THE RELATIONAL UNCONSCIOUS, THE ENCHANTED INTERIOR, AND THE RETURN OF THE REPRESSED*

Abstract: In recent years, a number of relationally oriented psychoanalysts have begun to think of the unconscious as generative and creative, rather than as a seething cauldron of potentially dangerous distinctive drives. There is also a tendency to view the unconscious in mystical or spiritual terms. For these theorists the emphasis tends to be on infusing life with the vitality of the unconscious or on being guided by the unconscious forces rather than on taming and modulating them. In this article I argue that this perspective on the unconscious is consistent with a world view that is characteristically American and that it has its roots in developments within both popular and academic psychology that preceded the absorption of psychoanalysis by American culture. I also argue that it is consistent with certain culturally specific features of the American Protestant tradition that began emerging in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that have had an important impact on contemporary American culture and on popular psychology. Finally I speculate about the role that the tension between secular and religious (or rational versus mystical) world views play in the evolution of psychoanalytic theory.

THERE HAS BEEN A TENDENCY for American psychoanalysts to be less interested in the unconscious than their European colleagues. Nathan Hale (1971), for example, writes that "The Americans modified psychoanalysis to solve a conflict between the radical implications of Freud's views and the pulls of American culture.... They muted sexuality and aggression, making both more amiable. They emphasized social conformity. They were more didactic, moralistic and popular than Freud. They were also more optimistic and environmentalistic" (p. 332). For Freud, the

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instincts were never fully tamed. There was an inevitable conflict between instinct and civilization. The American interpretation of psychoanalysis was from the beginning a more optimistic one. Ego psychologists such as Hartman emphasized that there were conflict-free areas of the ego. In ego psychology, the ego's methods of defense and control over instinctual drives became a major focus of psychoanalytic interest. Interpersonal analysts inspired by Sullivan, Fromm, and Thompson become more interested in demystifying unconscious collusions enacted at the interpersonal level than in plumbing the depths for unconscious fantasy. This emphasis on the exploration of interpersonal enactments has to some extent been continued by relational psychoanalysts.

At the same time there has been a recent resurgence of interest in the unconscious by relational analysts, as exemplified in the work of such theorists as James Grotstein and Michael Eigen as well as some of Stephen Mitchell's later writing. But the picture of the unconscious that emerges from these authors is a different one from Freud's unconscious and from the writing of many European analysts. The unconscious that emerges in these writings is one that is creative and generative, rather than one that is dangerous or destructive. And the emphasis of these authors is on harnessing unconscious forces or being guided by them, rather than taming or modulating them. In this paper I argue that it is no accident that relational theorists would construct a version of the unconscious as generative and creative. This conception is consistent with a world view that is characteristically American and has its roots in developments within both popular and academic psychology that preceded the absorption of psychoanalysis by American culture.

I also argue that this conception of the unconscious is consistent with certain culturally specific features of the American Protestant tradition that began emerging in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and that have had an important impact on contemporary American culture. To anticipate my argument here, the literary critic Harold Bloom (1992) speaks about what he refers to as "The American Religion" and argues that the most influential indigenous American sects of Christianity, such as Mormonism, Christian Science, Seventh Day Adventism, and Southern Baptism can be seen as forms of Gnosticism: that is, various traditions within early Christianity that emphasized the potential for access to the divine through inner experience. I illustrate the way in which certain features of the relational conception of the unconscious are also consistent with Gnostic and mystical traditions, insofar as they view the interior as a potential
source of wisdom and establish a link between the interior and the transpersonal or universal.

Finally, I argue that the emerging interest in the unconscious as generative and creative, can be understood more broadly as a reflection of a tension in contemporary psychoanalysis that the sociologist, Philip Reiff (1966) identified as the tension between Freud's view of psychoanalysis as alternative to a system of faith, as a kind of an antidogma, versus the universal need to have faith, to believe in something, or to commit to a belief system that provides meaning to one's life.

Contemporary Relational Views of the Unconscious

I begin by reviewing some of the major currents running through relational views of the unconscious. One of the most comprehensive (if not always accessible) theorists on this topic has been James Grotstein. Grotstein (2000) distinguishes between the repressed unconscious (akin to Freud's) and the unpressed unconscious. What is the unpressed unconscious? The paradigmatic experience that Grotstein refers to in constructing his theory of the unpressed unconscious is the experience of dreaming. When we dream we do not have the experience of intentionally dreaming, but rather one of experiencing the dream. The question that arises then is "who dreams the dream?" Grotstein refers to the dreamer as "the ineffable subject," and he equates this ineffable subject with the mystical and Gnostic notion of the God within. In mystical and Gnostic traditions, this God within is an incarnation of the mystic's ultimate reality or Godhead that can never be known—and for Grotstein, this ultimate reality is Bion's O.

