dilthey agree that there are two types of psychology, a natural scientific and a cultural scientific type.

Natural scientific and cultural scientific psychology. As a result of their difference of opinion with regard to the object of cultural sciences, Spranger and Dilthey disagree in their distinction between the two types of psychology. Spranger considers the differences in the following statement:

> I enumerate as frequently mentioned contrasts:
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> 1. Explanatory and understanding psychology.
> 2. Inductive and insightful (einsichtige) psychology.
> 3. Atomic and structural psychology.
> 4. Psychology without and with meaning.
> 5. Natural scientific and cultural scientific psychology.[2]

Dilthey would agree with everyone of these contrasts. He would also confirm Spranger's contention that natural scientific psychology "explains" mental phenomena, that is, reduces them to their ultimate elements, while cultural scientific psychology "understand" their meaning. But inquiring into the concept of "meaning" reveals a significant difference. According to Dilthey the meaning of a

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[2] Edward Spranger, "Die Frage nach der Einheit der Psychologie,"(Sitrungsberichte d. Berliner Akademie, 1926), Vol. XXIV, p. 199.

mental act, for instance, the sentence: "I would like to help you," the content is the expression of a desire to help, but the individual uttering these words may use them as a means to get rid of an annoying fellow. The latter is the real intention of these words, and according to Dilthey, the meaning of this mental act.

Spranger's concept is more complicated. In order to make clear his meaning of "meaning" we give the following statement:

> Given, extra mentally, the objective structure: H, a physical elementary constellation, that can be determined, according to the "Gesalt" theory, as a linear figure, and, according to physics and chemistry as an accumulation of black dust particles on white paper. What would be the experienced correlate of this object structure? It may be experiences as a linear figure, in which case the psychological object is a visual observation free of meaning. It may be experienced also immediately as the letter H. In this case, another experience is built on top of the visual experience. This new act is the psychologically important experience of significance (Bedentung) or meaning (Sinn).[3]

There are also two ways of observing the letter H: in the first place, as an accumulation of black particles. But one has to approach the letter closely, or to use a magnifying glass in order to observe it as such. In the second place, as the symbol H which is recognized if we are able to observe the particles in their totality.

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[3] Edward Spranger, Einheit der Psychologie, op. cit., p. 203.

According to Spranger, the observation of the colored spots is a meaning less act. This seems strange for we are observing things and their qualities. The main contention against Spranger's concept, however, is in relation to his meaning of meaning. Spranger maintains that the symbol-relation between H as a figure and H as a letter brings the meaning into our perception. This is definitely a mistake. This relation does not exist independent of the individual intention. Spranger in forgetting this intentional relation destroys both meaning and perception. Because of this difference of intention, we see the letter H, one moment as a heap of particles and another moment as a symbol.

Still is is clear what Spranger means with the difference between the types of psychology. Natural scientific psychology, among other things, investigates the acts of perception without regard for the meaning that is transmitted. Cultural scientific psychology focusses its attention on these meanings more than on anything else. It becomes therefore necessary to inquire into Spranger's conception of meaning.

Spranger's concept of "meaning" and "meaningful life."

1. Meaning and meaningful. Without a comprehension of Spranger's use of the words "meaning" and "meaningful"

no adequate comprehension of Spranger's psychology is possible. He defines "meaning" as having always reference to values and "meaningful" as that which forms a constituting member of a value-structure.[4]

Spranger elucidates these definitions as follows:

> An organism is meaningful in so far as its functions tend towards the preservation of its existence under given environmental conditions, since its preservation may be considered valuable for itself.[5]

In a given mental act the meaning is its intention towards the realization of a value. An object may possess value, considered entirely in itself, but as such it has no meaning. Meaning implies a value, experienced as a probable purpose for a mental act. Whereas meaning refers to individual mental life, values refer to super-individual mental life. Values have their own existence, are part of another structure than individual minds. As such, they are considered to be: value-essences, and the totality of value-essences is called as a super-individual structure, the objective mind (*Objectiver Geist*).

2. *Objectiver Geist*. Spranger defines the "*objectiver Geist*" as follows:

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[4] Edward Spranger, *Types of Men: The Psychology and Ethics of Personality* (Translated by P. T. W. Tigors: Nalle: Max Neimyer, 1928), p. 12.

[5] *Loc. cit.*

> This "objectiver Geist" does not yet exist. Rather is it the ideal complex of norms, which, either in its totality, or in sections confront society as well as the individual, as a real demand of how one should evaluate. It is then 'objective' not only in the sense that it exists outside of the individual, but also in the sense that it is normative, genuine and valid; 'subjective' then would mean that not only the isolated individual as opposed to the over-individual historico-mental sphere, but everything which deviates from the norm. For the sake of greater clarity we shall in future call the first form 'objectiver Geist,' and the second 'normativer Geist' (corresponding for instance to Negel's 'absolutem Geist').[6]

According to this statement Spranger distinguishes between the objective mind, the super-individual totality of existing values and the normative mind, the ideal totality of all value-essences, the objective mind, with all its genuine and false values is another name for the social-intellectual environment. The normative mind is the cultural, ethical, directive, aiming beyond any actual condition towards that which possesses genuine and lasting value. The objective mind represents existing reality; the normative mind that which ought to become reality. These existing values and ideal value-essences may be grasped or intended by individual persons, and so become part of the individual mind, Spranger's subjective mind.

3. The subjective mind (subjectiver Geist). This individual mind is at the same time independent of and

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6 *Ibid.*, p. 15.

related to the objective mind. The objective mind also exists independent of and related to the subjective mind. To use Spranger's words:

> The objective mind exists only in so far as it is experienced by living persons. But it exists prior to every single individual and entails for everyone a given complex of life-conditions and directives.[7]

As a result of this last statement we will have to distinguish between a potential and an actual existence of the objective mind. It comes to actual existence only in so far as it is grasped by an individual mind, whereas its potential existence with regard to that person embraces also the values that exist for this social environments. As to the individual, subjective mind, he states:

> The individual soul is *ab initio* merged into the objective mind. Important is the fact that the individual mind forms part of the greater meaning-structures of the historical-social world.[8]

These greater meaning structures, however, possess only actual existence in so far as they are realized in the subjective mind. Every individually experienced value is therefore members of the individual mental structure and,

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[7] Edward Spranger, *Psychologie des Jugendalters*, p. 145.

[8] *Loc. cit.*

at the same time, it belongs to a super-individual value-structure.

Spranger accepts three forms of existence for the values:

1. The ideal existence as value-essence and part of the normative mind.

2. The potential existence as part of the objective mind.

3. The actual or real existence as part of the subjective mind.

It has to be kept in mind that any actual value in the subjective mind is as such also part of the objective mind. Spranger distinguishes between "realization" and "actualization" of values:

> An objective value, can be actualized in the individual mind, as an experience of value, or an act of evaluation, in which some value-essence may be present.[9]

We see that on objective value exists in some form before it comes to actual existence in the objective mind. If this actualization is the coming into being of a real, genuine value, some value-essence is present. If, on the other hand a false value is actualized no value-essence is

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[9] Edward Spranger, <u>Types of Men</u>, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 250.

present. A false value therefore is the actualization of an ostensible value, not containing a value-essence. Potentially such a false value may be present in the objective mind, and actually in both the objective and subjective mind.

A value is realized when the individual creates something that possesses value. In order to do so, that individual must first have actualized that value as an experience, and subsequently carried out his creation. Such a creation can be called meaningful if a value is realized. It is possible that the human mind conceives and creates something which possesses a false value, as, for instance, the Israelites when they made their golden calf. It was intended to have value as an object of worship, but as such it possessed no genuine value and must therefore be considered as meaningless. This use of the word "meaningful" enhances its significance; only that which embodies genuine and lasting values can be considered as meaningful. But, we could ask, who, at any given time, is going to determine whether a given mental creation is meaningful or not. In other words, how are human persons able to know about value-essences except in and through their individual minds. This brings up the question of our knowledge of value-essences and value-structures. But

in order to answer this question Spranger's concept of _a priori_ has to be explained first.

Spranger's concept of a priori. In a footnote Spranger makes the following remark: "_a priori_, of course does not mean previous to all experience, but _with_ all experience."[10] This footnote may be just as easily overlooked as the following remark: "Perhaps unconsciously influenced by a neo-Platonic point of view I became convinced that everything is a part of everything else."[11] Now if these two remarks are considered as being related, their significance for the understanding of Spranger's system increases immediately.

Spranger's _a priori_, in the light of unconscious Neo-Platonic influence, is no longer the Kantian _a priori_ but receives a deeper meaning. Value structures are, as such, organic members of the objective mind. Value-structures are not given in experience, neither by some means other than experience. Value-structures are given _with_ all experience.

To use the example of the Calvinistic interpretation of the Lord's Supper: The bread is not "transformed"

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[10] Edward Spranger, _Types of Men_, _op. cit._, p. 29.

[11] _Ibid._, p. 30.

into the substance of Jesus' body; neither is it a mere symbol. It is in, and through, the bread that the communicants partake of the body of Christ.

In the same way, in, and through experience we partake of values and also participate in the objective mind. In so far as we actualize value-essences we even could partake in the normative mind. Spranger calls these value-structures *a priori* because of their being independent, of experiences. Potentially they exist as objective values. Actually they come into being when a subjective mind comprehends them. The subjective mind therefore is passive with regard to the creation of values. They exist independent of their realization and actualization. The individual mind can neither add to nor substract from their number. They are given or revealed to the subjective mind. It is interesting to note that Spranger not only distinguishes two types of psychology but also two types of experience, one with and another without meaning. For not im every experience a value is actualized. The act of value-actualization seems to be of a more profound nature, and here we recall that Dilthey already spoke about persons who are able to know their immediate experience and those that do not. But whereas Dilthey referred to a more mystical intuition, Spranger is considering a rational

process. We know now that values and value-structures have an *a priori* existence, and ask what Spranger means with value-structures.

Spranger's theory of value-structures. What really is a value-structure? Since Spranger did not express himself clearly on these points, it can be inferred from the foregoing paragraphs that he distinguishes between structures of value-essences and structures of objective values. Such a structure is a necessary relation; every member has its own place and relation in regard to other members. The entire structure *is* not only as it *is* but could not be otherwise. Its nature is based on the fact that value-essences as a totality form an interdependent system, and all their reciprocal relations are of essential nature.

Spranger often distinguishes the insight in such structural relations from the knowledge based on sense experiences. Sense-experience is able to show us that one events takes place after another, but is never able to show that such a succession is a necessary relation. Structural insight, however, is able to reveal how one event necessarily follows another one. Therefore, it will become important to investigate how much one can know about these structural relations, that unite both the value-essences and objective values in order to construct a

systematic whole. In the case of value-essences it may be dais, that the totality of them coincides with the "Normativer Geist," while the "Objectiver Geist" embodies the whole objective values. It then becomes clear that Spranger distinguishes between a system or hierarchy of values, seen as standards and such a system as changed by influences of time and space. It can be said, in other words, that it is the difference between the system of ideal values and that of values as accepted here and now. The values and their hierarchy as accepted here and now are the standards of the society and since we live in the ideal values or value-essences are eternal and unchangeable. This brings us to the investigation of the hierarchy of values as presented in Spranger's work, *Types of Men*.

Spranger's hierarchy of value-essences. It should be remembered that Spranger's hierarchy of values represents the system of value-essences, of eternal and unchangeable norms, constituting a universal and necessary structure. It should also be borne in mind, that the normative mind is, as totality, such a structure of vahe-essences; therefore, the hierarchy of value-essences coincides with the normative mind. The objective mind is a real structure of objective values. Spranger's hierarchy of values can be found in Part III, Chapter IV, of *Types of Men*. Underlying

the discovery of this hierarchy are certain principles. But before quoting Spranger it has to be mentioned that Spranger distinguishes six classes of value: economic, theoretic, aesthetic, social, political and religious values.

The first principle for the establishment of a value-hierarchy can be found in the following words:

> The very definition of values points two facts: economic values are the lowest and religious values are the highest. For, economic values are values of utility. They always refer to another value which they serve, and they themselves have as much value as the former reflects back to them.[12]

He then mentions religious values:

> But religious values, in so far as we think of them as adequately experienced, have been defined from the outset in such a way that there can be no doubt of their highest value. For they are based on the fact that all other values of life are related to its general and total meaning. What is this meaning? It lies as we have seen in moral value, in the normativity of the soul and the fulfillment of its true value destimy. This highest value surmounts space, time and matter: it is blessedness of the entire existence, complete absorbtion in the world meaning mental fulfillment of duty.[13]

According to the view of Spranger, as mentioned in the beginning of this paragraph, a definition itself could not

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[12] Edward Spranger, _Types of Men_, _op_. _cit_., p. 282.

[13] _Ibid_., p. 283.

decide the hierarchical relation of two values. And Spranger's words can hardly have any other meaning than these: I experience religious values as being the most universal values, and economic values as the least universal. Therefore, the degree of universality determines the place of a value in the hierarchical system.

Spranger expresses himself in the following words: "The character of religious values has already implied a criterion of value-rank. It will depend on the degree in which space, time and matter are surpassed."[14] He then uses this principle by stating that both the aesthetic attitude and the theoretic attitude always refer to ideational space and time. Immediately following he remarks that they "must be ranked equally."[15] He does not use this principle in the classification of the remaining two value-classes, the political and social values. In this case his reasoning is as follows:

> Both the assertion of one's own value and devotion to other souls are necessary to the meaning of life. But the value of these two attitudes, which we have previously designated as more formal, depends also on the content to which they refer: altruism, love which remains within the limits of utilitarian values is the lowest; and the love which is directed to

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[14] *Ibid.*, p. 283.

[15] *Loc. cit.*

> another soul with all its life-possibilities is the highest.[16]

Spranger's position would have been stronger if he had just given his hierarchy of value-essences, without the above quoted principles that constitute nothing but a rationalization on the ground of a pre-conceived selection. According to these statements Spranger's value-classes may be arranged in the following way: economic values, theoretical values, aesthetical values (interchangeable with theoretical values), political values, social values, religious values. At this point Spranger is ready to construct his types.

