

The Nature of the Primary System

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For the past twenty years, we have been studying children by methods the aim of which was to enable the children to talk, as it were, without the use of language. A careful and detailed analysis of the productions the children have made with materials specially detailed for their use has brought to light a part of the human psyche, which has not been previously described. To this the name of the Primary System has been given, since it is a systematised region of the psyche, appears first and remains for life in the core of the psyche. It is with this system that the following paper deals.

To give an account in words of this system is a task set about with great difficulties. The difficulties will be stated first, to show why it is that many gaps must appear in the account. To give a complete account of this part of the psyche one should first describe the system itself, then show how it operates in normal healthy childhood, say what happens to it in adult life and against that background describe the Primary System as we see it in our patients. But this would be a matter of intolerable length and quite outside the limits of this paper. Moreover, there has been no opportunity to study this region of the psyche in normal children in anything resembling the same details has been possible with the disturbed child. Also the amount of available evidence as to the behaviour of this part of the personality in later life is too scanty to give more than indications of probability. Thus all that can be done here is to put forward some of the evidence which has been collected as to the existence of this part of the psyche and than to describe it as it has appeared in child patients.

It must first be noted that psychiatry and psychotherapy have hitherto, in the main, been occupied with adult life and experience and with childhood as it has been recovered or recreated by the adult through the techniques psychoanalysis. In the analytic study of children, it is the material obtained primarily from adult, which forms the basis of the interpretation given to children of the meaning of their play. In the work with adults it has been taken for granted that language, supplemented by drawings, gestures, tones of voice and movements, all combined together in a specialised relation to the physician formed tools by means of which the whole of the psyche could be investigated. But in this assumption certain important considerations have been omitted. First European educationalists tell us that children cannot use words as tools to think until the age of about 7 or 8; before that time their use of language is similar to that of adults speaking a tongue which is only slightly known to them. Before that age children are unable to manipulate language as, for example, to write a letter or an essay that has a beginning, a middle

and an end. On the other hand, we have Freud's discovery, and the knowledge poets have always had, that early childhood is the time of most vivid impressions, and of emotional experience, which is crucial for the whole of later life. Furthermore, in adult life language is the tool used to realise within the self by interior speech the individual's own experience and to communicate with his fellows – unless the individual is an artist, a point which will be dealt with later.

Now, R.C. Collingwood, the English philosopher whose work underlies so much of this study, used to teach that all thought began with putting a question. The question put by the writer some twenty years ago could be formulated as follows. Since the parts of the brain with which one thinks are formed and active long before 7, when language is not available for thought, in what way do children before they reach this age think and register and group their experience?

Here we find ourselves in the same difficulty as the child finds in his communication with adults. The thesis we wish to present has several facets, which should be presented simultaneously, since they are each part of a single whole - but though it is possible to present many aspects of the same feeling or thought in the use of the Lowenfeld 'world' material this is not possible in speech. There only one aspect can be described at one time and one must rely upon the memory of the reader, which must combine the different elements for himself.

Study of the interior life and experience of man, by the processes either of psychoanalysis or analytical psychology has hitherto concentrated its attention upon the aspect of desire, and of emotional life. To the pictures that arise in the mind as the goals of these interior urges, the term 'fantasy', whether conscious or unconscious, has been given. But little attention has been paid, so far, that is, to the intellectual aspect of the pictures which appear. It is to the nature of the dynamic behind the picture, to the wish, or urge, which has appeared to call the pictured goal into being, that attention has been directed. Yet it is the two, the picture plus the urge that brings it into being that make the complete phenomenon. It is with the first element, the conceptual factor, that this paper is concerned and which it sets out to examine.

Take the simplest of all human urges, the drive of appetite - the desire to eat, which arises from the reality of the body's need for sustenance. This desire, because of the physiological substratum from which it arises, would, in its simplest forms, seem to give rise to the most obvious and direct form of activity. One is hungry and one eats. But even here, experience with primitive people has shown that, in the relief of famine, the dominant factor in the situation is not, as would be imagined, the physiological need, but instead, the intellectual concept that accompanies it. Hunger alone, and the organic need behind it, is not sufficient to bring about eating. There must also be, in the minds of the hungry, a concept of 'food', which corresponds to the foodstuffs available. It is no rare thing for large numbers of adults - men and women - to die for instance in India, or among the Indians of Canada, because the food

offered them, maize, in the place of rice, was not seen by the hungry as food - and this refusal to accept the unknown, even when the preservation of life depended upon it, has been persisted in until death supervened.