Grotstein then builds upon Bion in arguing that all experience must first be unconsciously fantasized or dreamed before it can become remembered or reflected upon. Raw experience (Bion's beta elements) must first be transformed into manageable form (Bion's alpha elements) before it can be reflected on. This raw experience is a reflection of an ever-evolving absolute or ultimate reality (Bion's O), which can never be definitively known. Because the experience of this ultimate reality can be overwhelming, we need the other to serve as a container who can help us to transform this experience into manageable experience. This is the role that the mother plays for the infant and that the analyst plays for the patient. The role of the analyst's interpretation is, thus, not to modify unconscious fantasy in the face of reality, but rather to reinforce and substantiate the functioning of unconscious fantasy.
Michael Eigen's perspective on the unconscious is similar to Grotstein's in many respects (Eigen, 2004). He too builds on Bion's notion of the container and the contained, as well as the work of Winnicott. He argues that in order for something to feel real, it first has to undergo unconscious processing. Eigen maintains that development and growth have a natural rhythm of breakdown and recovery, and that transformation into something new is always associated with an experience of loss or breakdown. Following Winnicott, he links the experience of breakdown with the experience of madness and with Winnicott's incommunicado core, which can only be approached but never fully grasped. And he links the approach toward this incommunicado core with the experience of being real. According to Eigen, this rhythm of breakdown and recovery is also linked to an ongoing process of emotional digestion (Bion's alpha function), and when this rhythm and the associated emotional digestion become blocked, one experiences psychic deadness. The goal of psychoanalysis is thus not to modulate or tame instinctual drives, but to facilitate the flow of unconscious functioning and emotional digestion. Finally, it is noteworthy that Eigen links Winnicott's incommunicado core to Bion's O and to the Kaballa's Ein Soph, which is the unknowable, ineffable, infinite that can never be grasped: that is, the ultimate or the divine in the Jewish mystical tradition.

Stephen Mitchell was quite taken by Hans Loewald's perspective on the relationship between primary and secondary process and devoted a portion of his last book written for a professional audience, to an exegesis of Loewald's thinking (Mitchell, 2000). For Loewald (and for Mitchell) the unconscious is not a seething cauldron of instinctual impulses, but a mode of psychic organization that maintains the primordial connection between self, other, bodily, and sensory experience and perception. It thus serves a dedifferentiating function in that it captures an important aspect of reality that eludes the logical qualities of secondary process. For Freud, secondary process is associated with language, whereas primary process is not. There is thus a clear distinction between preverbal and verbal domains. According to Loewald, language is present at the very beginning and is part of an original "primal density" in which feelings, perceptions, self and other are all part of a seamless unity. As Mitchell (2000) puts it: "In the beginning, the word, the body, affect, relational connection—these are all indistinguishable components of a unified experience" (p. 9).

Over time, however, words become detached from immediate sensory experience and we learn to understand the abstract, semantic significance
of words, and to use them to communicate with others. Language thus becomes harnessed for secondary process purposes. If language usage does not become sufficiently broadened and abstract, we will not be adapted to consensual reality. If, however, language usage becomes too detached from primary process, life becomes affectively dead and empty.

Thus for Loewald, repression is not a lack of awareness of impulse or fantasy, but rather a severing of the connection of secondary process to primary process. The goal of analysis is thus not to tame primary process through secondary process and to learn to live within the constraints of the reality principle, but rather to reestablish the link between primary and secondary process, so that life becomes revitalized and alive. As Mitchell (2000) put it:

For Freud, transference operated as a resistance to the “memory work” that was at the heart of psychoanalysis, the sorting out and decontamination of the past from the present. For Loewald, transference serves as a revitalization, a relinking of the past and the present, fantasy and reality, primary process and secondary process. In Loewald’s vision, the fantasy-saturated primary process of the unconscious and the secondary process of everyday reality need each other. [p. 25]

Thus for Mitchell, building upon Loewald, the unconscious is no longer a seething cauldron of instinctual impulses. It becomes a level of psychic organization that captures an important dimension of reality that is not captured by rational thinking. The unconscious thus becomes a vital force for imbuing life with meaning.