II. SPRANGER'S TYPOLOGY

Spranger reminds us that,

> The basic types which we develop are not photographs of real life but are based upon an isolating and idealizing method. In this way eternal and ideal types are developed which are to be used as constructions or normal structures in connection with the phenomena of historical and social reality.[17]

This quotation shows the relation between Spranger's theory of value-essences and of the hierarchy of values and his doctrine of attitudes or types. Value-essences, in Spranger's typology, become the motive forces in the

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[16] Edward Spranger, _Types of Men_, _op. cit._, p. 284.

[17] _Ibid._, p. 104.

individual mental life. And each separate class of values creates, by dominating the other value-classes, a specific type of singular structure. The subjective mind, therefore, is always, to a certain extent, a shadow of the normative mind.

Discovery of the types. Spranger describes his discovery of the attitudes as follows:

> We find them by considering in each case one definite meaning and value-direction as the dominant one in the individual structure. And in view of our principle that in every mental phenomenon the totality of mind is somehow immanent; the other mental acts cannot be absent.[18]

He then uses an example to show how different types may be constructed by means of the one dominating value-class. This example is that of a gambler's die, of which in every instance one side with its figures must like uppermost. The others become subordinate, but remain in a fined relation to the uppermost one. The totality of the normative mind therefore is not complete, without the different typical structures. At the same time, not more than the six established value-classes are possible, therefore, only six types are possible. The normative mind as totality unites these different value-structures in a unique whole

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[18] Ibid., p. 104.

determines the structures of the individual types.

It becomes at once clear that Spranger's types, as Dilthey's, are "Ideal types," in so far as they also represent the universal and necessary in the individual. They are different from Dilthey's types, however, because of the fact that Dilthey finds his types in "immediate experience" enlightened by his "historical consciousness," while Spranger derives his types from the different value-classes. The method of discovering the types is described in the following words:

> In the following we shall start with each type from the central region and relate the five others to it. The direction of relation must appear to us *a priori* from the meaning of the basic sphere. For, the direction of mental acts and their interrelation to a total structure are within as *a priori*.[19]

There is a difficulty however. Spranger has given only a hierarchy of value-essences, that is, a one-dimensional series. Each value has but two relations: one to its predecessor and one to its successor, while in the structural types he gives the relations to all other value-classes. Such a structure could never be derived from a value-hierarchy. It appears therefore, that the construction of every individual type is purely a matter of "insight" in value-structures. This "insight" brings

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[19] *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Spranger to the following set of attitudes: the Theoretic Attitude, the Economic Attitude, the Aesthetic Attitude, the Social Attitude, the Political Attitude, and the Religious Attitude. As can be observed, this list differs from the hierarchy of value-essences, where economic values achieved the lowest place on the list. No reasons are given for this rearrangement, which is difficult to explain. The only possible explanation is based on Spranger's desire to refrain from giving this list of attitudes a progressive preference. It makes no difference whether theoretic or economic attitude comes first, because the one attitude is just as good as the other. This, will leave open the question why the rest of the two series are identical.

Description of the types.

a. The theoretic attitude. A person of this attitude is dominated by his desire for the actualization of theoretical and cognitive values. Characteristic is a trend toward objectivity. He wants to realize only the objective essence of the perceived phenomena. The state of mind of this man, the cognizing scientist is characterized by the absence of affectivity. General objective validity is his only aim.[20] The world in which he lives

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[20] Ibid., p. 111.

is a universe of general entities and objective relations. In the field of economics he is helpless, for that side of life is extremely unimportant to him. He cares little about aesthetic values. A mathematician, after hearing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, said: "Beautiful, but what is thus proved by it?" He is an outspoken individualist in the realm of social life. Only among people of his own type does he feel at home. He will take an active part in politics, spending his activity, mainly in criticisms, exhibiting a radical tendency. The positivistic trend is revealed by a denial of the existence of religious values. In the other hand, a man of this type may envisage the tendency toward the actualization of religious values as an attitude towards totality or towards the highest good. In the field of ethics he wants to elevate his behavior to the level of universal lawfulness. He attempts to act according to general principles in a consistent way.

2. The economic attitude. The economic man is he who in all the relations of life prefers utility above all other values. Cognition to him, is but a means to an end. The theorist will search for truth, so will the economist if the truth is useful. If truth may be harmful he will ask: What is the use? Spranger did not want to have any

value judgments obscure the objectivity of his descriptions, but this task seems beyond his ability when dealing with the economic type. His disgust shows up in every sentence he writes about the economic type but is very clear in the following sentence:

> This attitude gave birth to pragmatism which does not allow any special law of cognition, but calls whatever is biologically useful or harmful, true or false.[21]

This type shows only a mild interest in aesthetic values, since generally they serve no economic purpose. When, however, the beauty of an object increases its usefulness, he will accept it. He does not appreciate the streamlining of automobiles because of the beauty of their flowing lines but because it represents a saving in gasoline. He will be an egoist in his social contacts. Human beings are regarded simply as economic factors, producers or consumers. Society for him is the institution that has to safeguard the established economic relations. He adheres to the capitalistic system with is private property rights, and will freely express his admiration for competition.

God, to him is the source of all blessings and good things. He will accept the moral standards of his time in so far as they do not hinder his own goals. If they are

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[21] *Ibid.*, p. 133.

in his way, he will not openly condemn them, for such an action might be harmful, but he will reject them secretly. Some moral qualities are highly appreciated by this type as thrift, industry, and efficiency.[22] Whether one likes or dislikes both this type or Spranger's description of it must be said that he gives a lifelike picture of a capitalistic businessman.

3. The aesthetic type. Whereas the theoretic man emphasized the objective side of experience, the aesthetic man tends towards subjectivity. He considers himself an elected one, specially adapted to the reception of these subtle subjective colorings of experience. While it may be true that he lives very much in the sensual world; it is certain that he seldom contacts the world of movement and action. He does not act to change the world, he does not reflect profoundly on the world, he simply enjoys it. He rejects nor denies any values, he only drapes them with an artistic veil. Theoretic values are the only ones he shuns, for they are apt to transform the warm and living perceptual world into a cold and dead conceptual one.

There is a possibility, however, that the theoretical attitude may be found as a subordinate factor in the

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22 Ibid., p. 136.

aesthetic man. Spranger is thinking mainly of writers, who attempt to combine science and art. In that light we may appreciate his words:

> This goal in life is the presentation of life's eternal laws in his own concrete individuality and the formation of his personality so that the general radiates through the specific.[23]

Just as the theoretic type, so the aesthetic man is absolutely helpless in the economic field. He may recognize economic values, but as soon as it comes to the task of realizing them he is at a loss. He also experiences difficulties in the realm of social life. Since he is very much interested in his own subjectivity he does not have a genuine interest in other persons. Yet he is not a egoist, nor is he anti-social. Only when he is moved to help other individuals they become objects of aesthetic appreciation. He may, for instance, admire the beauty of a hungry face to such an extent that he would not want to relieve the condition of hunger. God, to him, is the source of beauty in form and line and color. God is the beautiful soul of the Universe. The aesthetic type will therefore tend towards pantheism. His ethical aim is contained in the words: Be yourself. He wants to enjoy himself and in doing so fulfill his ultimate destiny,

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[23] *Ibid.*, p. 152.

4. The social attitude. Different from the foregoing types is the social man, because of the fact that social behavior contains a unique act, namely, the value-affirming interest in another human being. When this tendency to evaluate the other higher than oneself begins to dominate we contact the social life-form. In its highest development the social quality is called "love," which is based on the firm conviction that all life is related and is perhaps essentially one. If love becomes thus all-inclusive it achieves a religious character. In contrast with the theoretic attitude, which makes people pround, the social attitude creates humbleness, characteristic of a great soul. There exists a similar contrast between the economic type and the social man. Self-preservation and self-sacrifice have opposite meanings and therefore he who loves, shuns the egoism of economic desires.[24]

Similarly a tension may be noted between the aesthetic and the social life-form. Love, in its purest form, does not contain that type of self-enjoyment which is so characteristic of the aestheticus. The social attitude is not directed towards "charm" and "beauty"; rather is it directed toward the "wholly unformed" soul because of its

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

value potentialities. In the field of politics, love and power are mutually exclusive, and therefore the social type is really in sympathy only with the patriarchal system.[25]

The social attitude in the field of religion represents the typical Christian point of view. The highest social categories of value are transferred to the relation between God and man. God becomes the father and all men his children, while among themselves they are as children of one father, brothers and sisters. The personal ethics of the social type is one of surrendering loyalty, of compassion that has become the permanent attitude of the soul.

5. The political attitude. The political life-form is characterized by the fact, that men of this class center their entire value-interest around the ideal of power. Power is thus the capacity and (usually) the will, to point one's own value-direction in the other, either as a permanent or a transitory motive.[26] The political type wishes to feel itself as a power, and, in so doing, is

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[25] Ibid., p. 177.

[26] Ibid., p. 189.

convinced of fulfilling the meaning of life. This experience of power, necessarily includes a feeling of being freed of constraints, for every limitation is concerned as an antagonistic force. Theoretical values, knowledge are conceived of as powers. He will use them to rise above other human beings. According to him, everyone has his price and he is interested in finding out the amount of that price. Objective truth is not a serviceable concept in his system, so the political leader will abolish it for himself at the same time letting his constituents believe in objective truth.

In the field of economics, there is but one interpretation, that is, all economic values are destined to serve the political achievement. In the same way aesthetical values enter into his system as important factors. The political man will surround himself with splendour as a symbol of power, and as an intelligent way of impressing the people. In such a type, the Christian God of love is wholly unacceptable. His God must be the ultimate of power and strength. God is uncontested ruler, and people exist only for the sake of the ruler. This attitude results in a dualistic ethics, one system for the rulers and another one for the people. Humility and meekness in people, haughtiness and hardness in the ruler, are the norms of ethical life.

6. The religious attitude. The religious life-form is, according to Spranger, the highest one, because it represents the dominance of the highest value-essence. This tendency is more than an idle word, it penetrates all other spheres of life to such an extent that every single experience is either positively or negatively related to life in its total value. That is, a person, in religious experience is confronted with the total meaning of life. This meaning of the world as a whole can only be experienced in the religious life-form, which contains and transcends all other forms. This total meaning of life and world may be expressed in one word: God. He is the objective principle that is thought of as the object of the highest personal value-experience.[27] This tendency to relate every value-species to God or to the total value of life, determines the entire value-structure of the religious life-form. Theoretical values become genuine sources of religious experience. Economic work is considered as religious service, and the goods for the preservation of life are viewed as the gifts of God. Aesthetical values, although of a subordinate type, unable to seize all of life's meaning, nevertheless are able to express beauty as part of the meaning of the world. In regard to the religious total evaluation, no sphere of life stands higher than the

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[27] *Ibid.*, p. 211.

social. But religious love as distinct from the social attitude includes also the religious interest in the soul as an individual expression of God.

After the completion of this short description of Spranger's typology the question arises: "Are his types the foundation or are they the result of his cultural scientific psychology?" The answer must be: they are both. For it is Spranger's understanding that reveals to him the lasting and essential in the passing individuals. It is his understanding that made him see and construct the foregoing types. At the other hand, the types are at the basis and beginning of his "understanding" psychology. For these types as "ideal constructs" are going to be the tools by means of which he will attempt to understand living beings. For the goal of Spranger's subjective psychology is insight in an individual's value-structure by means of these types. The next inquiry will lead us to a description of Spranger's method of understanding.

III. THE METHOD OF "UNDERSTANDING" AS DEVELOPED BY SPRANGER

The life-forms, as has been seen before, were both a result and basis of Spranger's understanding-psychology. Spranger's understanding as different from that of Dilthey

is defined in the following words:

> Understanding is the very complex theoretic act in which we comprehend in a way that claims to be objective, the inner meaningful content in character and action, in experience and behavior of a man or a group, or the meaning of a mental objectivation.[28]

It becomes immediately clear that understanding, according to Spranger, attempts to cover a wider field than that of Dilthey, who limited his method of understanding to immediate experience. Secondly, whereas Dilthey's understanding is a irrational, intuitional act, Spranger emphasizes the theoretic rationality of his method. There is a more complete definition of understanding in the following words:

> In cultural sciences, the characteristic method of knowing, that we call "understanding," ought not to be confused with sympathy or mental harmony. Understanding is not limited to the comprehension of personal totalities. Neither should "understanding" be identified with simply re-experiencing. "Understanding" in the most general sense means: comprehending meaningful mental relations in forms of objectively valid knowledge. We "understand" only meaningful structures. Understanding is different from causal explanation in terms of external succession. It seems as if "understanding" suffuses inner mental relations. It always grasps a meaning because it infuses the observers act with part of the observers own mental life.[29]

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[28] Edward Spranger, _Types of Men_, _op. cit._, p. 316.

[29] Edward Spranger, _Psychologie des Jugendalters_ Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1924), p. 3.

After this elaborate statement, several questions arise, as to the meaning of insight into a structure, of causal explanation and inner lawfulness. Before attempting to answer them, let us recall Dilthey's definition of understanding: "It is the process by means of which physical objects or bodily states or changes are comprehended as objectifications of mind."[30]

Dilthey therefore limits understanding to the sphere of experience. In understanding we recognize the state of mind of the other person that prompted him to act in such a way as if we were accomplishing that act ourselves. There is sympathetic identification in Dilthey's understanding. Not also in the case of Spranger, the observer remains on the outside. He is not so much looking at the purpose that was in the other's mind as in the values that could be realized by his actions.

Spranger's "understanding" attempts to give insight into mental structures, insight that shows how value-essences become the dominating motive forces in individual mental life. Spranger asserts that "understanding" discovers in an individual mental act, the working of a value-essence. "Understanding" is the process, by which we are able to conclude from individual mental acts to the

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[30] Chapter II, ff. 2.

value-structures, of which the individual acts are the constituting organic members. The kind of knowledge, given in "understanding," is asserted to be objective and generally valid. This claim thus is identical with Dilthey's claim that understanding by means of his types gives universal and necessary knowledge. But Spranger's "understanding" is a more rational process, it is not so much different from arriving at conclusions by way of analogy.

