



The Wolf-Man

An Introductory Daseinsanalytic Reading of Sergius Pankejeff's Ontological Trauma

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Abstract

The Wolf-Man remains one of Sigmund Freud's most enduring and critically reviewed case studies, and his 'successful' treatment was seen as an important milestone in the validation of the psychoanalytic approach to the neurosis. Given the Wolf-Man's prolific academic following, the aim of the current paper will be a very selective reading on Mr. Pankejeff's own autobiographical accounts concerning his history, the important figures influencing his psychological vitality, as well as later difficulties in sustaining mutually satisfying relationships with especially women.

Introduction

As articulated by the great Harry Guntrip (1969), the one thing an infant cannot do for him or herself is the provision of ontological security - this remains the sole domain of the relationship with the Other. Countless psychological and psychoanalytic theories have found creative and poignant metaphors to illustrate their awareness of the importance and danger of being in relation to another. Even before the infant's psychological and spiritual birth (Bail, 2007; Balint, 1969, 1986), the soon-to-be-named (the infant embedded within the womb and domain of the maternal and paternal imaginary and symbolic) remains in large part psychically absent at its own creation. None can ensure in and for themselves their own birth as an infant. Our births are the result of fate, of an union never of our choosing, in itself an unconscious potentiality. As existential analysts we frequently encounter psyche sentiments such as "I did not ask to be born", "why am I here?", "I never felt I truly existed", which are heartfelt communications from our fellow travelers, articulating a shared (for most mostly an unthought known) human dilemma. For a human soul / psyche to survive and flourish, to live relatively free and not 'endure' the encapsulating crypt of Winnicott's False Self, R.D. Laing's Divided Self, J.P.



Sartre's Nothingness, or James Masterson's abandonment depression, an enduring nourishing rhythm of faith needs to be cultivated throughout life in relationship to self-other, and the lived-world (Daws & Bloch, 2015; Eigen, 1986, 1996). In short, the unique human being's Being, constituted as an ontic-ontological structural unity within the Eigenwelt, Mitwelt and Umwelt, may suffer and endure various - if not an infinitely textured - variation of ruptures, tears, lacks, pressures, and much more. Daseinsanalysts, psychoanalytists and depth psychotherapists all serve as faithful scribes (with of course our philosophers, poets and theologians) to the soul's grammar - its ontic-ontological facticity and potentiality. More specifically, the ontological characteristicsevident in Daseinanalysis, i.e. being-at-all (Facticity / Factizität); being-understanding-of-Being (Seinsverständnis); being-in-time (temporality / Zeitlichkeit); being-in-space (spatiality / Raumlichkeit); being-in-a-mood or being-attuned (moodedness or attunement / Befindlichkeit or Gestimmtheit); being-embodied (bodyhood / Leiblichkeit); being-as-care (Sorge); being-with-others (sociality / Mitsein); being finite (Endlichkeit); and being-toward-death (Sein sum Tode); among others, may all reflect the said compromises, limitations, ruptures, and reversals, greatly impacting the experience of ontological security.

A Synoptic Reflection Note on R.D. Laing's Concept of Ontological Security and Insecurity

According
to Laing's understanding of ontological security:

"A man may have a sense of his presence in the world as a real, alive, whole and, in a temporal sense, continuous person. As such, he can live out into the world and meet others: a world and others experienced as equally real, alive, whole, and continuous. Such a basically *ontologically* secure person will encounter all the hazards of life, social, ethical, spiritual, biological, from a centrally firm sense of his own and other people's reality and identity.

It is often difficult for a person with such a sense of his integral selfhood and personal identity, of the permanency of things, of the reliability of natural processes, of the substantiality of others, to transpose himself into the world of an individual whose experiences may be



utterly lacking in any unquestionable self-validating certainties.” (1960, p. 39).