Another perspective on the relational unconscious can be found in a recent book by Joseph Newirth (2003). Newirth’s synthesizes contributions from Bion, Winnicott, Grotstein, Ogden, and the Chilean analyst Matte Blanco to portray the unconscious as a generative force and an important source of meaning. Consistent with Mitchell, he argues that the paradigmatic form of psychopathology in contemporary life is emotional deadness and emptiness. Newirth's conceptualization of the unconscious is strongly influenced by Matte Blanco who, like Loewald, argues that conscious and unconscious thought are different but equally valid modes of psychic organization. Conscious thought is organized around a principle of asymmetrical logic, which focuses on the differentiation of time, person, place, sequence, and causality. Unconscious thought, which is organized around the principle of symmetrical logic, effaces differences. In dreams,
for example, one person can be transposed into another, and the difference between past and present is effaced. Building upon the contributions of Matte Blanco, Grotstein, and Winnicott, Newirth views the failure to develop an experience of oneself as a subject as a primary form of psychopathology. This failure in the development of subjectivity takes place when one is not able to access one's unconscious experience in a way that creates similarities, identifications, intense emotional relationships, and a sense of individuality, purpose, and connection. When this happens, the person becomes "trapped in the external world of asymmetrical experience, a thing in the world, only able to react to the pushes, pulls, and impingements of others, having no capacity to express will, intention, joy, or connectedness to others" (Newirth, 2003, p.187).

Anthony Bass (2001) focuses on the topic of unconscious communication and on moments of uncanny connection between analyst and patient. For example, a patient knows things about her analyst that she has no way of knowing, or the analyst wakes up from a dream about a terminally ill patient at the very moment the patient calls to leave an important message on the his office answering machine. By way of accounting for these uncanny connections (or what Jung referred to as "moments of synchronicity"), Bass makes reference to developments in quantum theory, and in particular the work of the physicist David Bohm, who theorizes that there is a fundamental realm of unbroken wholeness, an implicate order, underlying our perceived world of apparent separateness and fragmentation. To quote Bass (2001):

our psychic experience interpenetrates that of our patients; we become entangled in transference-countertransference matrices replete with dense process of projection and introjection; we experience various forms of indentification and merger, processes with effects we see and experience but cannot always understand; and our shifting states of self and affect shift in a stunning choreography that becomes the medium of analytic work. [p. 695]

And finally, over the last two decades Donnel Stern (1997) has articulated a systematic and coherent model of the unconscious as, what he terms, "unformulated experience." This unformulated experience is a type of tacit experience that precedes verbal formulation and explicit knowledge. To quote Stern (1997):

If we pay close attention, there is often a sensation of something coming before language. Whatever this is, it cannot be worded, though sometimes,
after the fact, we feel that it was there. We often have the sense that the
words we use "fit" the shape of what we wanted to say, or do not fit. There
is a vague meaning-shape, a protomeaning . . . that precedes what we say
and by which we gauge our success in expressing ourselves. [p. 15]

Importantly, from Stern's perspective, this unformulated experience is
not a preexisting meaning that awaits discovery, but rather an emergent
product of a dialectical interplay between that which is given and that
which is constructed. In attending to our experience and formulating it
explicitly we both discover and create meaning. Stern places particular
emphasis on the creative function of unformulated experience and on the
importance of allowing ourselves to be open to this experience—to be ca-
pable of not knowing what will come next.

According to Stern, therapeutic action has to do with allowing oneself
access to one's own unconscious capacities for experiencing, which are
rigidified or stifled in neurosis. In order for this to take place, language
must be given the freedom to construct freedom as it will. Novelty can
only come from experience that is unbidden. To quote Stern yet again:

This is hardly a vision of language as passive, docile or merely categorical. It
is instead apocalyptic, intuitive, antic, possessed. Language is no servant; it is
disobedient and revelatory. Language is a dervish. It belongs to us and it car-
ries us away, all at the same instant. There can be discomfort in the realiza-
tion that we really don't know what we will experience next. We do not
even know what we are going to mean, what we will want (intend) to say.
This uncertainty is the price we pay if we choose to wait for our thoughts to
come to us of themselves. [Stern, 1997, p. 91]

Having briefly reviewed some contemporary relational perspectives on
the unconscious, let me summarize some of the common themes. First, as
I said earlier, the unconscious is viewed as generative and creative. It is an
important source of meaning, vitality, and creativity. The tendency to
overvalue rationality and secondary process is seen as a major source of
psychopathology, and the ability to have a dialectical interplay between
conscious and unconscious, primary and secondary process is viewed
as essential to a vital, creative, and meaningful life. In addition, impor-
tant metaphysical and epistemological claims are being made. There is an
important dimension of reality that can only be apprehended uncon-
sciously. For Grotstein and Eigen, this aspect of reality can be designated
by Bion's "O," the ever evolving Absolute Truth or Ultimate Reality, which
can never be definitively grasped. For Mitchell, Newirth, and Bass it is
Loewald's primal density or David Bohm's implicate order—the under-
lying unity of all things, which is obscured by the differentiating function
of conscious thinking. For Stern, it is unformulated experience.