In section six it has been shown what Spranger means with the distinction between external succession and internal lawfulness. The main assumption is that "understanding" renders "structural insight," and this kind of knowledge claims to be objective, necessary and a priori. It may be asked: What does science already possess in the field of structural insights? The answer will be that physics already has this kind of knowledge to an increasing extent. Structural insights are of the mathematical kind. Physics possesses then in its theoretical branch, in the models invented in order to develop the strict orders of "lawfulness" in an insightful way. However, physics never confuses "ideal" structures as, for example, the mathematical pendulum and "real" structures as given by perceptual observation. Insightful knowledge into "ideal" structures is exhaustive, while, in the case of

"real" structures it still has to be shown whether, and how far, such structural insights give exhaustive pictures. It seems that psychology today is somewhat in the same condition as physics was in the time of Kepler. Psychology has to prove, which Spranger did not do, in every special case, whether the applications to of insightful propositions to mental life is allowable or not. Turning back to Spranger's concept of "understanding" it becomes clear that this mathematical type of knowledge was his ideal.

In psychology he advocates the use of structural-insights in order to comprehend the meaning or significance of mental life. But, it will be asked: Do Spranger's types render such an insightful knowledge in individual mental life? Every type is based on the supposition that one and only one class of values rules and dominates the entire mental life. In the case of mixed types another class of values may receive a relative dominance, and change the structure. But such a picture of an individual's life assumes an inner harmony that is very problematic in many cases. Admitted that a certain value-class dominates mental life, does this admittance imply that the entire structure of the mental life is determined by such a dominating value-species? Psychological investigation may come to the conclusion

that every individual, as object of knowledge, contains an "irrational" residue, withstanding every attempt of rational comprehension.

Finally, all these questions center around the main problem, that Spranger left unanswered: Does understanding eliminate the necessity of verification?

In the field of physics, the question may be asked: Does a model eliminate experimental verification? If we have worked out the formula of the "ideal" pendulum, do we need to verify a "real" pendulum? The answer to the first question will be "yes" and to the second question "no." However, in the history of physics we are told of experimental verification of the pendulum formula, a verification that necesitated several corrections. Therefore, the physicist will answer that the application of an "ideal" structure to a "real" structure invariably necessitates experimental verification. How, then, it is possible that Spranger never raises the question of empirical verification?

Pythagoras may serve as an example to clarify Spranger's position. This proposition can be regarded as "true," as soon as mathematical proof has given the necessary insight into the structure of this proposition ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$). In such a case no empirical verification

is necessary. But, it may be asked: (1) Has Spranger furnished such a "proof," and (2) did he limit his types entirely to the "ideal" realm? There is no evidence of any such proof; Spranger asserts that his types are "self-evident." But Spranger is not justified in asserting that his types, when applied to real individuals do not need objective verification. One example of the lack of self-evidence may suffice.

Spranger identifies the attitude of Christianity with the social type, and the social type is to be distinguished from the religious type, for religious values are higher than social values. Therefore, according to Spranger, the attitude of Christianity is not the genuine religious attitude. To quote from his work:

> But the ethical attitude of Christianity, love for one's neighbour and morality, are regarded as practically equal. To do something for another person is equivalent, according to this point of view, to moral action. . . . And in the content of this Christian value-system, self-denial, self-surrender and love are regarded as the main virtues.[31]

This viewpoint may be seriously contested. Many would point to these words of Jesus:

> And he answering said; Thou shalt love the Lord thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him; Thou has answered right.[32]

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[31] Edward Spranger, Types of Men, op. cit., p. 260.

[32] Luke 10:27-28.

To them, this means that, in the eyes of Jesus, Christian morality, Christian love, includes self-assertion. Self-surrender, in terms of Christian morality, does not include any destruction of personal values; on the contrary, it means the acceptance of the highest possible norm.

Therefore, Spranger is not justified in claiming the self-evidence of his types, since at least one of them obviously rests upon a misunderstanding of Christian morality. At this point, a final evaluation of Spranger's psychology can be attempted.

IV. FINAL EVALUATION OF SPRANGER'S PSYCHOLOGY

Up to this point the main criticism against Spranger's results has been the lack of verification, or the ommission of proof that his results are verifiable. Against this criticism, it may be maintained that such a method of verification is contained in Spranger's work. For, in the last pages of his work, Types of Men, Spranger writes on the discovery of mental laws:

> Thus the keynote of understanding lies in the value-laws of the mind. To understand means to enter into the special value-constellation of a mental content.[33]

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[33] Edward Spranger, Types of Men, op. cit., p. 369.

To say it in other words: the objectivity of knowledge rests on the fact that, in understanding, the subjective mind grasps the meaningful interconnections. Spranger elucidates once more what meaningful is:

> In a grammatical sentence, every word has one determined meaning, and the entire sentence has its definite meaning in the interconnection of a unit of knowledge or an announcement; also under the viewpoint of a theoretical value.[34]

It can be remarked, that to judge a sentence under the viewpoint of a theoretical value, is to pronounce a judgment about the truth or falsity of that proposition. Such a judgment is more than insight into, or understanding of the meaning. As Buehler remarks:

> To understand a sentence, means to know or to grasp what is intended, means to recognize its speech-purpose and does not mean: to know its truth-value.[35]

Therefore understanding does not render knowledge with a self-evident objective validity. The main objection against Spranger's psychology still stands: there is no objective verification. As final evaluation it has to be stated that Spranger's psychology does not give scientific hypothesis. But, in so far as no claims of objectivity are

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[34] Edward Spranger, Psychologie des Jugendalters, op. cit., p. 4.

[35] Karl Buehler, Die Krise der Psychologie, p. 133.

made, it has to be admitted that Spranger has given a wealth of valuable information. As such, Spranger's types possess their own value, as results of keen and artistic observation. This chapter on Spranger should not close without a remark by an American scientist:

> The essential and significant unities in personality cannot be determined by any cross-sectioning; they must be studied longitudinally as the life-process of the individual (*Wertrichtung*). It is on this point that Spranger makes his distinguished contribution regarding the various types of values which become integrating forces in personality.[36]

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[36] Gordon W. Allport, "The Study of Personality by the Intuitive Method," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 24:26, 1929-1930.[a]

[a] Allport proposes in this article to translate "*Verstehen*" as intuition, which example has not been followed because "understanding" comes closer to the original German meaning.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONCEPT OF UNDERSTANDING IN THE PSYCHOLOGY OF KARL JASPERS

The psychological system of Karl Jaspers presents an entirely different attitude from that of Dilthey. Whereas Dilthey lays the foundation stones of a magnificent structure, Jaspers limits himself to the necessary groundwork. Dilthey indicates only the outlines of his cultural sciences, while Jaspers completes but one branch of the field of psychology. Jaspers demonstrates the results of Dilthey's psychology when applied in the field of abnormal mental life. As an introduction to these studies, it will be necessary to relate some of his distinctions from his master.

Jaspers differentiates between psychiatry and psychopathology. According to him, this distinction is similar to that between pure and applied psychology. Psychiatry envisages as its primary goal the cure of mentally diseased people, their restoration to normal mental life. Psychopathology wants to know, wants to describe and analyze pathological mental life.[1] In the field of psychiatry the

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[1] Karl Jaspers, Allgemeine Psychopathologie (Third edition: Berlin: Julius Springer, 1923), p. 1.

knowledge of mental diseases is a means to an end, while, in the field of psychopathology knowledge is the only goal. If we compare Jaspers' definition with the accepted one in this country, it becomes obvious that his psychopathology is essentially identical with our Abnormal Psychology, since both are interested in a description and analysis of diseased mental life. There is one difference, however, between the structure of Jaspers' work and our textbooks on Abnormal Psychology. While our textbooks give a description of abnormalities in the light of a typical disease picture, Jaspers attempts to give an analysis according to the different methods that are used. These methods are: (1) statical understanding, (2) genetical understanding, and (3) causal explanation. The disease picture as a typical unity assumes but a very small place in Jaspers' work; and it appears that Jaspers is referring to these types, e.g., schizophrenia, neurasthenia, in order to conform to scientific use. Indeed, he is convinced that these disease types, borrowed from the field of physical medicine, do more harm than good in the analysis of pathological mental life. If, then, he does not intend to go into a complete description of the well-known disease types, it becomes important to know what he is going to do instead.

I. THE OBJECT OF PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

Jaspers reaffirms the close connection between psychology and psychopathology. They belong together, and they learn from each other. A psychopathologist has to study normal mental life, in order to know the aberrations in his pathological individuals. On the other hand, a psychologist ought to study psychopathology in order to know just where normal mental life ends and the abnormal begins.

In Diltheys' method of "understanding" Jaspers found a procedure that seemed to apply to his field. The more he studied Dilthey's works, the more he became convinced of having found the thing he was looking for. Notwithstanding his admiration for Dilthey's work, however, he soon discovered that an adaptation without revision was out of the question. The very problem that Dilthey left untouched, i.e., whether human beings are at all times free agents, became important in the field of abnormal mental life. In addition to this, an investigation of the method of understanding revealed that if it was going to be used, several important distinctions would have to be made within it. Finally he came to the conclusion that it would be impossible in this field to disregard somatic changes. Mental life, according to Jaspers, cannot be studied as a

separate entity. Body and soul belong together, form a unity that cannot be dissolved, not even in specialized actions. On the one side, bodily phenomena depend partially upon mental events, while even the highest mental processes are to a certain degree the results of physical causes. It is, however, never possible to speak of perfect one-to-one relation between the two that would enable us to consider every mental events as a counterpart of a bodily process. Therefore, the study of people who are suffering of mental diseases, being the object of psychopathology, will involve an investigation of both mental and bodily events. And in order to accomplish this task, we have to use the methods appropriate to the field of study and the required results.

With respect to the field of study, Jaspers distinguishes between objective and subjective symptoms of mental diseases. Objective symptoms he describes as those symptoms which may be objectively perceived, such as sensory observations, test results, and verbal statements.[2]

Subjective symptoms are feelings, experiences of fear, joy, hallucinations, phobias, and the like. This type is not open to objective observation. The examiner,

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[2] Karl Jaspers, "_Psychopathologie_," _Zeitschrift fur die gesammte Neurologie und Psychiatrie_, Vol. IX, 1918, p. 391.

rather, has to rely upon answers and voluntary expressions. Very often their existence is a matter of conjecture, especially when the examiner attempts to complete his personality picture of the patient from imcomplete reports. While the objective symptoms can be observed by the examiner and his consultants, the subjective symptoms have to be grasped in an entirely different way. Take, for instance, a person, who is afraid of being poisoned. In order to know the significance of this fear the examiner will have to adopt an attitude similar to that of his patient. That means that he will have to think as if he were in the center of his world, for most abnormal individuals will take such an attitude. He will have to reason from such an egocentric standpoint. In this case, any real or imagined attack on the person in question receives a greatly exaggerated importance. The examiner will have to think as if he were convinced that someone was out to poison him. If that were the case, he would avoid every bodily contact, suspect all the food and be constantly tense and on the alert for a suspected attack. Such a process clarifies the patient's situation, and demonstrates the relations between the different symptoms.

This "understanding" is achieved by thinking according to our patient's "pattern," by feeling as he would feel, by placing ourselves mentally in his position. It

necessitates a partial identification with him.

This understanding of subjective symptoms is accomplished by subjective or "understanding psychology," while objective psychology is limited to an investigation of the objective symptoms. This distinction of Jaspers[3] reminds us of Dilthey's distinction between natural scientific and cultural scientific psychology.

Jaspers' description of the aim of objective psychology as a comprehension and explanation, and that of subjective psychology is an understanding and description of mental life follows Dilthey's account. Jaspers too, accuses the objective psychology of a mechanistic attitude in the following words: "Objective psychology wants to work with objective data, and will therefore lead to a psychology without soul."[4]

Obviously Jaspers implies that subjective psychology, working with subjective data leads to a psychology with soul when he asserts: "Subjective psychology has as its object mental life itself. It inquires upon what conditions mental life depends, what results it has and what relations may be discovered in it."[5]

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[3] Karl Jaspers, "Psychopathologie," *op. cit.*, p. 691.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 393.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 393.

At this point the question may be asked: Is such a procedure "understanding" or is it "explanation"? Returning to our example of the man who was living in fear of being poisoned, it is Jaspers purpose to achieve understanding of this fear. Such an understanding will allow the examiner to say: "Yes, now I know what it really means in your life." The examiner attempts no explanation whatsoever. The only thing he wants to achieve is that partial identification with his ailing subject that enables him to make sense out of contrasting subjective and objective symptoms. Nevertheless, explanation may creep in and distort the examiner's picture of his patient. If the examiner is not satisfied with the understanding of partial symptoms, but attempts to build them up into a structure, embracing the entire personality, he has to supply links, which are matters of "experience," "intuition," or "conjecture." Such a conjecture was already implied in our example of the man fearing to be poisoned, in so far that we assumed the necessity of thinking in egocentric terms. On the other hand, this assumption was founded upon clinical evidence. But before entering more deeply into Jaspers' method of understanding, the distinction between statis and genetic understanding must be clarified.

Understanding is the method of subjective psychology, as opposed to explanation, which is the method of objective

psychology. Understanding opens up the depths of mental life that can otherwise only be symbolically represented as a structure in space and time. Such symbolic representation, however, has its value. Keeping in mind that such a picture is not the real thing, the mind could be represented as a river flowing from the past to the future. In order to know more about this river we could set out in two different ways. In the first place, it could be imagined that a glass screen were placed in the river from one shore to the other. Such a division would render insight into the different layers, would show the things floating in the stream. But it would have one disadvantage; such a crosscut of mental life could never give insight into the most important feature of it, its movement. This first picture of the mind could give nothing but a complete picture of all the contents of that moving stream, as if they were in rest. A second possibility arises; instead of cutting clear across the stream, we could place a glass screen lengthwise in it. Doing this, we would not obstruct the movement, but observe the stream flowing parallel to our screen. Such a picture is able to give us insight into the most important feature of mental life, the streaming and movement of it. In the first case we could achieve a view of the different layers of mental life, a comprehension of

everything that, on a certain moment, may be the object of observation. The first type of understanding is called "static" understanding; the second one, "genetic" understanding.

Jaspers defines the two types of understanding as follows:

> In static understanding we separate, we delimit and describe certain mental phenomena, which by these means become clearly represented and identified.
>
> In genetic understanding we become aware of the unrest of the soul; the action, the movement, and their sources.[6]
>
> Genetic understanding occurs when one places himself within somebody else's mental life. Doing so, he is able to understand genetically how one event develops out of a preceding one.[7]

Static understanding, therefore, means a description and an analysis of mometary consciousness, considered as being at rest. This description leads to a complete classification of momentary consciousness. Therefore, while static understand serves a different purpose than the analysis of association psychology it gives the "elements" of conscious life. Jaspers attempts to give a complete inventory of the contents of mental life in terms of conscious events.