The conceptual element is, therefore, at least as important as the element of desire, and worthy of the same attention. But if it proves difficult to understand this element in adult, and in adults who share a common language, how is such contact to be made with the inner life and experience of children and particularly of young children or of infants.

To answer this question, means must be found for making contact with children, which are independent of speech. Tools must be created with which children can describe to themselves and to adults the nature of their own experiences; methods must be devised to make it possible, as it were, to watch a child think.

Once it had become clear that something real was emerging through use of the, at that time very primitive, tools designed by the author, the next step was to secure companions in the search and adequate material to make genuine study possible. This was necessary to cope with a difficulty, which had begun to appear very clearly. For Freud, without realising it, had made in his work a certain basic assumption, which it was not possible for him to realise as an assumption, because it was accepted by all the men of his time. This was, that there exists a common plan of development in the emotional sphere of human beings, which parallels physiological and anatomical law. Working on this assumption, he felt justified in drawing deductions of universal application from the study even of single individuals. This assumption is continued by present-day psychoanalysts - namely, that what occurs in a small group of individuals, or even in a single individual, if sufficiently carefully studied and rightly understood, can be taken as generally applicable to all individuals. But although this belief is very strongly held, no evidence has been adduced in support of it. The cautious individual would prefer not to assume anything, but to leave it to the material to demonstrate whether this concept was true or not. The next question to be tackled was that of the checking of observations and the recording of facts, and to do this a system was devised by which every fact was cross-referenced and checked, and later charts were drawn up of the data found. A paper on the first findings was read to the Medical Section of the British Psychological Society and published in their Journal in 1951, entitled: 'A new approach to the problem of psychoneurosis in children'.

At that time it was possible to see dimly what can now be understood far more clearly. This was that there is a region of the mind which so far has not been observed, described and understood and that, because it is inexpressible in language. But it is in language, ultimately, that all discoveries have to be communicated and this accounts for the delay that has occurred in the presentation of these findings. Moreover, it seemed best to wait until a certain number of the children treated in youth had (one out into the world as adults in order to see whether the benefits which appeared to accrue from this

type of treatment in childhood based upon these findings produced in reality in later life the results that theoretically it seemed likely it would do.

A series of some two thousand cases has now been treated and studied in this way, and a fair number of the earlier ones of these are now grown up and out in the world as independent individuals. Wherever it has been possible contact with them has been maintained.

It is possible, therefore, now to present a study, which has a certain completeness about it.

But to return to the matter in hand, which is to put forward some of the essential nature of that strange part of the human psych, which has emerged from these studies.

To make the matter clearer, a parable is set out, the form of which is drawn from worlds children themselves made.

When we were children, many of us delighted in reading that mixture of fairy story with children's tale in which there was a garden surrounded by a wall which all the grown-ups took as being really the end of the garden, but which, at a specially exciting moment in the story, the children of the house found to conceal among the bushes which grew close up to the wall a secret door. This door, opened only at midnight, led to a garden of delights unsuspected by the grown-ups, and peopled with fairies and wise or prankish gnomes. This story has many forms; sometimes it is under the sea, sometimes on an island out at sea, sometimes in a lost valley in the hills. But the essence of the story is the same, the finding of a country near to home but with rules of life within it which are magical and different altogether from those which obtain at home. There are also terrible things in the garden, ogres and man-eating giants and spells and wizards; but in the end it is only the wicked who are consumed, or the careless and if one knows the rules of life in that country, it is exciting and virile and from it the traveller brings back treasures of gold and jewels.

It is clear that there are many ways in which these stories can be regarded, and Jung and Freud have thrown a great deal of light upon them, but here they will be taken quite simply as they stand and studied in almost a literal fashion so that they may assist the understanding of what we are calling the Primary System.

For instance, there are always certain constant characteristics about these stories. There is always a key to the garden and the key is difficult to find and to many people altogether invisible, and there are dangers and great efforts which are called for from those who are bold enough to take the key and open the door, before they can enjoy the freedom of the secret kingdom, and of the strange things within it. Within that garden, or that kingdom, they are dangers also, and tests and struggles, and not all come back again. Some die; some lose their way back; perhaps those become some of those people we call insane and who never find their way back again. There are people

who, having been once inside, are frightened and spend the rest of their lives denying that there is any such kingdom at all; and there are some, like the painter Chagall, and James Joyce and the poet Blake, who live equally on both sides of the wall, and come and go at will; and though people find them strange, they do not call them mad. And finally, there are those who take theodolites and measuring tapes and go in and out measuring and calculating and trying to learn the geography of that vast garden and how its outlines are drawn.