And finally, a number of these perspectives on the unconscious, to vary-
ing degrees, allude to the spiritual or mystical realm. Grotstein and Eigen
are both quite explicit about the spiritual or mystical implications of their
views. Grotstein refers to the unpressed unconscious as the God within—
an incarnation of the ultimate, unknowable God. Eigen equates Bion's O
and Winnicott's incommunicado core with the Ein Soph—the ineffable and
ungraspable Ultimate or Divine in the Jewish mystical tradition. Bass does
not explicitly speak of spirituality or mysticism, but I would argue that his
interest in Bohm's implicate order (i.e., the seamless unity underlying ap-
parent separateness) is certainly consistent with a mystical emphasis on
nonduality or the interconnectedness of all things. And finally, Mitchell fol-
lows Loewald in arguing for the importance of experiencing life as en-
chanted, and quotes Loewald's statement that "one does not have to be a
mystic to remain open to the mysteries of human life and human individu-

American Culture and the Enchanted Interior

As I argued in brief earlier, it is no accident that this particular perspec-
tive on the unconscious is developing on American soil. There are some
distinctive features of American culture that predispose it to influence the
conceptualization of the unconscious in this way. One of the most obvious
features is the oft noted optimism of American culture compared to Euro-
pean and many other cultures. Clearly the view of the unconscious as a
creative and generative force rather than a seething cauldron of dangerous
instincts is an optimistic one. But there is more to it than this. Philip Cush-
man (1995) for example, in his cultural history of psychotherapy in Amer-
ica, has contrasted Freud's emphasis on healing through self-domination
with the American emphasis on healing through self-liberation. As Cushman
argues, Freud's emphasis on the importance of taming the instincts
is consistent in many ways with the emphasis on self-discipline and
willpower in nineteenth-century Victorian Europe.

In more traditional communally oriented cultures social control was
achieved through religion, communal ties, and social tradition. With the rise
of secularism in eighteenth-century Europe and the growing importance of
individualism, there was a need for a new form of social control (Foucault, 1977). There was a growing emphasis on the development of self-surveillance—on the internalization of social control. There was a growing emphasis on the importance of self-discipline and will power, an emphasis on self-domination. Mental illness came to be seen as kind of moral weakness and healing was to be achieved through a kind of domination and control of the body and the uncivilized animal instincts through rational self-control. The interior was viewed as irrational and dangerous. Freud was both a critic of the Victorian era and an heir to it. On one hand he saw the hypocrisy of Victorian morality and the self-deception associated with the belief that one’s actions were rationally motivated. He also recognized the pathogenic impact of instinctual repression. But he was not a champion of instinctual liberation. He believed that rationality ultimately had to play a role in balancing instinctual demands with the pressures of society. The important point from Freud's perspective, however, was that this had to be achieved consciously and rationally rather than unconsciously. The task of the ego is to mediate between the demands of the id and the demands of the superego. Thus even though Freud challenged the repressive morals of Victorian culture, he believed that healing ultimately involves a type of self-domination: a self-domination through reason rather than repression.

The European emphasis on salvation or healing through self-domination had an important influence on American culture and continues to do so. It was brought to the United States through Puritan culture and played an important role in early nineteenth-century moral reforms. And it continues to play an important role in the culture. It can be seen in the rise of Christian fundamentalism in the United States. It can also be seen in the importance of a variety of power-of-positive-thinking movements in popular psychology at various points in American history. And it can be seen in the development and incredible success of cognitive therapy, which at least in its original form emphasized the use of rationality to challenge irrational or distorted thinking.

At the same time, American culture is characterized by an important emphasis on healing through self-liberation, which began emerging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During this period, Americans began to develop a perspective on the interior as, in Cushman's words, "inherently good and potentially saturated in spirituality" (p. 118). In contrast to the European view of the interior as dangerous, Americans began to develop a perspective on the interior as "enchanted" (Cushman,
1995). In contrast to the perspective on healing through control of one's interior, Americans began to develop a perspective on healing being associated through the liberation of one's interior.

This shift was undoubtedly influenced by a number of forces, but one of them can be traced to the populist and democratic impulse in American culture that influenced both the development of religion and of popular psychology. In the religious sphere, this shift can be seen in the phenomenal impact of the Christian religious renewal movement in the early eighteenth century. During this period, referred to at the "Great Awakening" by historians, new forms of Christianity that emphasized the experience of personal salvation through the surrender to Christ began to take hold in the New England colonies. The emphasis was on personal and unmediated experience of the divine rather than on institutionalized religion, with its doctrines and formal hierarchies. Although this renewal movement began in Europe, it reached its fullest expression in the United States. During this period, it was common for charismatic preachers to hold revival meetings in large tents. These meetings were characterized by emotional expressiveness, public confessions, moaning, and sobbing. There was an emphasis on popular leaders who derived their authority, not from their education or stature within a formal clergy, but through what historian Nathan Hatch (1989) refers to as "the democratic art of persuasion." In contrast to the austere Calvinist Doctrine of predestination and ultimate salvation of the elect, the emphasis was on salvation for all through surrender to God in all of one's sinfulness. With this would come an experience of love, acceptance, and salvation in the present.

American culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was a hot-house for religious innovation and experimentation. Many of the religious innovations within Christianity stemmed from Methodist and Baptist roots. There was a considerable emphasis on what had been referred to in Europe in derogatory terms as "enthusiasm." This involved entering into altered states of consciousness and having the experience of being possessed by some force other than conscious intention: for example, speaking in tongues, sobbing and screaming, falling to the ground, and in general a loss of the experience of conscious volition (Taves, 1999). Experiences of this type date back to the early days of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, when the institution of prophecy was still alive, and are certainly consistent with forms of spiritual experience that have been common to various cultures throughout history (e.g., shamanism, spirit possession, trance mediumship). A significant feature of American culture at this time, however,
was that there was an acceptance and tolerance of these forms of spirituality and worship that was not present in Western Europe.

Many of the new Protestant sects that originated in Europe and flowered in the United States emerged out of the Puritan tradition. The Puritans emphasized the importance of inward religious experience and the direct experience of God, in contrast to religious formalism without an inner, experiential element. In contrast to more moderate sects emerging out of Puritanism, which emphasized the inspiration of the spirit in the context of fixed liturgies (e.g., Presbyterianism), more radical forms emphasized the spontaneous experience of being "born again"—of being taken over by the Holy Spirit (and the rapture associated with it), the revelatory power of dreams and visions, the importance of faith healing, and so on (Taves, 1999). In contemporary America many of these features are found in influential Christian sects such as Mormonism, Pentacostalism, Seventh-Day Adventism, Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Southern Baptism, and evangelical Christianity in general.

Popular Psychology and Popular Religion

Another important stage in the emergence the American perspective on the interior as enchanted took place in the early nineteenth century with the development of the Mind Cure movement. The origins of the mind cure movement can be traced to mesmerism. In 1836, Charles Poyen, a follower of Franz Mesmer, brought mesmerism (also referred to as animal magnetism) from Europe to the United States. America proved to be a fertile ground for mesmerism.

Mesmer believed that healing took place through reconnecting people to electrical-mystical force that was alive in the world and was the ground of all being. Animal magnetism was a mixture of magic, spiritualism, hypnosis, and pseudo-science—in some respects, an attempt to provide a naturalistic account of phenomena traditionally accounted for in religious or spiritual terms. Mesmer originally developed his approach as a cure for rich, bored, alienated patients who often had psychosomatic illnesses. He believed that an invisible spiritual-magnetic fluid was alive in the world and connected all living things. Illness was caused when an individual had an imbalance of this fluid resulting from a disconnection to the unifying spiritual essence. Mesmer treated his patients by having them stand around a tub of water in which electrical magnets and wires were inserted. He would then sing, dance, chant to his patients and touch them
with a wand in order to rebalance their magnetic fluids. They would fall into a trance, become ecstatic, and gain a deep sense of well being. Animal magnetism influenced the development of hypnosis in Europe, Charcot's work with hysterics, and as we all know, ultimately played a role in the origins of psychoanalysis. Mesmerism itself, however, by and large died out in Europe.

The United States, however, proved a hospitable environment for its further development. Charles Poyen believed that when the body's electricity was properly balanced, the mind was progressively brought in touch with the divine. People would go into trance, exhibit spiritual gifts, and feel renewed, transformed, and invigorated. His approach was an optimistic one, which combined inner liberation with a connection to a unifying spiritual essence. It was a combination of psychology and spirituality that gave rise to subsequent movements such as Mind Cure philosophy, the New Thought Movement, Christian Science, and American spiritualism (Taves, 1999).

Subsequently, Phineas Quimby, the founder of the American Mind Cure movement and an important influence on Mary Baker Eddy (the founder of Christian Science) added a further refinement to mesmerism. He argued that the cause of emotional and psychosomatic distress was not an imbalance of magnetic fluids, but rather outmoded or incorrect ideas about life. According to him, one of most problematic ideas is the belief that the opinions of others (including conventional moral standards or religious beliefs) and external, material conditions should influence the way one feels about oneself and one's behavior. Instead, one needs to challenge this belief and open oneself to the spiritual forces within that are connected to the universal spiritual force (Meyer, 1988).