Laing’s description provides the reader with the essential ontic- ontological descriptors of ontological security. The ontologically insecure person desperately struggles to maintain a firm sense of self, of reality and of personal identity. Precarious and compromised, the ontological insecure individual remains sensitive and deeply affected by the very nature of living. Even more relevant and painful are, for at least Laing, the exposure to three distinct but interrelated forms of lived-world anxieties: engulfment, implosion, and petrification. Space prohibits a detailed discussion, although, given the current reading of Mr. Pankejeff’s ontological insecurity, it may be important to provide a synoptic summary. For Laing the precarious sense of self evident in the ontological insecure person forces a vigilance stance towards the world as an attempt to protect the self from the felt colonization of being with another. Relationships may be needed but they are dreaded as they imply the loss of identity (being engulfed). All thought, feeling, and behavior may be in service of preserving existence, even at the expense of loneliness and exhaustion:

“The individual experiences himself as a man who is only saving himself from drowning by the most constant, strenuous desperate activity. Engulfment is felt as a risk in being understood (thus grasped, comprehended), in being loved, or even simply in being seen... The main maneuver used to preserve identity under pressure from the dread of engulfment is isolation. Thus, instead of the polarities of separateness and relatedness based on individual autonomy, there is the antithesis between complete loss of being by absorption into the other person (engulfment), and complete aloneness (isolation). There is no *safe third possibility of a dialectical relationship between two persons*, both sure of their own ground and, on this very basis, able to “lose themselves” in each other... *To be understood correctly is to be engulfed, to be enclosed, swallowed up, drowned, eaten up, smothered, stifled in or by another person’s supposed all-embracing comprehension. It is lonely and painful to be always misunderstood, but there is at least from this point of view a measure of safety in isolation.*” (1960, p.44) (italics added).



There remains an inherent terror (implosion or Winnicott's *impingement*), of being impinged and obliterated, leaving the ontological insecure individual petrified and reliant on depersonalization (amongst other mechanism) as a way to protect the self from being turned into a not-me, a self devoid of subjectivity, identity and vitality. Guntrip's (1969) schizoid clients frequently articulate experiences of feeling like a puppet on a string, treated as an automaton, turned to stone, ignored, even being soul murdered (Fabricius, 1999; Shengold, 1989).

Protection from *daseins-icide* may be varied, as mentioned, and for Laing depersonalization remains an effective technique even at the risk of a de-emotionalized reality, i.e., treating the self and others as 'emotionless', which in turn further threatens one's existence and brings the ontological insecure person into needing the other to paradoxically confirm his / her existence. The very techniques used to ensure existence may create an existential *cull-de-sac*, Sartre's *no exit*. With Laing's descriptions in mind, I turn to selective autobiographical sections as described by Mr. Pankejeff himself.

Sergius Pankejeff's Ontological Voice

Mr. Pankejeff's autobiographical accounts introduces to the reader a Russian émigré, 83, and known as the Wolf-Man to the psychoanalytic world (a set therapeutic identity) and the only son to an estate owner. Mr. Pankejeff's birth location description is followed by a childhood memory of observing, through a crack in the fence, the noisy gesticulations of gypsies evoking a revelatory private thought; "This scene created an impression of *indescribable confusion*, and I thought to myself that the goings-on in hell must be pretty much like this." (1971/1991, p. 5) (*italics added*). The childhood memory of indescribable confusion (bewilderment) is followed by further descriptions of loss and physical vulnerability, i.e., his father selling the beloved estate (before age 5); his Nanya (nurse) relating to him his battle with pneumonia and his physicians all but given up on his chances of survival as an infant; his suffering from malaria



as well as a memory of at least one bout of pneumonia; experiencing fever without pain; of having red hair and it turning brown to the dismay of his mother (his mom kept a lock of his red hair as a relic); and being a relatively quiet phlegmatic child until the introduction of the English governess, Miss Oven, that lead to a complete change of nature (irritability, nervousness and severe temper tantrums). The arrival of Miss Oven also coincided with his parents traveling, leaving Mr. Pankejeff with his Nanya, grandmother, sister and Miss Oven. Although the maternal grandmother was to oversee the children she did not resume protective responsibilities.