This is easier for the author personally to do because her childhood was spent in part in a square in London near the Park, and partly in a quiet part of Poland. Her father was a collector, and the house in London, which formed the background to experience, was full of objects that came from far away places and had no relation to each other. They were rich in colouring and unexpected to a child, in character and did not fit into the life of every day. In Poland, the people wore brightly coloured clothes and were simple and direct in speech and thought. Several languages were talked round one normally, and so things did not have just one name by which everybody knew them, but several names, and some called them by one and some by another, so there was always a certain amount of uncertainty as to what the names really were; the word one thought of might be the one the grown-up one was talking to wanted and again it might not - it was difficult to be sure.

The author was also a very delicate child and spent a large part of her life in bed in illness, with long periods of solitude. The years immediately following the 1914 war brought opportunity in Eastern Europe of seeing and experiencing famine and war and terror and isolation, but also the exhilarating experience of taking part in the rebirth of a country.

With a basic training in paediatrics, return from Poland brought an opportunity of training in paediatric and biochemical research work under the late Professor Leonard Findlay, and as part of a research team at the Royal Free Hospital, London.

Perhaps these experiences have made it easier to forge a key to that garden and not to be too startled at its contents.

Two characteristics of that fable must now be considered, which differentiate it in important ways from the concept (either psychoanalytical or of analytical psychology) of the unconscious.

First of all it is a quite well defined region, and a wall separates it from the note garden. The rules of conduct and the type of event that occur on one side of the wall are different from those on the other side. What is to be expected in one garden does not happen in the other and in the magic garden almost anything may come about. This is not strange, because the idea of the fable has been arrived at directly from study of the actual productions many children have made with the tools supplied to them.

The second important fact about the garden is that though to some extent it looks like the outside world - there is in it neither time or space. It is this timelessness, and this quality of being able to be in two places at the same time, which may actually be far apart, that has given rise to the legends and fairy tails of Rip Van Winkle, the Magic Carpets, Seven League Boots, the figures that suddenly grow tall as in 'Alice in Wonderland', and much of the paraphernalia of fairyland.

We are dealing here with something, therefore, that resembles closely to what is termed the Unconscious. Indeed most of the phenomena of the Freudian and Jungian Unconscious will be found within it, though with a different explanation. We need to ask ourselves, therefore how is this garden constructed and what do these strange features mean.

Now it is very difficult to understand this directly, it is too peculiar and those who are not poets or artists have left it too far behind and grown into too different another world to be able to regain contact with it easily. Some artists keep a dim consciousness of it and the work of the painter Chagall may be taken to help us in building a bridge.

It is characteristic of Chagall to paint pictures in which figures and objects appear without apparent relation to one another and without the normal relation to gravity. His method of grouping these and skill of colouring are so aesthetically pleasing that his pictures receive a warm welcome in most countries of the world. Nevertheless, judged from a 'rational' standpoint, it is difficult to understand the rules upon which he works, why he selects just those objects that appear in his pictures, or why the ones, which are included in any given picture, should appear together. Moreover, the size of figures and objects and the place in the picture they occupy seem, judged from the common sense point of view, to be completely irrational. Figures are painted within other figures and, in some large heads contain whole scenes within them. From the ordinary standpoint, this is very odd. This is not surrealism, which is an attempt to represent and to evoke in the beholder by that representation certain emotional states, but something different and that stands by itself. It is, in the main, the painting of the beautiful side of the inner region of man, so difficult to reach in adult life but which dominates the experience of children.

As a first step may be considered the way he treated common metaphor in a concrete fashion. For example, it is quite common to speak of 'horse-faced' woman. But in the picture called "Clair do Lune" (1944) Chagall paints a nude female figure in solid texture and superimposes over the head of the figure a shadow painting of a horse, so that in literal fact the central figure in his picture is both women and horse. In the exhibition is shown for comparison a reproduction of a drawing made by a young woman patient who wished to express early confusion of thoughts about certain aspects of bodies. It is a commonplace of psychoanalytical experience that the teapot with its projecting spout and the breast-like formation of its lid can stand in symbolic fashion for the male and female sexual characteristics. It is also one of the characteristics of the early confusions and identities of the Primary

System that the parts of the body which contain orifices into which and from within which substances come and go, stand for and are identified with one another, the head becoming, in this way, confused with the excretory end of the trunk. This particular patient wished to express a concept into which those ideas had coalesced, and to combine the resultant mess with the idea of struggle for possession of the total qualities conceived of as existing both in the head and in the male and female genitalia.