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[6] Karl Jaspers, Allgemeine Psychopathologie, op. cit., p. 6.

[7] Ibid., p. 197.

Again it may be asked: Is such a procedure "understanding"? The answer must be in the affirmative; for in the light of individual experience, a description is given of the other's mental life. And the accumulated data given us a complete inventory of mental life in general. In such a procedure, there is no underlying theory that mental life is built up out of elements, neither is it assumed that the totality of mental life is but a reflection of the outside world. Mental life simply is given as it appears to the observer. Its isolated states and processes are labeled and classified in order to enable us to communicate about individual minds. But since mental life is not statis, but is a system of dynamic and moving processes and events relieving one another, subjective psychology attempts to understand this variegated unity in its real being. Such an attempt is an approach to the reality of mental life, it is an answer to the "why," that always follows the insight into a causal relation. Going back to the man with his fear of being poisoned, it is hard to find a cause, as conceived by the physical sciences for such an event. For an objective symptom, e.g., epileptic convulsions, a cause may be found, perhaps in a brain lesion. Still in such a case the psychologist will often ask "why," even if such a "why" is never forthcoming. In a similar way a "cause" may be found, for such a fear.

Take, for example, the case of a patient who read in a book that Lorenzo di Medici poisoned one of his adversaries. From that very day dates his "fear" of being poisoned. Very definitely a psychologist is not satisfied with this "cause." And this observation brings us to the heart of the question: What really is a causal relation? We observe the temporal sequence of two events over and over again, until finally we arrive at the conclusion that since the one event always procedes the other it therefore, is the cause of the other.

But in the science of mental life such an external observation does not satisfy. The temporal succession of "reading a book" and "acquiring a fear complex" even if it were repeated numerous times would not give us satisfactory insight. Such a procedure is not only unsatisfactory, it is entirely unnecessary. In mental life we "experience" the birth and development of separate events in the totality of mental life. Returning the patient with a fear complex, if we put ourselves in his position, we realize that such a conviction must have a deeper basis, must arise on the foundation of a distrust of his environment. Just at this point the distinction between "explanation" and "understanding" must be drawn very sharply, for the procedure of "understanding" might easily lead to "explanation."

On the basis of the hypothesis that such a distrust of the environment roots in an "inferiority feeling," an "understanding" of his personality structure could be reached that really only is an explanation. For such an "inferiority feeling," unless it is experienced by the patient, is a purely hypothetical assumption. Pure understanding ought to avoid all such hypothetical prejudices. But one asks: how is this possible? Not only is understanding endangered by hypothetical assumptions, a very real danger is still closer at hand. Understanding is the grasping of active mental processes, but the verbal expressions of such a knowledge, when achieved, is highly difficult. And every expression of understanding tends to pin it down into propositions that have a general meaning, and hence, tends to generalize that which is singular and individual. This danger, however, is unavoidable if we want to communicate our findings to others. Theoretically, understanding reveals the processes going on in the human mind, and, therefore, gives insight into the real causes of mental events.

Jaspers says, "Genetic understanding gives us the real causes, and not the externally observed temporal sequences".[8] Genetic understanding, he holds, is its own evidence. It is something ultimate. This statement follows

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 29f.

naturally from his conception of "understanding" and its relation to explanation, since understanding brings us in contact with mental reality, reveals the efficient causes of human actions. Explanation on the contrary, gives nothing but phenomenal causes. An external succession may be experienced several times, but an internal causal relation occurs only once, can never be repeated. Therefore, according to Jaspers, a verification of internal cause by mean of repeated observation is not possible. This statement is indeed strange, for my understanding of a causal relation in the patient's mind is already a repetition of the original process; for my "understanding" is correct, I have already repeated it. Besides, even if my "understanding" is unrepeatable, my very attempt at communication assumes the possibility of a repeatable experience. Furthermore, as soon as I express the result of my understanding in words, that proposition embodying it represents a single datum. Nobody is forced to accept the truth of it on my assertion that it is the result of genetic understanding. Before considering this claim further, let us consider Jaspers' distinction between "genetic understanding proper" and "rational understanding," since it has immediate bearing on the problem.

By "rational understanding" Jaspers means the comprehension of rational contents, the grasping of the meaning

of a sentence or proposition. But understanding proper is the grasping of the origin of thought contents in moods, desires and attitudes of the thinking person. "Rational understanding" is also the grasping of the meaning of written words and symbols, without regard to the person who wrote them. "Understanding proper" means to re-experience the intelligible continuity in another mind. Such a process requires its own attitude. People who live in a self-centered life find it difficult to identify themselves with another person to sufficiently enable his experiences to become their own. The procedure of understanding on itself is not completely rational; it means a re-experiencing, not only of the contents of thinking, but also of emotions and anxieties in their multiple intertwinements. According to Jaspers this process is self-evident. In other words, no repeated observation is necessary, in order to establish the truth of understanding.

Jaspers arrives at this conclusion in the following way: If we "understand" the development of a certain mental state, that understanding or "insight" dawns upon us quite suddenly. And if we possess such an understanding, we are also convinced of its truth. It really is something final, it carries the power of conviction. Therefore, it needs no proof by means of repeated experiences.

To use Jaspers' own words:

> The evidence of genetic understanding is something final, it has the power of conviction in itself, and the acknowledgement of this evidence is the presupposition of understanding psychology.[9]

It might be said that Jaspers means only that this is a legitimate way of making hypotheses about the inner life of others as revealed by conduct. But one should not forget that Jaspers was a student of Dilthey, and Dilthey had already claimed this self-evidence for his understanding. And Dilthey opposed his type of psychology to the natural sciences, on the ground that his psychology did not need hypotheses, but arrived at self-evident truths. Such truth is available, he held, of the fact that in understanding real causality and mental life itself is revealed.

What Jaspers really means is that in understanding the real connection between mental events is revealed. If that is the case, then, of course, Jaspers is correct, and error is excluded. It seems, however, that he is confusing the peculiar experience of certainty that accompanies the process of understanding with objective evidence. For the fact that one person is convinced of a certain truth does not force others to accept it as a truth. Still Jaspers is more justified in his statement than it might seem.

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9 *Ibid.*, p. 199.

When I understand the fear of someone, in the intertwining of past experiences, emotions, and attitudes, I am experiencing a singular fact. No further repetition of this experience were it possible will make the truth of my understanding more true. Such is not possible as an individual experience of an individual mental process cannot be repeated. What we really repeat is our own experience of that understanding. When understanding dawns upon us we receive it, so to speak, as a revelation, and doubt is excluded. While this might be quite true, it still would force nobody to accept my personal understanding as final. Besides, how do I know when my comprehension of a certain mental act is "understanding" and therefore self-evident, and when it is just a mistake? What is the criterion by which we are able to distinguish between "understanding" and "mistaken interpretation." Is there not also the danger that a beginner in psychiatry, not as experienced as Jaspers, might use the method of understanding, or at least think that he is using it, and in that way arrive at erroneous and dangerous results? Whatever be our answer to this question, let it be as it is, understanding as a method in psychology turns out to be a subtle and far reaching process. Naturally such a method cannot cover the entire field of mental science. Jaspers is aware of this

and admits that understanding has some limitations. One of these limitations is in the field of organic diseases. It is impossible, for instance, to experience the result of a brain tumor. Another lies in the fact that in abnormal personalities we often find changes, whether organic or not, that cannot be understood. Such a change is a sudden loss of memory. This we could never "understand" in the sense of Jaspers. Another limitation is the fact that some people have special abilities, certain dispositions, temperaments. Jaspers calls these limits of the understanding the foundations and also the limits of mental life. In other words, in this field we may expect no answer to our "why."[10]

There is still another set of limitations arising out of the fact that some mental events come into being without any conceivable connection with previous experiences as far as is known. We may be walking along the road, and suddenly one of us says, "Mr. D is a strange man." How did he happen to think of Mr. D just at that moment? We do not know the answer. These limitations of the understanding have an important bearing on psychopathology, and a consideration of this fact brings us to the realization that

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[10] Karl Jaspers, Allegemeine Psychopathology, op. cit., p. 202.

"understanding" is not always able to discover efficient causes in mental life. The field of possible understanding seems to be more limited in psychopathology than in the psychology of normal people. Since mental abnormalities, as will be seen later, always involve an impartment of the personality, it may be stated here that understanding reaches only as far as the personality has not been harmed. A second conclusion may be drawn from Jaspers' realization of the limitations of understanding, that the demarcation line between organic and functional psychoses must be drawn more sharply than has been done before. For in cases of organic psychoses, we know beforehand that the impaired structure and function of the central nervous system will form a blind wall against which all our understanding will be fruitless. But in functional diseases, as long as no underlying pathology is discovered, we have a field that, to a great extent, is open to understanding. As a result of the foregoing considerations Jaspers divides the field of psychopathology into the following subdivisions:

1. Phenomenology: this new name Jaspers uses to signify the results of statis understanding. Phenomenology therefore will contain a description of the subjective symptoms of pathological mental life. Here we will encounter dreams, phobias, obsessions, delusions, and hallucinations.

2. The field of causal sequences: this comprises all pathological changes in mental life that are due to physical or physiological causes. All changes that have an underlying pathological anatomy, such as paresis and the psychoses resulting from brain injuries.

3. The field of genetic understanding: this is the realm of subjective psychology, containing all aberrations of mental life that are open to pure understanding. Jaspers offers here an exceptionally clear description of functional psychoses. Keeping in mind that even in the case of functional psychoses, such as schizophrenia, a vast field, closed to understanding, is encountered, his distinctions give a better insight in the realm of mental diseases than heretofore was possible.

In this division of Jaspers, however, one field, that of objective symptoms, has been left out. In order to complete his work, Jaspers inserts a special chapter on objective symptoms. Unfortunately while necessary for a complete picture of pathological mental life, this chapter really does not fit in with his theory; for objective symptoms find no place in either objective or subjective psychology. Since Jaspers divided the field of psychological investigation into subjective and objective psychology, objective symptoms and their investigation seem to fall

outside the field of psychology in so far as these objective symptoms have no immediate phenomenal or efficient cause. For objective symptoms, in so far as they are neither open to static or to genetic understanding, should come in the field of causal explanation, and belong to the realm of objective psychology. This implies that the entire field of organic psychoses, plus a great part of the realm of psycho-neuroses is left to objective psychology, a discipline that has been accused of falsifying mental life because of its mechanistic tendency. Dilthey never considered abnormal mental life, but we can be sure that he would not agree with Jaspers' limitation. They agree that a psychology attempting to build up mental life out of stomic sensations is inacceptable. They also agree that the mind cannot be considered as a phenomenal structure, and finally they agree that no method arriving at causal relations by means of induction is eligible. Understanding psychology alone arrives at an insight into the reality of mental life. Jaspers and Dilthey disagree, however, on the status of natural scientific psychology. Dilthey, first maintaining that atomic psychology is inadequate, later on reserves a place for it as a complementary discipline. Jaspers reserves a definite field for each type, indicating the borderlines. The difference of these two viewpoints, fortunately, is not as large as

it might seem, since they agree that associationistic psychology never will be able to give a satisfactory account of mental life, and should be replaced by the only true type of mental science. While Dilthey envisages the probability of the latter covering the entire field of investigation, Jaspers realizes and points out some definite limitations that always will obstruct the further pentration of research.

The result of Jaspers' distinction is that only part of the field of functional psychoses and secondary investigations in organic disorders are open to his subjective psychology. A great amount of material shows that mental processes in abnormal mental life are to be considered as either the direct or indirect result of physical and physiological causes. Jaspers conception really does not involve a radical change in the field of psychopathology. The difference is more in the approach than in anything else. But even in the approach, Jaspers' method is not so different from that of abnormal and clinical psychologists in this country. The greatest difference appears when we attempt to realize the significance of his psychology in the field of normal mental life. For here the field of direct or distant physical and physiological causes seems to be much more limited. Jaspers considers

the field of innate abilities and faculties closed to subjective psychology. He also affirms that another realm of psychological investigation, that of bodily actions, is not open to his type of psychology without a conscious component that is a direct result of physical or physciological stimuli. Within this field he enumerates the knee-jerk reflex. This field, he contends, belongs to physiology.[11] To a certain degree this view again reverts to Dilthey. For his conclusion is reached in the following steps:

Subjective psychology attempts to grasp mental life in its reality, attempts to understand the dynamic activity of the stream of mental life.

Every human action that has a conscious component, therefore, is open to understanding.

Every human action that has no conscious component and of which we can assume that such a component was never present, or cannot even be presupposed, is not open to understanding. Therefore, such an action falls outside the field of psychology.

In this argument Jaspers identifies psychology with subjective psychology. However, it is safe to assume that the main importance of Jaspers' method will be in the field of clinical and abnormal psychology. Since his book was

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[11] Karl Jaspers, "<u>Psychopathologie</u>," <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 391.

written for the field of abnormal psychology, we are not justified in blaming Jaspers for his failure to unite general and clinical psychology.

After the investigation of his theoretical principles it becomes important to inquire into the application of his "understanding." In other words, we want to know just how Jaspers goes about his investigations. In order to know how his method is applied to actual case problems we have to know more about the object of his practical investigation. In general, he indicates that psychology is the investigation of mental life, which might be supposed to mean an investigation of mental life in general. Such, however, is not Jaspers' intention. He states quite clearly that he attempts to understand human personalities. It is true that mental life is given to us only in individuals, but it makes a great difference whether we regard these individuals as mere numbers, representatives of typical cases, or whether we regard these human individuals as the very center and final goal of our investigation. Since the latter is his intention, his psychology will never take the place of general psychology. For Jaspers, the immediate goal has been reached when one human individuals is completely understood. In this relation Jaspers uses quite frequently the word "personality"

and we may ask what he really means by this more or less ambiguous term. His answer is to be found in the following statement: "Personality is the individually different totality of the intelligible relations (verständliche Zusammenhänge) of the mental life."[12]

By "intelligible relations" Jaspers means those relations between mental events that are open to understanding. It is thus clear he does not consider the psychophysical foundation of mental life as belonging to the personality. Jaspers' personality is not psychophysical neutral, it is essentially mental in character.[13]

One condition has to be fulfilled in order that an individuality may be considered as a personality, the presence of self-consciousness. Jaspers distinguishes between Ego-consciousness and Personality-consciousness. Ego-consciousness is the always present experience of being an individual and different from other egos.