Quimby's perspective is an interesting fusion of American individualism and a quest for a sense of universal connectedness. There is a kind of interiorization of the spiritual. In his perspective we begin to see the emergence of the American "enchanted interior" more fully. The individual is not accountable to an external God but to an internal standard reflecting one's inner spiritual wisdom, which in some way is connected to a universal spiritual wisdom. One can see a similar type of interiorization of spirituality in the writings of the quintessential American public intellectual Ralph Waldo Emerson. When Emerson speaks about the virtue of self-reliance, he is not promoting the virtues of an isolated, rugged individualism, but rather an interiorized sense of spirituality (an inner light) that intuitively grasps the interconnectedness of all things.
The Mind Cure movement, (which was on the boundary between religion and popular psychology) was tremendously influential in American culture. It subsequently gave rise to the Christian Science tradition and also to another important American tradition lying on the boundary between popular psychology and religion: the New Thought Movement. Both Christian Science (which still exists as a religious sect) and the New Thought Movement, each in its own way, sought to find ways of reconciling religious experience with the naturalistic theories of the mind of their day. Mary Baker Eddy, a former patient of Quimby's and the founder of Christian Science, ultimately rejected mesmerism and clairvoyance as false religious experiences, and identified authentic religious experience and "divine science" with the realization that the material realm (including sickness and emotional disorder) are illusory and only the spiritual is real. Her God becomes the Gnostic Godhead. In her words "God is incorporeal, divine, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love" (Bloom, 1992, p. 134).

The New Thought Movement, also founded by former students of Quimby's, maintained a more psychological orientation. Warren Felt Evans, for example, a former Methodist minister who at one point consulted Quimby for health problems of his own, viewed the "influence or action of mind upon mind" as the basis of all healing, both religious and otherwise. He explained both faith healing and religious conversion experiences in naturalistic terms, without denying the authenticity of spiritual experience. According to him, Christ was not just a historical person, but also a principle of salvation available to all through the faculty of intuition.

**William James, the Psychology of Religion, and Psychotherapy in America**

The great American psychologist William James played a unique role in the establishment of a dialogue between the concerns of popular and academic psychology and in the development of the psychology of religion. James was particularly interested in phenomena such as sudden conversion, faith healing, mystic raptures, spiritualism, trances, automatic writing, and so on. His interest in these phenomena is in part attributable to the general fascination with these phenomena within popular American culture at the time. It can also partially be accounted for in biographical terms. One important influence was the involvement of his father, Henry James Senior, in the Swedenborgian movement. Swedenborg was an
influential Swedish mystic (also known for his scientific contributions) whose thinking had an impact on such luminaries as Blake, Balzac, Baudelaire, Emerson, and Yeats. Another important influence was James's own struggles with depression and psychosomatic problems throughout his life, and his attempt to heal himself or to live a meaningful and productive life in the face of his infirmities.

James developed a model of consciousness as dissociative, based on a modification of Pierre Janet's model. Janet referred to the splitting of consciousness or dissociation as "desegregation of consciousness." His dissociative model of consciousness assumed that selves were constituted by "chains of memory." While memories are associated within a chain, they are dissociated between chains. Janet, following his mentor Charcot, assumed that dissociation is associated with hysteria. Charcot and Janet both assumed that hypnosis was an abnormal state allied with hysteria. They assumed that dissociation was a characteristic of the psychopathology, but not the healthy mind.

In contrast, James assumed that dissociation was normal and healthy. According to him, the mind is "multiplex." He proposed what can be thought of as a field theory of consciousness. According to him, mental fields succeed one another and constitute a stream of consciousness. In his word: "consciousness aggregates and dissipates." Each field has a center or a focus and a margin. Objects of attention are clustered at the center and as the attention shifts they fade to the margin. There is no unitary self, but rather multiple selves, arising out of our interactions with the various people in our lives. The task of harmoniously integrating these various subselves can be extremely difficult, especially if the demands of one social self are in opposition to those of another. Interestingly, here we can see an anticipation of the current relational psychoanalytic perspective of the self as multiple (e.g., Stephen Mitchell, Philip Bromberg, Jody Davies, Stuart Pizer, Adrienne Harris). In fact, James's model of consciousness had an indirect influence on contemporary relational thinking because, as Barnard (1997) has pointed out, James influenced the thinking of George Herbert Mead, who had an impact on the thinking of Harry Stack Sullivan.