It will be seen that so complex a conception is impossible to express in words, just as the complex of ideas and feelings behind the impulse to superimpose a horse upon a woman's head cannot be fully expressed in words. Both, however, can be presented in a plastic medium, if the visual concepts of 'sense' and 'possibility' are rejected. Chagall, being an artist, can blend his concepts into an artistically pleasing whole, which has value in itself. This patient, having no artistic ability or desire to do anything but communicate something has produced a drawing in which teapots formed heads of pairs of people engaged in a struggle with each other. The teapots were of different colours, and the patient stated that each figure was dissatisfied with its particular coloured teapot and wished to change it for another's. The top hat, the cork seen from the side, and the third crude drawing indicating a cork stopping up a hole, fill out the genital significance of the drawing in a manner that will be familiar to all psychoanalysts.

Further, those who are familiar with the paintings of Chagall will remember that, as an example in the well-known painting "Dans mon Village", Chagall makes use of the device of painting scenes within scenes, small solid individuals within parts of larger figures. In particular in the painting entitled "La Somnambule" (1945), there appears within and painted upon the crinoline skirts of a female figure a winter village scene, the floating horizontal figure of a man with a cook's head, and a quadruped minus the front legs and with human legs instead of its back legs. In the same picture candelabra appears in the top right-hand corner although there is a moon below it, and a man's arm in a coat sleeve is in a region of the ear of the bridal female figure. Once again because Chagall is an artist, the total result of these compositions is enchanting, and has brought Chagall fame in all countries in which his pictures have been exhibited. But this means only that Chagall, being an artist, has chosen to use as the material of his pictures concepts and plastic forms which many experience. These are a common possession of all human beings, but of which we are at present unaware.

To make this clear, let us consider two drawings of a young woman patient. In the first, out of the mouth of a dragon's head come what she termed 'many tubes' or 'many tongues' with parts of the human body attached to the end of them. The body of the dragon curving away then becomes part of a scene of a river with a lugger on it and a camel on the bank. The end of the tail is finally looped round a kettle. At the bottom left-hand corner of the paper on which this drawing appears is a quite different small scene of a prehistoric monster standing by a sheet of water; at the top of the paper is a crucifix with a charwoman prostrate before it: a lamp floats in the middle, as does Chagall's candelabra, and a crown sails away to the right on wings. In

the second drawing a whole undersea world with seaweed and sea creatures appears inside a woman's abdomen, and in the place of breasts are bombs. We should here note that in the patient's drawings parts of the human body become mechanical objects where in Chagall's animal and human parts are interchanged.

We have here then drawings suggesting the 'introjected objects' of psychoanalysts. Indeed this same patient described at another session that at one time she had so vivid a feeling of her father's body, diminished to something smaller than life, present within her own body, with the face at right angles to her neck, that she maintained that the 'tickling in the throat' from which she suffered, was caused by his moustache touching the sides of her throat. At the same time this patient is, as far as daily life¹³ concerned, remarkable for her quick and correct Observation of people and her sound common sense.

Another feature of Chagall's paintings is the confusion of time and space or, put the other way round, the absence of the dimensions of time and space. The materials he uses appear, therefore, to be suitable for the expression of experience, in which there is neither time nor space but only the immediacy of experience, each experience obliterating the one before it and replacing it with itself.

Now the beauty and harmony of Chagall's pictures and the gulf that in that aspect separates them from the productions of patients, gives much material for thought, material, which arises equally out of contemplation of the work of Blake, of Coleridge, of James Joyce and of Henry Moore or of Hieronymous Bosch. The great artist works with the same tools as our own actual experience could make accessible to all of us, but he produces results, which are mysterious and act powerfully on us. Where the work of our patients very often reflects fear, horror and suffering, the work of these artists, even where we cannot understand it with our intelligence, affects some other part of our being in a way peculiar to itself, often calling our responses of which we did not previously know ourselves capable.