Mr. Pankejeff mentions that his grandmother was aware of Ms. Oven's 'harmful' influence, but remained passive and awaiting the return of the parents, whose return "was delayed over and over again" (1971/1991, p.6). Mr. Pankejeff goes as far as to write that Miss Oven "who was either a severe psychopath or often under the influence of alcohol, continued her mischief for several months. It is difficult to know exactly what went on. I can remember and our grandmother confirmed that angry quarrels broke out between my Nanya and me on the one side and Miss Oven on the other. Evidently Miss Oven kept teasing me and knew how to arouse my fury, which must have given her some sort of sadistic satisfaction." (1971/1991, p.6). Furthermore, and serving as a possible theme of identifying with the aggressor;

"Unlike me, Anna apparently got on with Miss Oven fairly well, and even seemed to enjoy it when Miss Oven teased me. Anna began to imitate Miss Oven and teased me, too. Once she told me she would show me a nice picture of a pretty little girl. I was eager to see this picture, but Anna covered it with a piece of paper. When she finally took the piece of paper away, I saw, instead of a pretty little girl, a wolf standing on his hind legs with his jaws wide open, about to swallow Little Red Riding Hood. I began to scream and had a real temper tantrum. Probably the cause of this outburst of rage was not so much my fear of the wolf as my disappointment and anger at Anna for teasing me." (1971/1991, p.7).

In this stunningly introductory first few pages of his

own childhood memories the reader can sense an individual of immense sensitivity, struggling with themes of deracination and uprootedness, lack of true parental support and protection, being over-stimulated and provoked, experiencing perceptual and affective confusion (later expressed somatically), exposed to intimate acts of betrayal from his own body (being ill and fragile), his sister, and his adult protectors (largely absent parents and grandparent, physicians giving up on him, a compromised governess). It is meaningful to understand his description of the gypsies as a possible first representation of the caesurian 'crack'- the external world experienced as overstimulating, the protective psychic shield (caul) ruptured, exposing Mr. Pankejeff to the experience of a *hellishly noisy otherness*, inducing *indescribable confusion and bewilderment*. Given Mr. Pankejeff's description of his immediate *Kairos cosmos*, the famous *wolf dream (rather nightmare)* may serve as creative glimpse into his feeling of security (nightmare as petrification), his infantile *idios kosmos*: "I dreamt that it was night and that I was lying in bed. (My bed stood with its foot towards the window; in front of the window there was a row of old walnut trees. I know it was winter when I had the dream, and night-time). Suddenly the window opened *on its own accord*, and I was *terrified* to see that some white wolves were sitting on the big walnut tree in front of the window. There were six or seven of them. The wolves were quite white, and looked more like foxes or sheep-dogs, for they had big tails like foxes and they had their ears pricked like dogs when they pay attention to something. In great *terror, evidently of being eaten up by the wolves*, I screamed and woke up. My nurse hurried to my bed, to see what had happened to me. It took quite a long while before I was convinced that it had only been a dream; I had had such a clear and life-like picture of the window opening and the wolves sitting on the tree. At last I grew quieter, felt as though I had *escaped from some danger*, and went to sleep again." (Freud, 1918, in Pankejeff, 1971/1991, p. 173) (italics added).

For Daseinsanalysts in general, the wolf dream-nightmare would not follow classical Freudian instinctual interpretations, as this case is so well known for, but in essence would be held as a special *form of existence* (Kunz, 2014). That is, for the dreamer and the one to experience the nightmare, the wolf dream holds and reveals Mr. Pankejeff's ontic-ontological dilemma. The dream reveals all that there is, and the dreamer's relationship with what is revealed should always be explored from his or her own autochthony. Dreams also reflect the basic emotional attitudes and moods as evident in day-to-day living. Given the discussion on ontological insecurity and reading the nightmare as a special



form of existence and basic emotional attitude and mood as seen in day-to-day living, the nightmare may be more self-evidentiary than initially held. Freud was known to say that man can be wolf to man. The predatory and animistic anxieties to be faced and mastered by a child is well known and in my reading communicates a ontological need for tender and welcoming gestures from caretaking others (Daws, 2015; Eaton, 2015; Eigen, 1986,1996).