For James, the subconscious (understood as a mental field that has been dissociated because it is outside the margins of focal awareness) was the source of a variety of phenomena, including dreams, mystical experiences, sensory and motor automatisms, hypnotic states, and hysteria. Applying an
evolutionary perspective, he argued further that the subconscious is a potential source of spontaneous variations that furthers the development of the species as a whole. He theorized that throughout history, the subconscious experience of religious geniuses has produced a variety of mystical phenomena, the finest of which have been preserved by various religious traditions. James thus sought to explain the origins of religion without explaining religion away. For him the "subconscious self" is the mediating term between science and religion. It becomes the channel to the divine. James conceptualizes God as simultaneously the idealized self and the idealized other. But for him, God is not just a social construction or projection. James essentially dissolves the distinction between internal and external by arguing that God exists on the boundary between inside and outside in the same way that the self does.

James' thinking was influenced by popular movements such as Mind Cure and the New Thought movement, and subsequently had an important influence on the New Thought Movement, which appropriated James's conception of the subconscious. In liberal Protestant religious circles, the Emmanuel movement also appropriated James' notion of the subconscious to understand spiritual healing as both natural and religious. The Emmanuel movement offered an alternative to Christian Science as a treatment for emotional and psychosomatic problems. It encouraged people to tap into the powers of the subconscious mind, which are in contact with the Universal Spirit. In churches across the country "mental health classes" were offered that combined individual meetings with ministers, with religious services and social meetings. The Emmanuel movement, while located institutionally within the church, was also a popular psychotherapy movement that along with other New Thought traditions had an important influence on American culture. Moreover, James's model of consciousness influenced the thinking of James Jackson Putnam, a prominent member of the influential Boston School of Psychotherapy, who ultimately played an important role in the establishment of psychoanalysis within the United States (Hale, 1971).

Protestant Transcendentalism Versus Jewish Rationalism

Given the emphasis that I have placed on the influence of Protestant Christianity on American popular psychology and the American conception of the unconscious, it is important at least to raise the question of why
the roles of Jewish religion and culture are missing from this account.¹ This a particularly important question to raise given that the Jewish tradition played such a central role in the origins of psychoanalysis and that so many influential psychoanalysts, beginning with Freud, have been and continue to be Jewish. I believe the answer here can be understood in terms of the contrast that Andrew Heinze (2004) has drawn between the Jewish tradition of moral rationalism and the values of spiritualism and transcendentalism associated with Christian liberalism and romanticism. As Heinze points out, Freud was deeply rooted in the rationalism that characterized modern European Jews. While Judaism certainly has its mystical traditions, the secular Judaism that emerged in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe was characterized by an enlightenment emphasis on rationalism. Like the mainstream rabbinic Judaism that preceded it, secular Judaism had a strong ethical focus rather than an emphasis on the metaphysical. Moreover, as the social theorist Thorstein Veblen (1919) initially suggested, European secular Jews composed a unique group of marginal intellectuals. Alienated from traditional Judaism and not fully accepted into European society, even when they assimilated its customs, secular European Jews always existed at the margins, and developed a characteristically skeptical point of view. This skepticism is reflected in Freud’s hermeneutic of suspicion. In addition to this characteristic skepticism, European Jews developed a deep suspiciousness of the type of mass enthusiasm associated with European romanticism and Christian revivalism as a result of their experience of centuries of persecution, which testified to the dark side of mass psychology and the irrational. Jewish intellectuals thus developed an appreciation of this dark side and a wariness of romanticized views of the irrational. The conflict over the role of spirituality and mysticism in psychoanalysis between Freud (a secular Jew) and Jung (the son of a Protestant minister) provides a widely acknowledged reflection of the tension between Jewish and Christian cultures on this issue.

Consequently, as Heinze (2004) documents, the predominant influence of Jewish thinkers on American popular psychology was as a counterbalance to public attitudes of a more mystical or occultist bent. To quote Heinze (2004): “Their profoundly rationalistic moral perspective and deep discomfort with radical visions of psychic transformation added what they

¹ My thanks to Lewis Aron for raising this question.
considered necessary ballast to public attitudes about the mind and soul" (p. 191).²

The Triumph of the Therapeutic and the Return of the Repressed

In summary then, the conception of the unconscious that dominated American culture prior to the arrival of psychoanalysis was very different from Freud's unconscious. In contrast to Freud's model of the unconscious as a seething cauldron of antisocial drives that need to be tamed or renounced, the American unconscious was a source of wisdom and a channel to the Universal Spirit. This model was compatible with indigenous developments in religion and popular culture that emphasized the interiorization of the spiritual as well as mystical experience or the immediate contact with the divine.