Personality-consciousness involves more than this, it means the consciousness of being a totality, of being both the center and the totality of all mental activities. Both ego-consciousness and personality-consciousness

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[12] Karl Jaspers, Allegemeine Psychopathologie, op. cit., p. 342.

[13] Loc. cit.

together form the self-consciousness and self-direction that are the real characteristics of a human personality.[14] The personality is constituted by the totality of psychic events, members of an individual and intelligible structure, that are experienced by a self-conscious individuality.[15]

However, this is not Jasper's complete definition of personality, for we always regard the different emotions, reactions, actions, and the like, as expressions of certain abilities; and those abilities, innate or acquired, belong also to personality. As has been shown on page 115 Jaspers regards these inherited abilities as limits upon the understanding. Strictly speaking, therefore, they fall outside the field of psychology. As a result of this view point, Jaspers must consider the personality in its totality as being beyond the limits of understanding. We may be able to understand another individual to a great extent. A well trained psychologist can understand still better, but even the best will not be able to extend his investigation into every corner of the personality. Something always escapes our most profound understanding. Keeping this in mind we realize that Jaspers' definition of personality is twofold. Personality involves primarily the individual's mental life,

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[14] _Ibid._, p. 342.

[15] _Ibid._, p. 343.

and his consciousness of being a creative agent. This is personality as far as it is open to understanding. But it involves also the limitations of understanding that have to be accepted in thought. This set of limitations exists in every normal individual. In the abnormal mind, it is greatly enlarged, and includes those symptoms that appear without any known connection with the rest of his mental life. In the case of organic psychoses understanding is limited to an even greater extent by the presence of a pathological anatomy.

Since Jaspers envisages the human personality as the immediate goal of psychological investigation we realize that he is primarily interested in human individuals. It has now become clear what he means by the limitations of understanding. We are able to understand that subject A experiences joy or sorrow when listening to a cantata, but when we notice individual differences we arrive at a certain point where our understanding fails to penetrate. Every such point, where understanding ends, forms a starting point for causal explanation. In the case of musical appreciation, for instance, according to Jaspers we may continue in two directions. First, we may investigate whether environmental influences have been active in such a way as to increase his ability or taste for musical

sensations. Second, we may investigate possible physiological or anatomic structures, accounting for such a diversion of musical ability. These two types of investigation, according to Jaspers, fall outside the field of psychology proper, or of subjective psychology, since they are instances of the search for "causal" explanation. Sometimes it will happen that a certain event cannot be understood. Take for instance the case of a mathematician attempting to solve a problem. He has been working all night, without results, and finally falls asleep. On awakening the next morning he suddenly realizes that he has found the solution. This cannot be understood, and must be considered as one of the limits of understanding. But it can also be considered otherwise. The person in question may be able to trace this thoughts backwards, and arrive at the insight that he really had the solution already on the night before. It is also possible that he does not know how he happened to find it. In this case it might be supposed that thinking has been going on while the person was not aware of it. Theoretically, such a concept is self-contradictory, but the "unconscious" has become so prominent in the field of psychopathology that Jaspers feels obliged to include it in his considerations. He distinguishes between a realm that by definition must be

considered as falling outside of consciousness, and one that, while normally remaining unconscious, can be brought into it again. This latter field is not of immediate importance, but the former is, since in that case a hypothesis will have to replace understanding. We frequently encounter instances of this type in the field of psychopathology. Take, for instance, those hysterical cases where the patients report an insensibility of the hand. There is no possibility of an underlying pathological anatomy, but the insensibility of the hand corresponds with the anatomical conception of the patient, who considers his hand as an organic unity. Such a symptom is explained *as if* the person's conception influences his physical condition, but evidence for this explanation could never be obtained. Such a hypothetical understanding must always remain doubtful in science although it may form a useful concept in the theraphy of such individuals.[16]

Let us now consider the actual procedure of Jaspers' understanding. We may take, for instance, the words spoken by Martin Luther at the Diet of Worms, "Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me! Amen!" This sentence, expressed in audible sounds, really is the outcome of a long mental process. In order to "understand" Luther's

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16 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

experience of that action, in Jaspers' usage, an investigation will have to be made of his life history in order to pave the way for our necessary partial identification. We have to go into the crisis in his life that lead to his break with Rome. We then have to arrive at a clear picture of the conditions of the Roman Church during his time. Finally we have to know why he went to Worms, and what happened on the previous days. After all this material has been collected we are able to understand his words. We will be able to put ourselves in his place, to feel as he would think. In short, this preliminary investigation makes possible that partial identification which is necessary for our understanding. On the basis of it, I experience the growing necessity of uttering these historical words. That is understanding.

It may be asked in what respects such a procedure differs from the method of explanatory psychology. First of all, the emphasis is different. These same words may be approached from different angles. It could be conceived that, at a certain time in history, a movement began that split the Roman Church into two hostile camps. Luther's words may be considered as a typical expression of this movement. Approaching the problem in this way, the human element is left out for all practical purposes.

Another psychologist may approach this problem from a different angle. He may consider Luther as a product of his environment, leading necessarily to his break with the Roman Church. What happened in this historical movement was that the stimulus of Charles V's words were the cause of his response as expressed in his well known declaration.

In the approach of Jaspers, the entire situation has undergone a profound change. Environment, and all other factors are considered to be secondary, or contributing, but the real center of the entire picture if Martin Luther. The psychologist proper, according to Jaspers, attempts to identify himself with Luther until he imagines himself standing in front of all those high officials. He feels Luther's indignation growing and suddenly, with a burst, the insight comes into being. The psychologist how has re-experienced the birth and growth of Luther's experiences that lead to his historical words. This means a fundamentally new approach. For, in order to "understand" Luther's words, I not only include in my consideration the rational motives for their expression, but also every possible type of experience that might have influenced the speaker. And while considering their influence I do not express them in rational propositions, but simply experience their force and activity. Such a viewpoint of history in

general makes a great difference with regard to my concept of these words. Instead of being a wave on the ocean of historical development, the human personality becomes the very heart of all history.[17]

A similar approach is used in the field of psychopathology. The medical investigator, too, frequently, considers his patients as either typical or atypical examples of certain established disease types. The natural scientific psychologist considers a human being as a mere reacting organism, that, by means of interaction between itself, and its environment has built up a set of conditioned responses that have to be considered as abnormal.

The subjective psychopathologist is looking at a human being whose mental life is in a diseased condition. This individual is not primarily a representative of a certain disease-type. Neither is he a conditioned organism. This individual is not a totality of typical symptoms, he is a human personality, the carrier of his own individual mental structure, and the center of direction of his own activities. While considering the human personality, in the first place, as an individuality, Jaspers is not blind to the fact that man is a social being. He expresses this connection very strongly in the following words:

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[17] Karl Jaspers, <u>Psychopathologie</u>, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., Vol. 9, p. 391.

> While man receives his bodily and mental abilities by means of heredity, he acquires his actual mental life only through tradition, that is transmitted by means of his social environment.[18]

Therefore, according to Jaspers, the fundamental situation of human beings is to be an individuality confronted by a complex society. Such a viewpoint has its consequences for his consideration of pathological cases. In this country, many psychologists have accepted the viewpoint that there is a high correlation between the degree of abnormality and that of social maladjustment. Therefore, in order to make a thoroughgoing diagnosis of an abnormal personality, these psychologists will investigate the degree of social maladjustment in the first place. This procedure has now become generally adopted. But Jaspers, who fixes his attention primarily on the individual, and considers society as being composed of other individuals opposed to the person in question, never arrives at the concept of social adaptation. Therefore, his understanding of an individual becomes automatically limited to an understanding of the individual as a separate being. American clinical psychologists will arrive at a more complete understanding of the individual by regarding him primiarly as a member of society. This disadvantage of Jaspers' attitude is to a great extent eliminated by the new insights in pathological mental

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[18] Karl Jaspers, _Allgemeine Psychopathologie_, _op. cit._, p. 401.

life that are the results of his investigations. These practical results of Jaspers' subjective psychology show that the differences between American abnormal psychologists and Jaspers is not so great as would follow from this theoretical standpoint.

Jaspers divides mental diseases into two great groups:

1. Diseases that have a definite starting point, remain incurable, and lead to a lasting deterioration of at least one side of the personality. In this class we find all the typical forms of schizophrenia, as: (a) hebephrenia, characterized by a silliness of behavior, and other symptoms; (b) catatonia, cases of characteristic excitement and stupor; (c) paranoid dementia praecox, with a special development of delusions; (d) paraphrenia with perfectly systematized delusions. This classification is very similar to Kraepelin's clinical forms of dementia praecox.

2. The passing curable phases. We find in this group: (a) manic-depressive psychosis; (b) neuroses; (c) psychopathic personality.

This classification of mental diseases cannot be called complete. We find lacking here all psychoses due to breain or nervous diseases, alcoholic psychoses, psychoses due to drugs and other exogenous toxins, and psychoses associated with other somatic diseases. Jaspers treats

these different types in his chapter on mental diseases that have to be causally explained.

Among these different disease types, there is one, the neuroses, that receives a new treatment in Jaspers' work, and gives an insight into the results of his subjective psychology. He observes first that, especially in neuroses, we discover that the abnormal mental condition of the patient fulfil a certain purpose in his life. In this case we find that all the symptoms more or less are subordinated to this one leading purpose. These people strive instinctively to fulfill a certain wish, and the neurosis is represented by its fulfillment.

In order to make clear the meaning of Jaspers, we cite a case from the files of Fritz Künkel.[19] A girl of fourteen months is brought to the clinic. She is normally developed, but is entered as a clinical case because of the fact that for three days she has refused food. By taking the case history, it develops that the child has never been a good eater, that she refused some types of food, that is, vegetables. No organic disease of the digestive tract was apparent. However, suddenly it refused to eat entirely. The child started to cry as soon as food

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[19] Fritz Künkel, _Neurasthenie und Hysteria_, _Handbuch der Indwidualpsychologie_ (E. Wexberg: Munchen J. F. Bergman, 1926).

was offered, and neither strong nor soft measures could entice her to eat. Physical examination turned out to be entirely negative. The child entered the hospital, and, in the presence of other children, soon was eating normally. Brought back to the mother, she was returned the next day, with the same complaint. When the mother brought the child in she enjoyed seeing the nurse again, and, in the presence of the mother started to eat. This time the mother was investigated. It turned out that she had embarked upon a detailed training program which required that the child be forced to do anything the mother wanted her to do. When the child was not ready to obey, the mother was to develop a tantrum. Finally, she remembered that once, when the difficulties of feeding became unbearable she had lost her bearing entirely. She had forcibly opened the baby's mouth, and stuffed it with food. Here we have a typical case in outline in which two problems are presented to the psychologist: (1) the attitude of the mother; and (2) the child's answer.

Jaspers wants to "understand" these attitudes. Leaving the first problem alone we will follow him in the second one. Identifying ourselves with the baby, we know at once its difficult position. Its entire life is regulated by a tyrannical mother. Instead of freedom to move about,

to have some fun , it is forced to please mother, and is not always ready to do so. What happens is this: the baby will attempt to regain its freedom, it will fight back. But, there is very little a baby can do against a mother. Mother is big, she is little; mother has many resources, she has none. This fight goes on until one day, by accident, the baby discovers the weak point in mother's armament. Mother loses her control, and soon the baby knows that, in refusing food, she is able to render mother helpless. Therefore this single means to resist mother's tyranny is eagerly adopted. In this case, the method of Jaspers has several advantages over o her methods:

1. The baby's behavior has become intelligible by the discovery of its purpose.

2. This insight shows the best way to cure the baby's behavior. No long training of the baby is necessary; the mother has to change herself.

It has become clear that there was an intelligible relation between the experienced situation and the responsive behavior. This relation between purpose and means is open to understanding. The relation, discovered or understood by Jaspers, is not one between cause and effect in the phenomenal sense, but is rather that of purpose and fulfillment in the child's mind. This experience, embedded in a cluster of rational, emotional and volitionary

experiences, guides the child's behavior, remains present in some form during its actions. This is not a stimulus-response situation. The child is not reacting in a mechanical sense. No external necessity is present in its answer to the mother's attitude; the necessity is present in its answer to the mother's attitude; the necessity is an inner one wherein real efficiency replaces the external, phenomenal causality. By assuming, on clinical evidence, that the human personality is a free agent, we are able to understand why a certain individuality selected just those means when he was faced by a meaningful situation. Even if some of Jaspers' statements cannot be accepted, his main method, that of understanding, opens an entirely new and fruitful approach to the field of clinical and abnormal psychology.

CHAPTER V

THE VALUE OF "UNDERSTANDING" FOR SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY

The method of understanding was first introduced by Dilthey, who pointed out the difference between "understanding" and "explanation." While agreeing with James and Bergson that conscious life should be considered as a continuously changing stream, he conceived the totality of mental life primarily as a structure.

Jaspers sought the main importance of "understanding" in the field of abnormal psychology. His work contained not only methodological principles, but also an outline of psychopathology built upon these principles. Finally, he predicted the contribution this new type of psychology could make in the field of normal mental life.

The question now to be asked is: Just what contributions can be expected of "understanding" psychology in the field of contemporary scientific psychology? In order to answer it, two things have to become clear: (1) the variety of meanings of the concept of understanding; and (2) the one underlying, fundamental meaning of understanding.

I. ROSSENSTEIN'S TABLE OF THE CONCEPT OF UNDERSTANDING

Meaning- or sentence understanding and psychological understanding. Sentence understanding falls outside the field of psychology in the sense of Dilthey and Jaspers. The understanding of a sentence is simply the grasping of the meaning of a combination of words without regard to the man who pronounced them. Jaspers referred to this distinction as the difference between "rational understanding" and "understanding proper." Psychological understanding or understanding proper is the method that gives insight into mental life. It is a first hand knowledge of mental life, whereas, rational understanding can be considered as giving only indirect access to mental life. Understanding proper is generally opposed to meaning-understanding as intuitive knowledge is opposed to rational knowledge. Understanding, in the psychological sense, is the process that supposedly gives immediate self-evident knowledge on the grounds of a real or ideal identity of subject and object.

Understanding in the original sense and interpretation by means of analogy. When meaning-understanding was opposed to psychological understanding, the latter was already taken in the narrower sense of understanding proper.