Here lies the key to the difference between the Primary System in health and illness and this difference will be described in more detail later on. The fact having been established that these strange processes exist, it is now necessary to consider the questions of how they came about and what they convey: and as to the place that these processes play in the total personality. The first idea that will occur to any worker familiar with the technique of free association is that these represent the chain of free association occur- inn, not in sequence as it usually does, but congested or condensed, as it were, and as indeed in psychoanalytic studies often occurs, into a solid mass.

It will be useful, therefore, to start there and to analyse out some of these combinations. To do so we might take a hypothetical case in which a man walking down a street, undergoing emotional experiences of high significance for him, but of a type liable later to be repressed, at the same time notices idly that a woman on the opposite side of the street, wearing a

red hat is passing a pillar box of exactly the same colour. Further, as she comes towards him, she moves in front of a small front garden to the houses on the street, in which there are some Paul Crumpel geraniums. The colour of these, he casually notices, is the same as that of her hat and the pillar box. These three as they come together make, as it were, a column of red topped with a hat and finishing with fluffy flowers. It is possible that he would remember that experience exactly as he had experienced it; or the sight, on another occasion, of a component part of the combination would reproduce for him the other part; or even that when some chord in the accompanying emotional experience was touched, it would lead him to associate that with these, or the other way about. But whichever way it happened, he would at all times see the hat as a hat and the pillar box and flowers as a pillar box and flowers. It is necessary to examine this fact a little closer to see why this should be. To do so, let us consider the experience of a foreigner coming to a country with the life of which he is unfamiliar, as for instance, the arrival in the seventeenth century of Europeans in China. Or let us take our own experience when moving around an exhibition of pictures of an artist with whose style we are unfamiliar; or going around a number of furnished houses looking for accommodation. When we attempt later on to remember accurately the arrangement of the items we have seen, if we make a note of what we remember and then compare with the actual facts, we shall find that we have confused the characters of the objects seen and in memory attached the qualities of one part to another and so on. It is this well-known phenomenon, which renders so much legal witness and even scientific record on occasion unreliable.

It may then be agreed that the reason the man in the street would be unlikely to do this with the pillar box, hat and flowers lies in his perfect familiarity with those objects and with their functions. Moreover, they have displayed themselves before him as he is accustomed to seeing them. He has seen many hats, knows well their purpose and cannot mix the hat, for instance with the face of the wearer. He has posted many letters and only the swiftest glance is needed to tell him all he needs to know about the pillar box. The same is true of the flowers, particularly if he lives in London. He is, therefore, able swiftly to abstract one quality from each of these and associate it with the same quality abstracted from the other objects, while at the same time holding each distinct in his mind. That is to say, his ability to keep these distinct while at the same time associating them through a single aspect, depends UPON HIS PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE. Had he not had that experience, this would not have been possible for him, or only in exceptional circumstances.

But it is just this element, which is missing in children, especially young children. It must be emphasised that the one essential characteristic of all children's experience is that it is new to them, and comes, in the larger number of cases uncombined with understanding of the significance to other people of the sensorial experiences personally experienced.

Now it is one of the characteristics of intelligence that the owner attempts, as if driven by an inner need for internal economy,' to group his

experiences together. We all do this in cataloguing automatically. As soon as we meet some new fact, we say to ourselves in order to locate it: "That is rather like an X, but with the added character of Y." This impulse starts at as early an age as we have been able to gain contact with children (it may even begin prenatally). But in order to make a catalogue some principle must be adopted by which events, taking that word in its most limited meaning to apply to all items of experience, may be grouped. The author had the opportunity of discussing this point with the late Professor Spearman at the General Meeting of the British Psychological Society in Manchester in 1957; he agreed with her that the usual method of grouping in ordinary speech and usage of the adult includes a large measure of consideration of function and of common use. Thus, when thinking of a knife we tend to speak of its sharpness or bluntness, of its size and use — pen knife, dinner knife, etc., and do not use the adjectives 'cold', 'blueish', 'sour to taste', etc., which are equally appropriate to it. We do this not because we deny the existence of these qualities or could not perceive them if we desired to, but because they are uninteresting to us and so not noticed. Once again, the perception of these qualities we do notice involves experience of their use, and, therefore, is ex hypothesi inaccessible to young children.