Given

the debate to follow, the nightmare may also communicate, or contain, the object relations artefacts and grammar of failures in welcoming gestures and tender contact¹. The frightening and terror inducing wolves were frequently held by many analysts as representing the various care-givers in Mr. Pankejeff's world, the governesses and family members that played an important role in his psychological development. Again I turn to Mr. Pankejeff's own creativity as answer:

“There is a Russian proverb which I told S (Sigmund Freud). He liked it. Here's how it goes in German: ‘When a child has seven nannies, he lacks an eye.’ That means that when that many persons concern themselves with you, responsibility keeps shifting around. And that is really the situation in which I found myself after Freud's death. Because I don't know whom to believe now” (Pankejeff in Obholzer, 1982, pp. 172-173).

I may even risk a re-interpretation in the absence of Mr. Pankejeff's confirmatory reply to me and state this differently (ontologically): ‘When a child has seven nannies, he lacks an *I*.’ How did the possible lack of an ‘I’ come about? In terms of Dasein, is there a symbolic link between the act of being able to see, to behold (eye) the ‘I’ in the midst of so many others? If there are so many other ‘eyes’ (I's) on me, can I see the ‘I’ for myself, especially if the eyes through which I am to be discovered are themselves existentially desolate and destructive? In an attempt to address this ontic-ontological question I will for this next section focus on the governesses as described by Mr. Pankejeff, his immediate family, and his wife. The discussion is hoped to reveal, as contained within his original autobiography, important descriptions of self - feel in relationship ‘with’ his body, otherness and general ‘mood’.



Mr.

Pankejeff's autobiography continues from Miss Oven who was experienced as over-stimulating, if not sadistic, to her dismissal and being followed by Miss Elisabeth, who

although was clearly less provocative did however expose

Mr. Pankejeff to further over-stimulating experiences: "I really don't

understand what gave Miss Elisabeth the idea of reading us *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, as this book with its horrible details of

mistreatment of *the Negroes was certainly*

no suitable reading matter for children. Some of the descriptions of the Negroes punishments even disturbed me in my sleep." (1971/1991, p.8)

(italics added). These relationships did stand in contrast with his

relationship to his Nanya who was described as "a peasant woman from the period when there was still serfdom. She was a completely honest and devoted soul,

with a heart of gold. In her youth she had been married, but her son had died

as an infant. So she had apparently transferred all her mother love from this

dead son to me" (1971/1991, p.8). Again psychoanalytically speaking one could

speculate about Mr. Pankejeff being the recipient of *depersonalization* (Rinsley, 1989), becoming a stand-in for

another's loss. Mademoiselle, whose principal object of education was to teach

her pupils good manners and etiquette, later followed Miss Elizabeth. Mr. Pankejeff also

mentions: "My sister Anna soon recognized Mademoiselle's inclination to dominate,

and knew how to escape her excessive

influence very skillfully. Mademoiselle

did not hold this against Anna, but compensated by paying more attention to me

than to Anna, which was not at all to my

liking." (1971/1991, pp.16- 17). Although certainly a typical

socio-cultural arrangement given the

Pankejeff's fortune and affluence, the reliance on governesses and nannies also

brings into view the presencing of the parents. Mr. Pankejeff writes: "As our

parents were often away, my sister and I were left mostly under the

supervision of strangers, and even when

our parents were home we had little contact with them." (1971/1991,

p.8) (italics added). Despite such a description the time spent with his father

remains colored by pleasant memories, especially time spent playing the board game called

'*Don't Get Angry, Man.*' It is also

important to mention that Mr. Pankejeff's father's absences were also due to

his treatment for manic depressive psychosis, an affliction that seemed to

follow intervals of three to five years and was treated by the famous Professor

Emil Kraepelin, who would himself later diagnose Mr. Pankejeff as

manic-depressive, a diagnosis Sigmund Freud did not agree with and rather

settled on an obsessional neurosis (1971/1991).