Psychological understanding in the sense of Edward Spranger is a method attempting to understand mental life by means of a rational process. Spranger defines understanding as the interpretation of meaningful actions. Any action attempting to realize a value, is a meaningful action. Understanding such an action means to know what value was intended to be realized in that action.

The difference between understanding in the sense of Dilthey and Jaspers on the one hand and Spranger on the other hand is very instructive. Dilthey and Jaspers consider a particular action as an attempt to satisfy a purpose in the service of the individual. Spranger attempts to go beyond this, by stating that such a purpose implies a value for the individual. But according to Spranger, such a subjective value is but the shadow of an objective value existing outside the realm of individual mental life. The amount of real and objective value-essences determines the amount of possible individual values. Therefore, Spranger is more interested in these objective values and potential purposes, than in individual actions. Furthermore, Spranger's system of value essences is an objective, rational system, and the knowledge of all possible individual purposes or motives loses the irrational character of understanding in the sense of Dilthey and Jaspers.

There is, however, a great deal of agreement. While Spranger emphasizes the fact that he arrives at his understanding by means of analogy, a form of judgment denied by Jaspers and Dilthey, the difference in reality is less than this theoretical distinction would indicate. The element of intuition in Jaspers' understanding does not always imply the absence of such a judgment by analogy. Often this judgment by analogy is such a natural one that the observer does not become conscious of it.

For instance, I may think that I arrive at an understanding of an attorney's tactics suddenly and immediately, but grasping his viewpoint implies a partial identification, and this in turn comes very close to a judgment by analogy. The difference is one of emphasis: in Spranger's case it is on the logical and rational form, while in that of Dilthey and Jaspers it is on the psychological process.

Distinction between self understanding and the understanding of others. This scheme brings out another important feature of understanding, the distinction between: (1) understanding ourselves, and (2) understanding others.

Some will think that everyone has an immediate and self-evident understanding of himself, but subjective psychology reveals that such a view is not correct. Dilthey has shown that self-understanding in immediate experience

and the understanding of other persons depend on each other to the extent that an increase in one will increase the other, whereas a decrease will induce the reverse process. Dilthey's concept of understanding is difficult to classify in Rossenstein's table: it may be stated that his understanding covers both the self-understanding, and that of others. The contention that Dilthey's understanding comprises these two concepts rests mainly on the fact that Dilthey did not give a clearcut well-defined concept of it. His definition therefore fits in with genetic understanding, both as self-understanding and understanding others.

Distinction between primary and secondary understanding. Since statical understanding has been defined as an understanding of momentary consciousness as a whole (Chapter III, section 4) this type of understanding will consider such problems as the essential nature of fear, sympathy, and envy. But such a study would not be complete without an investigation into the causes of such contents of consciousness, that is, genetical understanding; nevertheless, such a static understanding is extremely valuable as preliminary to psychological investigations.

This static understanding is distinguished according to the means that are employed into primary and secondary types. The secondary types are the generally accepted forms

of understanding. A few examples may clarify this: we understand the crying of a child after his toy has been taken away, by putting ourselves in the child's place; we understand the anger of a teacher by interpreting the movements of his body, his facial expression, and the like. Such understanding may be called indirect understanding, that is, understanding by means of physical objects and bodily movements.

Others, and Rossenstein considers Max Scheler among them, conceive of understanding as an immediate irrational insight into the other's mental life. Such an understanding may be called "intuition" or "telepathy." It seems dangerous to assume such an extra-sensory perception of the other's mind before empirical investigation has given confirmation. But it is very dubious whether Scheler really meant such an irrational understanding. Some quotations will shows, at least, that Scheler's concept of understanding is open to another interpretation. There is, however, a more important reason for bringing Scheler's concept of understanding into a discussion of the type founded by Jaspers. More clearly than anyone else, he brings out the essence of understanding, showing its value and its drawbacks. Therefore, on the basis of Scheler's concept of understanding an attempt will be made to arrive at a unified concept of understanding, that is,

I Meaning- or Sentence-understanding

II Psychological understanding

A.

Understanding in the original sense

B.

Interpretation by means of analogy (Spranger)

a

Self understanding

1. Statical
2. Genetical
   Jaspers
   Dilthey (Immediate experience)

b

Understanding of others

1. Statical
2. Genetical
   Jaspers
   Dilthey

1 (a) Primary

Scheler
Bergson
Häberlin

1 (b) Secondary

I

Interpretation

II

Feeling into; the original sense

FROM: Aloys Wenzel, Anhang to Alois Hoefler: Psychologie, from G. Rossenstein: Das Problem des psychologischen Verstehensin: Versuch ueber die Grundlagen von Psychologie, Psychoanalyse und Individualpsychologie (Vol. 15 of A. Kronfeld: Kleinere Schrifte zur Seelenforschung, 1926).

that which all concepts have in common.

II. MAX SCHELER'S CONCEPT OF "UNDERSTANDING"

Max Scheler introduced a new note into the different considerations of understanding by recognizing the possibility of understanding the mental life of others must first be established on an epistemological basis. Such a foundation was neglected by Dilthey and Jaspers although it was implied in their descriptions. Scheler regards as the beginning point of understanding the fact that we are aware of the existence of other persons. He asked the question: How do we know that other persons exist?[1] He related a thought-experiment with an imaginary "Robinson." This man was living on an uninhabitated island, he had never perceived other human beings or traces of them. Would he have knowledge about the existence of a community of selves or of mental subjects analogous to himself? Scheler's answer was: Yes, he would think, I know that there is a community to which I belong, although I do not know the individual beings that constitute such a community.[2]

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[1] Max Scheler, *Formalismus in der Ethik und materielle Wertethik*. This problem is considered in a chapter titled "The 'thou-evidence' in general." ("*Die du-evidenz uberhaupt*") of his work, *Wesen und Formen der Sympathie*.

[2] Max Scheler, *Wesen und Formen der Sympathie*, p. 270.

Scheler thus affirmed that in every human being, there is an *a priori* knowledge of community and of "thou-existence" in general that is not based on a knowledge of accidental existence of one of the members of such a community. He declared, however, to agree with Hans Driesch that the "intuition of the particular 'thou' is transmitted by means of the visually observed movements of the other body."[3] Therefore, in every human being the existence of essential knowledge about community and thou-existence as such is basic. This knowledge is epistemologically prior to the particular sense-experience of other individuals. The knowledge about other persons is transmitted by means of observations of bodily expressions.

Scheler's definition of understanding. Scheler then proceeded to tell what understanding is not. It is not "feeling into," for the latter procedure is not immediately based on our belief in the existence of other egos, similar to our own. Nor is understanding Spranger's interpretation by analogy:

> The analogy-conclusion could lead to the assumption of alien egos in all cases only in as far as they are identical with my ego; never therefore to the existence of other mental individuals.[4]

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[3] *Ibid.*, p. 271.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

Scheler really saw the difficulties as nobody else had seen them. He points here to a problem in Spranger's system: If it is true, that human mental life exists in those diferent value-structures, how can one structure understand another essentially different structure?

Knowing what understanding is not, it may be asked "What then is understanding?" One thing has become certain, the ground of understanding is in the essential "thou-experience." In the three preceding chapters, the main contention has been that understanding is self-evident. Scheler never mentioned such a self-evident knowledge rendered by understanding. As a matter of fact he maintained that the facts of understanding, in order to become scientific facts, have to be communicable and verifiable.

To turn back to Scheler's concept of understanding, we have to remember his agreeing with Driesch, that knowledge of particular individuals is transmitted through observation of bodily movements; this statement may be interpreted as meaning that only knowledge of the body of another individual is sufficient evidence for the conclusion that another ego exists. We are justified in concluding that another ego exists, if we perceive signs of that ego's activity. Such activity may be seen in a work

of art, in the experiencable unity of voluntary acts, and these experiences are adequate evidence for an existence-conclusion. Not only is this evidence sufficient in order to decide the existence of another ego, it will also transmit information regarding the qualities of that existence.

It is not true, moreover, that our knowledge of other egos consists merely of the interpretation of bodily actions. Scheler then, made an important statement:

> Further, entirely identical bodies, and entirely identical contents of body-consciousness may belong to different mental Egos. Thus identical 'behavior' may possess entirely different meaning-relations.[5]

Am I allowed to say, then, that the totality of my experiences constitutes my own ego, and that of somebody else, his ego? No, for identical experiences may belong to different individual egos as essential contents. But:

> Every experience is in itself a concrete experience, only because I comprehend in it simultaneously an individual Ego, or the experience becomes to me a symbol for the existence of such an Ego.[6]

Scheler denied that our own Ego is given to us psychologically prior to everything else. Modern psychology[7] has offered sufficient evidence, that the ego-conception in a child comes into being and grows

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[5] Ibid., p. 281.

[6] C. f. Charlotte Buehler, Kindheit und Jugend (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1931).

[7] K. Buehler, Die geistige Entwicklung des Kindes (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1930).

simultaneously with the knowledge of at least one other ego. Scheler then traced the evolution of ego-consciousness in a young child or a primitive man. For a long time all experiences are characterized by their essential community tendency. Both the young child and the primitive man think the ideas of their social environment. An insult to one of the community members (or family members) is experienced as an individual insult. (As in the case of "feuds" in our mountain districts.) In growing up, he begins to experience difficulties in the realization of his purposes. In those obstructions he becomes aware of his own ego as an individual ego. He then begins to realize that his conscious mental life does not necessarily coincide with that of the other members of his community.

> Because it is essential for a 'communication,' that we understand the 'communicated content,' primarily as an experience of the 'communicator.' In our understanding we co-experience simultaneously its origin in the other ego.[8]

Therefore, in a fully developed consciousness, Scheler assumed an immediate recognition of the ego-qualities of particular experiences. He made one more significant distinction, that is, between (1) "inner perception" and (2) "self-perception." The confusion of these two has not

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[8] Max Scheler, _Wesen und Formen_, _op. cit._, p. 285.

only resulted in a clouding of the issue, but has always been a cause for contempt from the side of objective psychology, since "inner perception" allegedly gave self-evident knowledge. This self-evidence, which is true in the case of perception, must be denied to "inner perception," according to Scheler.

Distinction between "self-perception" and "inner-perception." "Self-perception" is the awareness of the ego in its own experiences, and is limited to that ego whose experiences they are. But "inner-perception," the observation of individual experiences with full attention (better known as "introspection") gives no more evidence than "outer" or sensuous perception. Therefore neither of these two forms of perception is exempt from induction. "Inner" perception is not to be defined as a perception of the self, for I am able to perceive my "self" just as well in "outer" perception, as anybody else can. "Inner" perception is an "act" direction and includes, from the very beginning, other egos, and their experiences, as well as my own ego and my own experiences. Certain conditions have to be fulfilled in order that, in those acts, alien experiences appear to me as such, which is true for my own experiences also. To these conditions belongs certainly that:

> My body suffers effects, the causes of which lie in the other's body, or originate in him, e.g., my ear must be touched by the air-waves of his verbal sounds. But this condition usually does not determine my understanding of this word in one given meaning.[9]

The grounds for the possibility of understanding. The grounds for the possibility of understanding are to be sought in the following facts:

1. To every act of "inner-perception" belongs an act of possible "outer-perception."

2. Every act of "outer-perception" is based upon senuous impressions.

At this point we are able to appreciate Scheler's definition of "understanding":

> The process through which the experience of an individual A is given to an individual B must occur exactly within the following scope: as if this experience had been stimulated by bodily changes in B, that were caused by similar modifications in A. In this would be included, as effect, an identical or similar experience of A. Meantime "*de facto*" inner perception of A may seize the experience of B immediately "*ab initio*," and these causal processes condition only the releasing of the comprehending act and, at the same time, the choice of a certain content among the spheres of inner perceptions of others.[10]

It may be stated that, on directing our perception inward, and on objectifying our experiences, we recognize them as being "ego-related," either in connection with our

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[9] *Ibid*., p. 288.

[10] *Ibid*., pp. 288-89.

own or with some other ego. The external or "outer" experience merely serves as a vehicle of this recognition; it "initiates" inner experience and, by the submitting of new experiences, determines the selection of content.

It may be stated, therefore, that experiences of another ego, transmitted by way of physical expressions and bodily movements, maintain their "ego-content, " or "ego-relation," that is recognized in inner perception. This explanation shows that Scheler's meaning can be appreciated from a scientific viewpoint. Scheler probably maintains that only those experiences that come to expression can be "understood." And this contention is valid not only for one's own experiences but just as well for experiences of other egos.

The limitations of understanding. Scheler made an important remark regarding the limitations of understanding: "An individual experience comes to separate observations only to the degree it discharges itself in motion-intentions and expression-tendencies.[11] This fact makes it clear why an emotion does out when its expression is suppressed. It likewise gives meaning to the experience

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 290.

that understanding of a spoken sentence, and the repetition of the words are related to such an extent, that fastening of one's tongue, decreases considerably his understanding of verbal expressions.

Scheler realized that our observation of others has more limitations, "We are never able to experience the other's bodily conditions, that is, the organi-sensations and their sensual feelings." Keeping this in mind, the proposition, "Mental is that which is given to only one individual," is valid only for those above mentioned organ-sensations and their feeling; it is not true with regard to the rest of our mental life. I can never observe another's pain; the only thing I am able to do is to reproduce a self-experienced feeling, which I believe to be similar to the one I infer as being present in the other person on the ground of sense-experience. This meaning of understanding as presented by Scheler is really the unifying thought back of the individual conceptions of Dilthey and Jaspers.