The conceptualization of the unconscious that is emerging in relational psychoanalysis can be seen as reflecting certain trends in both psychology and spirituality that are characteristic of American culture. In fact, in certain respects it can be seen as continuous with a model of the unconscious that was present in American popular psychology and to some extent academic psychology prior to the arrival of psychoanalysis. Of course this conception of the unconscious (as generative, creative, and as connected to the spiritual and mystical realm) is not uniquely American. Many American theorists of the unconscious have been strongly influenced by the British psychoanalyst, Bion. And Loewald, who had such a strong influence on Mitchell's perspective, was originally Viennese. Moreover, Jung's perspective on the unconscious as archetypal and transpersonal anticipated contemporary relational developments in various ways. My point, however, is not that the enchanted unconscious of relational analysts is unique to Americans, but rather that American culture has provided an extremely fertile ground for nurturing the growth of seeds already existing in European culture. Thus, in the same sense that many contemporary American Christian sects can be understood as emerging

² The above notwithstanding, one cannot ignore the fact that many of the most influential American relational analysts, and the majority of those whose work I have discussed in this article, are Jewish. The articulation by these Jewish psychoanalysts of a view of the unconscious as enchanted, can perhaps be partially accounted for in terms of their assimilation of American cultural values. But an attempt to understand this phenomenon in more complex cultural, historical, and sociological terms, is beyond the scope of this article.
out of the interaction of American culture and radical Protestant sects that originated in Europe in the eighteenth century, the relational perspective on the unconscious can be understood in terms of the creative fusion between preexisting European developments and American culture.

The second point I want to conclude with is that the emergence of the enchanted unconscious of relational theory can be seen as one movement in a dialectic existing in the development of psychoanalytic theory between secularizing and spiritualizing tendencies. Freud fashioned psychoanalysis as a type of antireligion or antiddoctrine. From his perspective, the mature individual is a realist, and the realist does not need the comforts of religion, which he regarded as illusion. He was interested in helping people learn to mediate between the needs of instinct and civilization in a conscious fashion, without being tyrannized by the unconscious internalization of repressive cultural and religious belief systems. As Philip Rieff (1966) argued, many developments in the history of psychoanalysis can be understood as a tendency on the part of Freud's followers to abandon his stoic refusal to commit himself to a system of faith or belief, and to refashion psychoanalysis as a new form of religion. Thus for example, Jung attempted to breathe new life into religion by locating the gods inside as archetypes. And Reich developed a psychology of sexual-energetic mysticism. The enchanted unconscious of relational theorists can thus be seen as another demonstration of Reiff's theory in action. In the context of the traditional hostility of psychoanalysis to religion, certain aspects of the relational perspective on the unconscious can be seen as a type of return of the repressed.

And finally, I want to close by suggesting that emergence of the enchanted unconscious of relational theory can be seen as a movement in a larger cultural and historical dialectic between two opposing worldviews: irrational versus rational, supernatural versus naturalistic, magical versus nonmagical, or mystical versus nonmystical. For example, the Protestant Reformation can be understood, in part, as an attempt to purify Catholicism of its magical and superstitious elements. The emergence of what was termed religious enthusiasm in eighteenth-century Protestantism among such sects as Methodists, Baptists, and Quakers can be viewed as an attempt to reclaim some of these elements. The rise of Hasidic movement (an extremely popular and influential mystical tradition) among eighteenth-century Eastern European Jews can be understood, in part, as an attempt to reclaim the magical and mystical elements that had been lost by mainstream rabbinic Judaism. As I have argued elsewhere (Safran, 2003), Buddhism, since its inception, has struggled with the tension between the
pragmatic-agnostic perspective at its core and the need for faith, epistemological certainty, and metaphysical absolutism. Not so long ago, sociologists and cultural historians generally agreed that we currently live in a secular era. And yet, as recent developments are making increasingly clear (e.g., the dramatic influence of Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East and internationally, the growing influence of the Christian Right in North American politics), the trend toward secularism is becoming dramatically reversed.

This tension between secular and religious (or rational and mystical) world views can be understood as reflecting the conflict between a variety of different needs, but I want to close by dwelling briefly on one conflict that I believe is of particular importance to focus on in contemporary psychoanalytic thinking: the conflict between the need to experience oneself as an autonomous agent who is masterful and in control versus the need to surrender (Ghent, 1990). Psychoanalysis emerged in the context of contemporary Western culture—a culture that was in the process of becoming increasingly individuated. And psychoanalysis has further contributed to the evolution of this culture and to the promotion of such values as individualization, personal agency, and responsibility. Whereas these are important values, it is important not to lose sight of the costs associated with them (isolation, lack of meaning, the experience of emptiness) or to lose sight of the need we all have to be able to surrender—to have the experience that it is not all up to us, that there is some benevolent force outside of us that we can trust and to which we can abandon ourselves: a sense that we are connected to others and to the cosmos. While here I can only hint at the significance of coming to terms with this need for future psychoanalytic thinking, I close by suggesting that the enchanted unconscious of relational psychoanalysis can be understood in part as an expression of it.

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