Concerning the maternal matrix, Mr. Pankejeff describes his mother as calm, quiet, with excessive bodily concerns:

“Since my mother, as a young woman, was so concerned about her health, she did not have much time left for us. But if my sister or I was ill, she became an exemplary nurse. She stayed with us almost all the time and saw to it that our temperature was taken regularly and our medicine given us at the right time. I can remember that as a child I sometimes wished I would get sick, to be able to enjoy my mother’s being with me and looking after me.” (1971/1991, p. 9).

Given his maternal and paternal experiences, as well as being left to governesses and nannies, it is very important to understand Mr. Pankejeff’s relationship with his sister Anna. Although later articulated by Freud that incestuous realities² were evident between Anna and Mr. Pankejeff, one does however read in his autobiographical account that her suicide in 1906 had the most profound impact on Mr. Pankejeff’s idios kosmos. After Anna’s suicide by poisoning, Mr. Pankejeff describes his state of mind as being severely depressed, feeling paralyzed, empty and suicidal, and the world becoming increasingly unreal. The mourning process saw Mr. Pankejeff desperately reviving Anna in switching university courses similar to that of Anna (process of appersonation). It was during this time that Mr. Pankejeff was first diagnosed with neurasthenia³, and later with manic-depressive psychosis. The latter diagnosis followed after 1907 when Mr. Pankejeff’s father committed suicide, a mere year after his beloved sister Anna, by taking an overdose of sleeping medication. It is of interest to read the oral component in both suicides.

It was during his recuperation in a sanatorium that Mr. Pankejeff became entranced by his wife to be, a hospital sister named Therese. He explains it as such:

“Whereas then the main symptom of my condition had been



the 'lack of relationships' and the spiritual vacuum which this created, I now felt the exact opposite. Then I had found life empty, everything had seemed 'unreal,' to the extent that people seemed to me like wax figures or wound-up marionettes with whom I could not establish any contact. Now I embraced life fully and it seemed to me highly rewarding, but only on condition that Therese would be willing to enter into a love affair with me." (1971/1991, p.50).

Given various descriptions throughout his autobiographical work it does seem that Therese proved a stable figure through most of Mr. Pankejeff's adulthood, and as such, it was again a tragic psychological concussion when Therese committed suicide (by gassing herself) leaving Mr. Pankejeff bereft, somatically and cognitively compromised, and in need of a further psychoanalysis. Fate can certainly prove truly tragic as Anna, Mr. Pankejeff's father as well as his beloved Therese all committed suicide through oral means. During this stage of analysis Mr. Pankejeff's psychotic like somatic complaints provides the reader some understanding of Mr. Pankejeff's bereft state. Also evident in his interviews with Karin Obholzer, Mr. Pankejeff's later relationship with women continued to prove highly ambivalent, if not master-slave like. His interviews sees an important pattern of establishing contact with women in need (similar to what he described in his courtship of Therese, which Freud interpreted as reaching through to the woman), the relationship suddenly proving (turning?) too demanding if not engulfing activating a need to distance (during such phases he would placate by providing financial support at his own expense), in turn stimulating fears of abandonment and reunion thoughts, feelings and behaviors (mainly through guilt), finally settling on feeling hopelessly trapped (Sartre's no exit). These periods were also known to stimulate various psychosomatic sensitivities, preoccupied states of mind, and excessive reliance on advice as what to do (with the relationship), all culminating into the experience of 'having a breakdown':

"Well, and then I had a complete breakdown. Suddenly, the whole neurosis was there and despair and not knowing what to do. Suddenly this fear of losing her... I had promised marriage to this woman.... She was so happy, and suddenly I tell her, 'I can't.' Terrible guilt feelings. What was I to do? I went home in the greatest despair and had this idea, an absurd idea — after I had promised to marry her and now didn't, want to, and with the idea of

employing her, she doesn't want that, I had this idea: I'll sign part of my income over to her. It was about 350 or 300 schillings at the time. I'll sign that over to her." (1982, pp.193-194).