III. THE UNIFYING THOUGHT IN THE CONCEPTS OF UNDERSTANDING OF DILTHEY AND JASPERS

Methodological agreements. Dilthey and Jaspers have so much in common that only a careful examination shows

their differences. The first common idea is the distinction between two kinds of psychology. Both feel their unity in the common opposition toward natural scientific psychology, being adequately expressed by the terms "explanation" and "understanding." Natural scientific psychology as a branch of the natural sciences yields phenomenal knowledge, but gives no structural insight. "Geisteswissenschaftliche" psychology yields knowledge that gives insight. The knowledge of the first type, the content of objective psychology, is accidental, a posteriori and general, while the knowledge rendered by subjective psychology is "necessary" a priori and universal. The summation of experience, the repetition of experimental investigations can bring no insight, and these summations and repetitions are unnecessary when the knowledge is "insightful," for "insightful" knowledge means "self-evident" knowledge. The two types of knowledge have previously been contrasted, but the designation of understanding as yielding "insightful" knowledge is a new one. What is meant by this type of knowledge? Insight into a structure is a knowledge of its relations. This type of knowledge is necessary, for any change in it would change the structure. Karl Bühler refers to it in the following quotation:

> The structure of a logical conclusion is only determined by the content of major and minor. The rules of inference are not causal laws of origin

> and succession of judgments, but structural laws of matters of fact, (Sachverhalten).[12]

This type of knowledge does not depend on repeated observation. The insight might come suddenly, and no new perception can make it either more or less probable. Let us contrast, for instance, the laws of Boyle and the rule that the angles of a triangle equal 180^0. A continued observation of the data involved in Boyle's law shows that by high and low temperatures a slight deviation of the rule exists. It might even show also that the law would have to be abandoned. Entirely different is the triangle law. Perhaps one perception was necessary for me to arrive at the knowledge of it, but no further observations are able to alter this insight. It may be acquired by means of a mathematical proof. This proof shows us the relation, its character and necessity. The question is, "Do we have these kinds of laws in the field of mental life?" "Is it possible to acquire similar insight into that realm?" Franz Brentano answers, "yes," and Dilthey and Jaspers agreed with him. According to them, there are such structural laws in the field of mental acts and values.

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[12] Karl Bühler, Die Krise der Psychologie.

Jaspers, as has been shown in Chapter III of this thesis, made a distinction between structural insight and causal explanation. Causal explanation is able to give us only the factual succession, while structural insight and causal explanation shows the necessary origin. Causal explanation is restricted to observation of the externality of mental life, while structural insight shows the essential relation. Understanding-psychology attempts to comprehend these essential relations. Let us summarize the contrasts that distinguish the types of psychology.

1. Mental life as a phenomenal whole vs. reality.
2. The mind as a conglomeration of elements vs. a structural whole.
3. Phenomenal vs. real causality.
4. Passivity vs. activity of the mind.
5. Uninsightful vs. insightful knowledge.
6. Accidental vs. necessary knowledge.

The contention has been that whereas natural scientific psychology takes the viewpoint of the first alternations in this list cultural scientific psychology holds that of the second. These contrasts are considered to be based on the differences between physics and mental sciences. Such a viewpoint implies that physics does not possess insightful knowledge. This statement is not true.

The physicist possesses an abundance of structural insights. He has them in the models invented by the theoretical scientists by means of which he develops rules of strict legality. But, and here we arrive at the main pitfall of "geisteswissenschaftliche" psychology, the physicist remains aware of the difference between the investigation of "ideal" structures, as a triangle or a mathematical pendulum, and the study of "real" structures as an existing triangle or the pendulum of a clock. He envisages his task as determining whether, and to what degree, the assumed "ideal" relations are correct pictures of the "real" existing relations. Besides, the application of mathematics to the field of psychology has not been as successful as in the field of physics. If Spranger's "ideal" laws are an example of necessary and insightful knowledge, how is it possible that only a few persons are convinced by his "proof"? Whether Husserl's phenomenology will be able to furnish such a fundamental science remains a problem open to investigation. Understanding-psychology has failed to show that its results are not in need of empirical verification.

Moreover it is incorrect to assume that induction cannot assist in the achievement of insightful knowledge. It has often been seen in the history of mathematics that

repeated observation leads to the discovery of a structural insight that afterwards is verified as being true. It is very likely that, originally, the relation of the hypotenuse to the sides containing the right angle in a right-angled triangle, was discovered by repeated measurements. After the discovery in many cases it turned out that this relation was found to be a necessary one, and insight was born.

It may even be maintained that many of the insights into structural interconnections discovered by modern psychology have been found by means of induction. As such may be considered, for example, the findings of the "Denkpsychologie" of Hoenigswald, Jaensch and Ach.

It should not be forgotten that ostensible insight may be the source of many errors. Even in the field of mathematics, structural relations have been claimed to exist, that, later on, turned out to be mistakes. In subjective psychology, the discovered types, assumed to be necessary and eternal, may turn out to be mere fictions. The claims for self-evidence of understanding in the sense of objective validity have to be denied. But we have to agree with Dilthey and Jaspers that immediate knowledge of our own mental life exists. In the case of understanding other people we prefer to agree with Scheler that such knowledge is initiated by sense experience of bodily movements.

Summarizing, it may be said that understanding means a contactual, immediate knowledge of mental life, both of the self and of other selves. Such a grasping of mental life in its reality attempts to evade all forms of hypothetical prejudices. Because of its individuality, direct contact, identity of subject and object, and unrepeatability it claims self-evidence. This claim for self-evidence of understanding is rejected by Scheler.

The possibility of such an immediate understanding of the other person's mental life is founded on the two following assumptions:

1. Individual minds have a super-individual common basis.

2. Every individual has an innate concept of other individuals, who have a similar mental structure.

The individual mental life, is a structural totality of acts that are directed towards the realization of goals having certain meaning for the individual in question.

In order to evaluate understanding as a method for scientific psychology, we must consider what scientific psychology is.

IV. THE CONCEPT OF "SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGY"

Following Scheler's custom, our first task should be to determine what "scientific psychology" is not. It is not necessarily a branch of natural science, of biology, or physiology; neither is it entirely a "Geistswissenschaft." The concept of "scientific psychology" has as many meanings as there are schools of psychology. Therefore, any selection will have to be an arbitrary one. It is not the purpose to investigate all possible answers; only one school of psychology has been selected--"Behaviorism." The reasons for this are as follows: (1) behaviorism, more than any other school, claims to be scientific; and (2) behaviorism has taken in more than one respect the place of the older sensationalism.

This latter aspect has to be enlarged; for behaviorism and sensationalism are generally regarded as contrasting systems. This common notion is quite true with regard to their concept of consciousness. Whereas sensationalists regarded consciousness as the only certainty, behaviorism contends that consciousness is too vague, intangible and elusive a foundation for the construction of a science. Many behaviorists disregard consciousness entirely. While associationists engaged in a psychology without a soul, behaviorists have a psychology without a soul and without

consciousness.

However, there is more than one characteristic that shows a great degree of similarity.

1. In the first place the human individual as an auto-active power has no place in either system. The human personality, in associationism, was a battlefield of sensations, while in the extreme types of behaviorism the human personality is a mere automaton.

2. In both systems we find a trend to explain mental life in a mechanistic terms. In associationism, the laws of association were able to explain the connections and disconnections of sensations. In behaviorism the conditioned response has taken the place of association, and the trend towards mechanism has remained.

3. Whereas sensationalism conceived of mental life as consisting of elements, behaviorism considers the human personality as the sum of activities revealed by constant observation of conduct over a sufficiently long period of time.

One thing is gained however, the insight that must be attributed for a great deal of Dilthey's criticism, that every motor reaction is of a totalitarian nature. This trend in behaviorism sets it apart from the older schools and permits us to see it as a modern movement.

Watson's behaviorism as a scientific psychology. Behaviorism is so closely connected with the name of John B. Watson, that the selection of his name is self-evident. Watson gives a clear statement about object and method of his psychology:

> In his effort to get uniformity in subject matter and in methods the behaviorist began his own formulation of the problem of psychology by sweeping aside all mediaeval conceptions. He dropped from his scientific vocabulary all subjective terms such as sensation, perception, image, desire, purpose, and even thinking and emotion as they were subjectively defined. The behaviorist asks: Why don't we make what we can observe the real field of psychology? Let us limit ourselves to things that can be observed, and formulate laws concerning only those things. Now what can we observe? Well we can observe behavior--what the organism does or says. And let me make this fundamental point at once: that saying is doing--that is, behaving.[13]

The first remark of a philosopher about this "sweeping" statement will be that Watson's action to drop thinking from his vocabulary, extended farther than he intended. However, this statement is worth a closer examination.

1. First, Watson wants to get away from subjective psychology, because the "intangible" concepts of that kind of psychology prevented new discoveries.

2. Second, instead of "intangible" concepts, he wants to study "behavior," that can be observed by means

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[13] John B. Watson, Behaviorism (New York: W. W. Norton, 1925).

of our senses.

3. Talking and thinking will be considered as observable behavior, for thinking is nothing but speaking to one's self.

Watson's first statement, it has to be admitted, is to be given extent correct. Psychology, as practiced before this time, carrying an overload of metaphysical concepts, did not form a sound basis for objective psychological investigation. His second statement, however, seems to contain a contradiction, for the replacement of some vague concepts by a new vague concept does not make much sense. But that is exactly what Watson is doing--"behavior" is a concept just as vague and subjective as those which he discarded. Let us look at the dictionary: we learn that behavior comes from the Anglo-Saxon behoebben; it is composed of the prefix "be" and the verb now appearing as "have," and signifying to have one's self, or to have self-possession.[14] Behavior respects corporeal or mental actions. Behavior respects all actions exposed to the notice of others. Behavior applies to the minor morals of society.

This quotation indicates that "behavior" is more or less "intangible," but it shows also that "behavior" is a

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[14] Crabb, English Synonymes (New York: Grosset and Dunlap).

subjective term. For "behavior" can never be observed. We can observe movements of physical bodies. But the statement: I observe human behavior, includes not only mere observation, but also a vast amount of introspection, interpretation, and understanding. A third objective of Watson is to consider talking and thinking as forms of behavior, thus excluding "conscious meaning." The implication is that in the case of talking one would have to study only the movements of the lips and the produced sounds. He could not study the meaning of the total sentence, nor its purpose. But the very fact that he calls this form of behavior, "speaking," includes already introspection, for speaking is transmission of meaning, and not only mechanical activity.

It may safely be said that behaviorism, luckily enough, has not kept itself clear of meaning and purpose. As a matter of fact it implies meaning, introspection and understanding at every step, by practically every experiment. This last remark indicates the most important mistake; behaviorism, when it studies only observable "behavior," without the acts of "meaning-giving" and "meaning-understanding" is either impossible or it is physics. Let us take, for instance the investigation of "lifting an object." Obviously this expression is not

behavioristic. We ought to say: I observe an organism, the right arm is moving in a southernly direction, the elbow decreases the arm angle, four fingers are moving in an easternly direction, the thumb in a westernly direction, an object can be seen. In this way we may study the physiology of muscular action, or the physics of lever-movement, but it can hardly be called psychology. It becomes psychology as soon as we study an individual who lifts an object. That implies meaning and consciousness of meaning. This meaning can be comprehended or understood only on the grounds of introspection or, as some would say, "inner perception." Why should we shudder to admit that, as scientific psychologists, we are studying the mental life of human beings? But, since scientific psychology attempts to conduct its investigations in such a way that the methodological approach may be defined, and only verifiable facts are admitted, the investigation has to be limited to mental life, in so far as it comes to expression in bodily movements, language, etc.

Why do behaviorists recoil from introspection? This shyness is not an honest attitude, for the behaviorist applies introspection all through his studies. To take but one example, found in the writings of an "orthodox" behaviorist, a man "*plus royaliste que le roi*":

> I am aware that most of my movements are of very debatable usefulness and that most of my time is misspent. What few goals I have been aware of setting for myself have been in large proportion avoided, and this appears not at all a cause for regret.[15]

If this is not based on introspection, one may ask "what is"? Another remark: Behaviorism is interested in behavior, in order to predict future behavior. But this prediction is the realization of a desire alien to the scientific mind. Prediction, in order to control behavior, belongs to the field of applied psychology and ethics.

Finally, one more problem arises: Behaviorism not only sets up a new object, but assumes that there is but one possibility of explanation; and this is merely to commit the same sin that has been criticized in the subjective psychology. While subjective psychology contended that understanding was the only true procedure, behaviorism assumes that all "behavior" has to be explained in terms of stimulus and response. The term "behavior," already vague, becomes still more "intangible," for what the different meanings of this word may have been, one thing was understood, namely, that "behavior" means "behavior of an organism." But if behavior is to be explained in terms of

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15 E. R. Guthrie, The Psychology of Learning (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1925), p. 17.

stimulus and response the personality becomes a "<u>quantite negligeable</u>." Such a procedure is extremely unscientific. If "behavior" is going to be the object that has to be investigated, nobody is justified in assuming: (1) that a complete explanation can always be made, or (2) that behavior must follow my pre-conceived pattern, that is, that the cause must be, not has as always been believed, the personality, but an outside stimulus.

Against this criticism an objection may be raised, founded in the totalitarian attitude of behaviorism. It may be said that the organism responds to the stimulus. This really does not change the conception at all. According to behaviorism, and we see how closely it follows the old sensationalistic psychology, all activity, ideational as well as motor, is initiated by sensory stimuli.

> The sensory-neuro-muscular mechanisms accumulate and store energy, and this energy can be released only by the incidence of extraneous forces upon the sensitive parts. This proposition must be regarded as an assumption, for its validity in the very nature of the case can never be submitted to a decisive experimental test.[16]

Here it can be seen that the totality of stimuli, that is, the environment finally determines all activity of the subject, maintaining therefore, the subject as a "<u>quantite</u>

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[16] Harvey A. Carr, <u>Psychology</u> (New York: Macmillan and Sons, 1925), p. 68 f.

negligeable."

Secondly, it shows that Dilthey's criticism against associationist psychology, still holds for behaviorism. For our psychologist admits that this contention is not only a hypothesis, but is one that never can be proved.

However, Carr does not want to admit the logical conclusion of his assumption, that therefore, the activity of the organism is totally determined by the environment.

The doctrine that all activity is initiated by sensory does not means that:

> The objective environment determines the character of an organism's behavior. In the first place, the energy of the response may be wholly disproportionate to the strength of the physical stimulus. For example, a weak sound may elicit a more vigorous response than a loud one. The nature of the act that is elicited by a stimulus is largely determined by intra-organic conditions, by the structure and physiological disposition of the organism.[17]

There are some interesting observations to be made. In the first place: what exactly is meant by "The structure and physiological disposition of the organism"? But the main point is, that the organism, or better, the personality is still regarded as a mechanical structure. All this could be accomplished by a transformer, a rectifier, or an amplifier system. The stimulus to a

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17 *Ibid.*, p. 72.

photo-electric cell may be an invisible ray of light of very small intensity, while the response may initiate a set of large electro-motors. Furthermore, the structure and physical disposition of my amplifier system, is finally responsible for the character of my output, but if the set works, there are but two factors that are studied, the input, and the output. A change in input causes a change in output. And this entire viewpoint is based upon a hypothesis that never can be proved experimentally. Therefore, even this answer does not refute our main contention; that behaviorism degrades the personality to a mechanical system. And still we contend that behaviorism must be rejected on grounds similar to those that forced Dilthey to reject sensationalism, that is, (1) it assumes hypotheses that can never be proved and do not fit the facts; and (2) it works with intangible, subjective concepts. But if behaviorism does not satisfy the requirements of science, we will have to define these requirements more exactly than before.