By what method, therefore, do children classify their experience? This was one of the first questions that it was essential to answer and the material collected over many years has made it quite certain that the answer is: "By the quality of the personal experience the child has of the thing and event in question". Thus "Things which made me feel horrid" go together, as do "Things which made me feel warm", etc., etc., up to the greatest refinement of difference in sensitive children in all varieties of experience. Moreover, items when grouped together in this way do not become associated; they coalesce the shared quality not combining them in a way that can be separated later by the owner into the component parts, but becoming entirely identified so that the original items now form part of a single whole. Here is a little story, which makes this clearer. A little boy of 3 ½ with a pretty social mother had a green, shining, smooth toy duck to which he was much attached. He used to put it under his cheek when sleeping. This duck quacked. His mother used to go out a great deal in the evening and so came up to his nursery usually wearing a green silk evening dress, to read him a good night story. She then sat in a low chair, and being rather tall, her knees came just to the height of his cheek. It was their custom that when he had had his bath he came in from the bath room to his nursery with his duck under one arm, paused at the door, locked at his mother, then ran forward, stroked his cheek on his mother's knee and cuddled down, and she read him his story. Every night this little ritual was carried out. But one night his mother came up wearing a red dress. The little boy paused at the door and looked at her very hard before he came forward rather slowly, did not stroke her knee with his cheek and climbed up rather soberly on to her lap. This happened two nights, and at the third he stood at the door and burst into tears and said, "Oh Mummy, why do you not put on your quacking dress?" That is to say, the whole combination of affection, greenness, smoothness, cheek stroking etc., and quacking had come together into a whole, and it was a matter of chance which of this composite group of qualities he might hit on to characterise the whole.

This is the process by which the inner experience of children becomes grouped, and to the results of this process has been given the name "cluster". The strange composite objects in Chagall's pictures are almost certainly clusters, though this could not be finally settled without investigating them with the artist himself. The difference is that Chagall is a great artist and children are just children. There are innumerable clusters in each child's mind. The number and variety depend upon two factors; the sensitivity and intellectual quality of the child, and the variety of its experience. Clusters are of all sizes and complexity and composed of very various material.

The formation of clusters, it would appear, is an essential process in the development of the individual personality. When the child is sensitive and intelligent, the linking together which takes place in this way in early life, of experiences of intimacy and intensity in ways which are personal to him and which are afterwards forgotten in a manner to be described later, gives the personality resources to be drawn upon which are of estimable value. From this region come later the five miles meandering with a mazy motion", the "Tiger, tiger burning bright, in the finest of the night" and so on, that delight us as adults. Since much of our essential experience is similar to that of the poet, musician or sculptor in whom a cluster can burst into poetic speech, or dynamic sound of form, the creation of an artist will express for us similar clusters in our own experience which are inaccessible to ordinary man, in so doing they bring about in us discharge of energy and release of tension and the experience of profound inner satisfaction.

Now two main characteristics are observable in any large collection of studies of this kind. The first is the occurrence in 'worlds' made by patients who vary in every possible way in age sex, complaint and intellectual capacity of the same formations. Take for instance a relatively simple formation, that of the mound surrounded with water which is, at times, a volcano, this can occur with a number of variations in different patients, but with always the same essential features. This is a representation plastically of the kind of experience which in an artist can result because of his temperament and ability, in the 'explosion' of a work of art, but which in a patient expresses only anxiety and neurotic tension. There are a very large number of these constant factors, but we are only at the beginning of the recognition of them mid an understanding of their significance, both in themselves and in and for the patient who makes them.

The second characteristic of this type of material is the individuality of each patient's productions when these are considered as a whole. This parallels to some extent what we all know of human life, we are all born, feed from a mother or a bottle that we suck, grow in stature with the constant change of relation to the outer world that this involves, come into full possession of our bodily powers, including those of reproduction, and finally die. Our faces and forms are made of the same features, but no two individuals' lives are really alike. In the same way there is a certain likeness in the material produced by patients when it is itemised. Were this not so it would be impossible ever to think of understanding it; but there is an infinite

difference in the manner in which the material is grouped and in the individual features which are added by each individual patient.

It is quite impossible within the scope of this paper even to begin to show the range and variety and the infinite subtlety and complexity of these clusters and the light they throw upon processes of individual and of group thoughts. We must, therefore, pass on to another aspect, that of how clusters are arranged. Intensive study of material from roughly two thousand cases has brought much material on this subject to light. To arrive at an understanding of the full meaning of any primary system production either of mosaics or 'worlds' - a series of material of the same kind from the same individual should be studied together, because the first productions often contain - as does the first interview of a long analysis - the germ of all that comes later.