Space prohibits a deeper exploration and articulation of Mr. Pankejeff's body-mind-other adaptations within such interpersonal dilemmas, although it can be mentioned that Mr. Pankejeff's psychoanalytic processes did describe the body serving as signifier in communicating and mediating interpersonal stresses and strains, as well his deep affectional hunger. The interpersonal patterns described do however repeat (the repetition compulsion) until Mr. Pankejeff's passing, and as Obholzer writes, Mr. Pankejeff seemed to have settled into a type of Sartrean melancholy concerning his relationship with others. Daseinsanalytically I hope some of the areas accentuated, especially in Mr. Pankejeff's own words, reveals the various demands and losses placed on him from a very early age. Over and under-stimulation (Freud's 'affectionate abuse') supported a *dipsychic dilemma*, a split soul, so to speak. Primordial trust in the self-world-other, as well as Mr. Pankejeff's primordial sense of psychical-sensory continuity (rudimentary pre-symbolic

self), needed for a secure sense of being, in Winnicottian terms 'going on being', may have become compromised. Mr. Pankejeff's narratives accentuate a relationship to a psychical- sensory history characterized by continual physical illnesses, over-stimulation, neglect, possible seduction, and maternal hygeaphrontic care. That is, the exposure to fateful illnesses, a psychosomatic mother, if not a genetic endowment given his father's manic depressive illness may all have played a defining role in the original body-self experiences. As Mr. Pankejeff's psychical-sensory continuity⁴ (bodyliness) remained inherently fragile, embrionic, and sensitive to rupture, combined with the fact that the very object[s] of rupture were needed to ward off not feeling disconnected (objectlessness, void, abandonment depression) and unintegrated (empty, porous, being engulfed) various endopsychic and interpersonal strategies to ensure survival may have been activated to facilitate a rudimentary sense of ontological security. Ontological insecurity is largely evident in Mr. Pankejeff's hyperactivating and deactivating attachment strategies and his parataxic psychosomatic concerns. Borrowing from two analytic traditions - that is, neo Kleinian and family systems theory (psychoanalytically informed) on bipolarity as well as hygeaphrontic parenting, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann (1949) describes a childhood characterized not only by multiple parenting, but also

non- introspective parents who rely on the prospective child as an extension of their needs. This could create in the child an acute, if not chronic, subjective feeling of defenselessness⁵ and insecurity, which is only alleviated by stimulating clinging or insulating behavior:

“That the manic-depressive has been subjected to multiple guidance in infancy and childhood and usually by non-introspectively interested grown-ups [the ‘white’ wolves signifying absence although predatory attentive?], that there is not one significant person responsibly related to the child, and that the child is not really important to anyone in *its own right* [no eye in service of a child’s ‘I’] create a great and specifically colored insecurity in him... He does not cease to look for a significant person to whom he can be important, and he clings to him when he believes that he has found someone [Pankejeff’s breaking through to the women ala Freud].” (Fromm-Reichmann in Wolpert, 1977, p. 285) (*italics added*).

Davenport and associates (1979) studied six families where at least one member was diagnosed as manic-depressive. They found very similar tendencies: (a) fear of loss and abandonment, (b) multiple parenting, (c) difficulty with domineering, depressed and/or withholding mothers, (d) general avoidance of affect, (e) massive use of denial in an attempt to manage hostility and anxiety, (e) unrealistic expectations and rigid conformity, and (f) difficulty in initiating and maintaining affection within and from outside the family system. According to Ablon, Davenport, Gershon, and Adland (1975), the most salient interpersonal and dynamic themes found in later bipolar research emphasised symbiotic relational realities and failed separation-individuation patterns, domineering mothers, absent father figures in oedipal development, and added the ‘later’ effects especially on marriage such as difficulties in modulating hostility. It is held that pre-oedipal stresses in the family of origin re-creates similar relational constellations in the marriage and general family life. Given such environmental demands, parental non- capacity to grasp the autochthonous needs of the infant-child, combined with affectional abuse, sensitive endowment and fateful illnesses, as earlier mentioned, the infant may be left to develop defences against such early body-ego disruptions known as second-skin formations (Bick, 1968, 1986). Second skin formations involve autistic-contiguous efforts to create sensory continuities through a variety of measures that may include self-mutilation, psychosomatic adaptations, and obsessions, all realities found in Mr. Pankejeff’s history and adaptation to separations and stresses. Importantly too is the level of anxiety experienced that remains largely primordial. All symptoms may in fact serve as attempted