Requirements of scientific psychology. Before inquiring into these requirements it seems useful to find out the requirements of science in general. The fundamental ones are stated in the following words:

> Whatever use scientific discoveries may be put to, science as such is a species of theoretical knowledge, as opposed to all forms of active skill or practical wisdom. The common characteristics of science are as follows: (a) critical discrimination, (b) generality and system, and (c) empirical verification.[18]

It seems that generality and verification are very important factors in the constitution of any science. Still more is this viewpoint emphasized in the next statement: "His (the scientist's) results are communicable and verifiable or they are not scientific."[19] Or to express this necessity in still other words: "Now science, being a social activity can properly deal with what is 'objective' in this second sense--that is "verifiable."[20] These general scientific definitions have to be kept in mind. For the purpose of determining the value of "understanding" for scientific psychology, we propose to divide the field into general and individual psychology. General psychology attempts to arrive at general laws, while individual psychology is interested in the individual only. The object of psychology is the totality of mental phenomena and their expressions. Dilthey and Jaspers have

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[18] A. Wolf, Essentials of Scientific Method (New York: Macmilland and Company, 1923), p. 10.

[19] L. E. Saidla, Science and the Scientific Mind (New York: MacGraw-Nell, 1930), p. 117.

[20] E. S. Russel, "Is Comparative Psychology an 'Objective Science'? Scientia, Vol. LIV (Bologna: Nicola Franichelli, 1933).

given an excellent criticism of atomic psychology. These charges can still be brought against any mechanistic system of psychology. It must be admitted, however, that behaviorism was correct in accusing subjectivistic psychologies of a failure to arrive at verifiable results. Scheler has shown the way out by demonstrating that "understanding" can be maintained without endangering objectivity. But in order to indicate this way out we have to be clear about the meaning of "scientific fact" in the field of psychology. Scheler gives the following definition:

> The scientific fact, in this sense must be a generally valid fact. For it is really co-constituted by its verifiability. Not the nature of facts in general is based on general validity, verifiability, communicability, but their selection as scientific facts. Those facts, that do not satisfy this condition, that are not communicable, for which no technique of their discovery can be given, that are seen by nobody or only by one person. . . . exist naturally just as well; but they are not scientific facts.[21]

The main point is that the scientific fact is co-constituted by its verifiability. This idea has been the norm of judging the theories of Dilthey and Jaspers. This idea of the essentiality of verifiability will be also the leading standard in the final examination of understanding.

The role of verification. Keeping in mind the points elaborated in the foregoing paragraph, it may now

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[21] Max Scheler, Zur Ethik und Erkenntnislehre (Berlin: Der Neue Geist Verlag, 1933), p. 350.

be said that a fact may be considered as scientific: (1) when its verifiability has been proved, and (2) when its existence and nature has been verified. Facts, in order to be scientific facts, must be communicable and verifiable. Not unless this condition has been fulfilled can a fact be accepted as a scientific fact.

Such an acceptance or denial does not include a judgment about the truth of a fact. A fact may be denied a place among the scientific facts, on the grounds that it cannot be verified right now, and still be true, whereas another one, already admitted as scientific may be refuted on the basis of new evidence.

Jaspers and Dilthey have presented subjective results as scientific facts, without verification and without proving their verifiability. They claimed that such verification was not necessary, assuming the objective validity of their results, whereas only subjective validity had been demonstrated. They have confused the feeling of certainty with the possession of insight.

However, this criticism does not imply a judgment about the truth of their facts. Only it must be stated that science today is unable to accept their results as scientific facts for the following reasons: (1) their results have not been verified; and (2) no method of

possible verification has been given. But, in the future, psychology may be able to verify some of their results. Experimental investigation may lead to insights that have a direct connection with the facts of Dilthey and Jaspers. As it is now, psychology can consider their results only as possible facts for scientific investigation.

Dilthey and Jaspers have emphasized the fact that psychology is an objective science of the human mind. Scientific psychology may be thankful for this emphasis. It means that it does not need to talk about mental events in terms of sensations and their associations. It means also that psychology does not need to speak about mental events in terms of observable behavior only. There is one point, however, on which Dilthey and Jaspers have failed to change existing convictions. There is no reason for believing that reality is immediately revealed in inner-perception. There seems to be little difference between internal and external perceptions in so far as reality is concerned. Both types of perception give access only to phenomenal reality. Whereas external per-perception gives us the external or physical phenomena, internal perceptions reveal to us the internal- or mental phenomena. Whether there is a noumenal reality back of the phenomena is a problem for philosophy and not for psychology.

To this problem of noumenal reality as given in inner perception is related that of causality. Whereas it should be admitted that mental causality as distinct from physical causality is of the efficient type, it is not necessary that these efficient causes are given in inner perception. Jaspers already admitted that an insight in efficient causes is limited to a great extent. The efficient cause of the suddenly appearing phobia is not immediately present. Neither can we know with certainty the cause of an amnesia. Therefore, we are forced to conclude that efficient causes, as such, are beyond the realm of psychological investigation. The causes of mental events that are revealed in understanding are phenomenal causes. Therefore, the claims for self-evidence of understanding in the sense of Dilthey and Jaspers have to be denied.

With regard to the value of understanding psychology for scientific investigation of today, it seems that a compromise is possible. But before this is considered, it seems valuable to relate some principles of Dilthey and Jaspers that still can be maintained. The first principle is that to a certain extent human beings have to be considered as free agents. The extent of this freedom, as limited by unconscious processes, physiological and physical causes form a fruitful field of investigation.

As a consequence, every attempt to investigate the field of psychology from a mechanistic view point has to be rejected as an unwarranted prejudice endangering the objectivity of the obtained results. A psychology that considers the physical or physiological stimulus as the starting point of mental acts, will therefore, not lead to a true picture of mental life. The second principle is that the object of psychological investigation is the mental life of human individuals. This, however, is an ideal that cannot be achieved immediately. Perhaps a complete insightful knowledge of mental life can never be acquired. Since the human individual is a psycho-physical duality, there will always remain the necessity of considering somatic factors. In relation to previous remarks it may be restated that the object of psychology is the totality of mental phenomena. It is not implied that an absolute separation between mental and physical phenomena is possible. It is implied, however, that such an abstraction between the two is to be strived for.

"Understanding" in the field of general psychology. As a first step in the outlining of the field of psychology may be considered the "static understanding" of Jaspers. This method will furnish a complete description of mental events and their classification. Such a procedure is not

a new method in the field of psychology. It is merely a description of mental events as found by introspection. The result is a complete inventory of human mental life. The difference from other procedures is that it doesnot reduce mental life to the elements of sensations. Second, it does not express conscious events in terms of stimulus and response. This first step presents the materials in a systematized form, and scientific investigation starts out with these events in order to arrive at an explanation. Explanation in the sense as it is used here is a more comprehensive term than it was in the sense of Dilthey. Understanding must be considered as a special form of explanation. Both "understanding" and "explanation" (in Dilthey's sense) attempt to arrive at existing relations on the basis of observed events. Take for instance a certain phobia. "Explanation" will aim at a cause that is to be found in a certain physiological change. "Understanding" of this phobia will mean the discovery of a relation with previous experiences, or of the meaning that this phobia has in the total make-up of a personality. The difference, therefore, is one of emphasis. "Understanding" tends to explain in psychological terms, while "explanation" has a tendency to speak in terms of physics or physiology. "Understanding" therefore, is the ideal explanation in the field of psychology.

But psychology cannot escape explanation. It will have to search for explanations in the same way as every science, and can achieve its objective end without the assumption of the revelation of noumenal reality in inner perception. The explanation possible alternatives of psychological are :

1. Physiological explanations. Observed psychological rules can be reduced to physiological laws. It is possible that temperaments may be explained by differences in the endocrine system coupled with varied forms of cerebral dominance.

2. Psychological explanation. Mental phenomena are related to other psychic events in an intelligible way. A certain decision may be explained as a selection between several possibilities on the basis of motives.

3. Psychological explanation with metaphysical implications. Separate mental events are related to personal or super-personal wholes. A fainting spell may be considered as a means of protecting the personality from impending disaster. Since we have to do with mental life, it seems clear that the second method is the ideal one for psychological investigation. The third one is an alternative. Both of these together ought to give a complete insight into the human mind. But, on the basis

of today's scientific insight this is not possible. As Jaspers has shown, this method of explanation cannot be universally applied. There are facts in mental life that are not open to understanding. Therefore, in every case where understanding fails to penetrate, the psychologist will have to resort to the first type of explanation. It should be kept in mind that, in doing so, the psychologist is really overstepping the boundaries of his field, is becoming a physiologist or neurologist.

Pure psychology ought to speak about the human mind in terms of mental life. Physiological explanation enters where his strictly psychological methods fall short of explaining the facts. It must be admitted that he is necessitated to do so in several cases. Innate abilities, suddenly appearing changes in mental functions, effects of drugs and several other events, cannot be explained on a purely psychological basis. It ought to be the psychologist's desire to limit this field as much as possible. There is no reason for him to make it his special investigation, if he does not attempt to resort to pure psychological explanation whenever that is possible.

"Understanding" in the field of individual psychology. The main value of understanding for today's scientific investigation is to be found in the field of individual

psychology. In this realm there is no desire for general laws. An understanding of the individual personality is the only aim. General structures are used, but only in order to arrive at an insight in the individual structure. These general concepts, such as, the inferiority complex, serve the same purpose as atom-models in physics, that is, means to an end and not scientific truths. They constitute a danger as soon as they are considered in a dogmatic way. When, for instance, an individual is investigated, an inferiority complex may be assumed, but when continued investigation reveals no trace of such a complex, it is not helpful any more to an investigation of his personality structure, and will have to be abandoned.

As has been shown, page 173, the assumption of immediate contact with reality in mental life has been rejected by psychology. Therefore, also denied was the statement that efficient causality was given in inner perception. Understanding, consequently, has to be taken as another form of psychological explanation. What then is the difference that makes the concept of "understanding" of such a high value to the field of individual psychology? The answer is to be found in the different approaches of the two types of psychological investigation. Dilthey and

Jaspers criticized association psychology on the grounds that it was mechanistic. A similar charge has been made against behaviorism. Let us, therefore, consider the implications of a mechanistic approach to the study of individual mental life. The so-called natural scientific investigation of the human individual has frequently been based upon an assumption that the relation of cause and effect is a necessary one. From such a standpoint the human being becomes a chain in a series of necessary causes and effects. Sometimes the causes were conceived as sensations, objective pictures of real things. In behaviorism the physiological or physical stimuli were regarded as the causes. Both systems have one characteristic in common: the growth of individuals is seen as a development of existing energies. Therefore, in a strict sense, the future is already contained in the present, and the human experience of free-will becomes an insoluble problem. On this view, the world is a machine, and science considers as its task the abolition of all the secrets that still hide within the working of this complex mechanism. But we ought to be clear about one thing, that the object of this type of investigation is something determined by eternal laws of cause and effect. Such a science cannot recognize creation nor creative acts. It does now know

anything new, and that means it comprehends only dead matter. As Dilthey has shown already, the ideal of this type of investigation is the science of physics. Everyone who attempts to investigate human beings in this way has necessarily to assume that the individual is a mechanism. Before he starts he is convinced that human persons are not essentially different from dead objects. A scientist who approaches his subject with this attitude cannot distinguish between the following propositions: (1) hunger seeks its satisfaction by the taking of food; and (2) the hungry man seeks his satisfaction by the taking of food. But everyone else who is not similarly prejudiced, knows the difference. In the first case, any murderer will be able to say, "I have not committed this crime, but I was forced to do so by present stimuli." Such a viewpoint has no place for responsibility. For if a certain action can be explained by means of stimulus and response, no person can be held responsible for such an act, because the causes forced him to act as he did. Everything that can be explained by means of the laws of cause and effect has to happen with necessity, and the results cannot be changed. In the realm of such a science there is no place for freedom nor for responsibility and, therefore, no place for human life. But he who regards human action as the results of a free agent cannot accept such a viewpoint, he has to look for another type of explanation. Such a type

of explanation is the understanding of Dilthey, Jaspers and Scheler. He who looks at the realm of living persons in such a way that the responsibility of the individual remains in the center of his field of vision, cannot find the ground of an act outside that individual person. The real ground of every human act, the efficient cause of human behavior is the person himself, whether he knows this cause with certainty or not. This efficient cause may be active without the person being aware of it. If he is asked, why he acted that way, he will frequently be unable to give account that refers to the past. He will be able, however, to indicate the purpose of his action. This new approach will switch its attention from the cause-effect relation to that of means and purpose. Knowing something about an individual's purposes means to have knowledge of his personality. In this changed approach the scientist will not say: the child eats because his hunger forces him to do so. Instead of that, he will say: the child eats in order to become satisfied. The difference between the two viewpoints is great. One cause can have but one effect, but several means may serve one purpose. To be sure, this purpose is present before the act and it is the presence of this purpose, conscious or unconscious, that really instigates the following act. It is this same

purpose that should be considered as the efficient cause of the act. What we know about the purpose is its appearance in our mental life. We may be mistaken about the interpretation of this mental phenomenon; nevertheless, we know that is active in every human action. At this point some caution should be exercised. The human individual is also part of the physical world, and as such seems to be partially determined by physical laws. Perhaps not all human actions are purposive actions in the strict sense of the word. Some human actions, as Jaspers has shown, seem to be the results of physical or physiological causes. Human freedom is not absolute, it is limited. All human actions that are the immediate results of physical or physiological causes are not free. Psychology, however, can investigate to what extent human actions are free, and to what extent they are determined by physical or physiological causes. As a result of this new attitude psychology may be freed of its self-consciousness. It has been following the example of physics because it wanted to be scientific. Psychology can be scientific without following the example of physics. As a matter of fact, it should not do so, for it has to deal with conscious human beings. Psychology may free itself of its mechanistic prejudices, and still remain an objective science. That, as we see it, is the value of the concept of understanding for present day psychology.

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