A very striking similarity between the development of primary system material and of musical themes here appears. The later themes emerge from elaboration of elements of the original design. 'It is as if the whole system were charged with power which only slowly becomes perceptible as it finds expression for itself, thus once more paralleling the process of artistic creation.

So far the clusters have only been considered from their sensorial side. But clusters also represent, and in the most powerful way, dynamic experiences. To illustrate this a very simple picture is shown in the exhibition. This was made and drawn by a young Woman and represents the following: At the top are, in parallel lines, a black smear, a green hedge and a train of trucks loaded with coal. This train is going very fast. The blackness above is frightening, as things pop up in it and one does not know what they are. Below these a child runs. She is really, the painter said, running out of the picture towards the beholder. She is running with all her might but she does not know to where she runs - it is the running of panic combined with the aimless running for the sake of movement of young children. Below on the left is a heap of faeces and then of smoking manure with streaks of blood in it, and on the right the sound that trucks made when heard shunting in the night. This picture aroused powerful vague emotion in the painter. She described this as follows: (the thoughts are given in the order they occurred) "It is important that the manure steamed - like the train - like smoke. I loved (that is as a child) giving plants heaps of nature (pause) the train is in pieces - like sausages. Coal burns, it leaves ash - I have often heard of lavatory (her word for faeces) referred to as ash. Yes, I remember tramps' hats popping up from behind a hedge (she later painted this incident without realising what she was painting) it's like when a man finishes P-ing, it comes in spurts. Something here is really like a face (she worked this out in great detail later) the nose area and a little like sick. There's something somewhere about what drives a train being partly water and steam, sick cones up in jabs too and is also hot - horrible trains at night, I used to hear shunting and puffing, frightening. P-ing is like lav, coning out with a rush (here followed a reference to early childhood defecation experiences when she had to get out of bed suddenly", from beside a heavily sleeping sister, because of a sudden onset of diarrhoea and

run a down a terrifying dark passage to a frightening lavatory.) I think of something Cook told us about a man, and while he had been ill and away from home they had built a railway and a bridge, but he had not known of it, and he said he had seen a row of houses rushing down a drain (i.e. a train going under a bridge): if one is being upset inside one feels one's whole inside is going to rush out, like it dies down the lavatory plug - I get a feeling that if I start machining I shall get faster and faster - I shall lose control - Very like running down a slope, you start all right and then you can't stop yourself later - and tobogganing."

Here then, therefore, is a cluster and in it are entangled a number of the patient's phobias, sights, sounds, sensations, memories, conceptions and motor experiences, the whole highly charged with energy. All these factors and feelings are, therefore, interrelated, and the material of this picture recurred in other forms and combined with other material in dreams and in worlds. If space permitted, many examples of this sort could be given where the strongest feelings form part of the clusters.

To return for a moment to the upside down faces of Chagall. One of the most striking features of the interrelation of clusters among themselves is the interchange of positions. Clusters are not arranged flat or vertically but apparently in a massive clumped manner. Children (and also such adults as have been studied so far) often attempt to arrange objects suspended in space above the 'world' trays, and the relation between 'world' and 'world' of the same patient makes it clear that they are conceived plastically. Not only is this true, but confusion between the relation of glove and hand and that of 'inside out' with the 'right way out' also frequently occurs.

This leads to a consideration of the relation between the clusters. How is the whole system tied together and what is the dynamic quality?

As far as it is possible to make a statement what has been observed, it would appear that energy invests the whole of the clusters of the Primary System, but does so in an uneven fashion. Some clusters are very highly charged, some less so; and the question of what happens to this energy and what part is played in the conscious life of the individual by the pressure of these clusters, depends on the next feature of the structure of the psycho that has appeared from investigations, which is the formation of the Secondary System.

It appears that the Primary System begins with the first beginning of sensorial experience and continues throughout life. But pari passu with the formation of the Primary System, the child begins to struggle to make contact and to understand the world that he shares with the rest of his surroundings. To say this is only to say, in other words, what is the common ground and study of all the aspects of child development. Already a great deal is known about this, and there is nothing new to add here. The child as he grows up goes through all the stages known to child psychology and shown especially by the beautiful and careful work of Gesell and his school. Through these processes he learns to gain mastery over his own body and gradually to

understand and in a practical way to master his environment, adding at about the age of eight the supreme achievement of mankind, the ability to communicate with others, and with his interior self, in language.