solutions against deeper ontological terrors, that of non-existence, falling apart (Mr. Pankejeff's experienced various somatic delusions and a psychotic delirium in his psychoanalytic treatments⁶), and being abandoned to an incomprehensible hellish world. As Laing himself wrote the ontological insecure person remains preoccupied by *preserving* rather than gratifying himself. Mr. Pankejeff's relational patterns, hyper- activating and de-activating strategies may indicate the Langian realities of engulfment, petrification and isolation, followed by using the body as defense (one example; by being physically ill the mum- nurse could be revealed), scribe and refuge.

Conclusion

It was the aim of the current paper to return, in very limited fashion, to the autobiographical work of Mr. Sergius Pankejeff in an attempt to explore the concept of ontological insecurity, if not ontological trauma. Editorial demand forecloses a Sartrean analysis worthy of the Flaubert studies, and as such, the reader is cautioned against any finality given Mr. Pankejeff's ontological strains and adaptations. As stated earlier, Mr. Pankejeff's autobiographical work as well as the work of Freud and other analysts support our continual study into the various ontic-ontological dimensions of being fully human.

Endnotes

1. Mr. Pankejeff agreed with Freud's reconstruction in his interview with Karin Obholzer concerning possible incestuous activities. Given the current paper Laing does however also add in his book "The Divided Self" that many 'incestuous' ways of being in the world, although certainly traumatic, are also desperate attempts at ontological security. See case I entitled Mrs. R (1960, pp.54-57); "Her fear of being alone is not a "defense" against incestuous libidinal phantasies or masturbation. She had incestuous phantasies. *These phantasies were a defense against the dread of being alone*, as was her whole "fixation" on being a daughter. They were a means of overcoming her anxiety at being by herself. The unconscious phantasies of this patient would have an entirely different meaning if her basic existential position were such that she had a starting-point in herself that she could leave behind, as it were, in pursuit of gratification. As it was, *her*



sexual life and phantasies were efforts, not primarily to gain gratification, but to seek first ontological security. In love-making an illusion of this security was achieved, and on the basis of this illusion gratification was possible.” (Laing, 1960, p. 57).

2. Please see the work on depletion depressions by Galatzer-Levy (1988). As Kohutian psychoanalyst Galatzer-Levy described various defects in the self of the cycloid (bipolar) patient, namely (a) a defensive warding off of a *depletion depression*; (b) the use of language as reflecting a disconnection between affect and experience; and (c) a unifying hypothesis integrating endowment and environmental/ parental failure. Furthermore, according to Galatzer- Levy’s clinical approach, the cycloid patient struggles with severe separation trauma, and in a desperate attempt to ensure others for intra-psychic equilibrium (referred to as ‘selfobjects’), inherent needs and wishes may be restricted, constricted, denied, and/or limited. This (seemingly) ensures constancy, but at the expense of true self-expression and psychological vitality.
3. See Thomas Ogden’s autistic- contiguous mode, Paul Ferder’s ego feel, and Harry Stack Sullivan’s prototaxic experience.
4. Dynamically one could wonder if this process is very similar to what is referred to as lack of endopsychic *insulation, a crack in the (de)fence towards the world.*
5. Also review Hammersley, P., Dias, A., Todd, G., Bowen–Jones, K., Reilly, B., & Bentall, R.P. (2003). Childhood trauma and hallucinations in bipolar affective disorder: preliminary investigation. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 182, p. 543- 547.

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