Thus, in every child there are two systems. The Primary System is personal, idiosyncratic, massive and multidimensional, by its nature incommunicable in words to others. Parallel with the development of this goes the development of the Secondary System, which is reasonable, practical, governed by causality, shared with other people and to a large extent describable in language. The Primary System is massive, non-rational, peculiarly constructed, entirely individual, and made up of groups of clusters not later separable by free association, all charged with undifferentiated energy. The Secondary System is clear, logical, reasonable, and uses language as its tool.

Now the important point is that the contents of the Primary System cannot appear in the Secondary System. Most people are, therefore, totally unaware of their existence and contemptuous about the possibility. These contents are, in this sense truly unconscious. But they are so, not through repression, either of the Freudian or Jungian type, but for the simple reason that Primary System material as such, and in its crude state, is totally inexpressible in secondary system terms.

In order to discover the Primary System, material has to be made accessible to the patient in which constructions of this peculiar nature can be expressed. It is the absence of such material, which has prevented its discovery hitherto. Similarly for the expression of music, instruments capable of producing certain types of sound must be available and adequate; suitable stone must be available for the production of sculpture. What, for instance, it is interesting to meditate, would have been the fate of Prokofiev or Beethoven had they been born in the Greece of classical times, or of Henry Moore if born in a desert of sand?

In collections of mosaics made by workers as far apart as Sweden, Switzerland and Central France, all the characteristics described appear; and also in worlds made in Sweden as in those made in this country. For development to be normal, two things are essential. First of all, there is much in the Primary System that is common to many different individuals and groups, and fairy tales, folklore, myth and fable embody many of these elements. As the Jungian school of analysis has shown, through enjoyment of these the energy which charges primary clusters can find its way through the Secondary System, to expression in the outside world. Certain of the clusters even become almost tangible in solidity and form 'the 'introjected objects' of psychoanalysis.

The second necessity is adequate opportunity for the child to play and toleration of his play and his difficulties in adaptation by the adults around him. Gradually then he corrects his interior concepts through contact with external reality, and the energy with which the clusters in the Primary System are charged passes through to the Secondary System to find expression in the

outside world. If, however, this does not occur for any of the many reasons that can happen with any child, then four conditions may result and these correspond to the four main disabilities of the children we treat. First, the energy may remain locked up in the primary clusters. In this case the child becomes listless and without interest, unable to put energy into any aspect of living, he tends to be conventional, uninteresting as a character and under the domination of outside circumstances. Secondly, if the amount of energy is greater and more concentrated in certain parts Of the Primary System, with no outlet through the Secondary System, then the energy, finding no way out, comes to be concentrated in the body. Different organs appear to be associated with different types of cluster; thus arise the asthmas, the catarrhs, the eczemas, convulsions, disturbances of digestive and sleep habits, and so on, which have no organic basis. Thirdly, if, on the other hand, the child takes his clusters for reality and tries to see them in the outside world, they make themselves into phobias and rituals and obsessions. And fourthly, if it be the type of child who cannot achieve a proper development of his Secondary System and a clear distinction between what is outside and what within, the outside world becomes for him mixed up with his inner life and his relation to reality confused. According to the content of his clusters he may become the dreamy detached child, the child who appears to be suffering from an early psychosis, or the neurotic delinquent. A single child may even develop all four types of trouble, or varying types may appear in turn during the lifetime, or the treatment of any single individual, depending upon his constitution and upon circumstances.

Another fate may occur in later life. The Secondary System, through some external circumstances of physical disease, may disintegrate. Then the Primary System is liable to flood over the debris, using whatever means it can to express itself and giving the appearances with which we are familiar in several forms of psychoses, notably in some forms of schizophrenia.

This is what may, for example, happened in Nazi Germany. The Secondary System in that country had for years previous to 1933 been more highly developed than in any country, with little opportunity in individuals for play. This steadily increased the gap, both individually and nationally between the Primary and Secondary Systems. The lack of material in education and life for expression of the contents of the Primary System, and so for modifications to take place, kept it in too many people both at a primitive level and in a state of high tension. The loss of public confidence in the value of the Secondary System, consequent upon economic stress, led ultimately to a breakdown of the whole structure of the Secondary System. What then happened was a flooding of the personality of many individuals and groups with the disjointed elements of the Primary System. Within the Nazi movement, therefore, the Primary System came to take the place of the Secondary System, with its passion, cruelty and unreality, and than through the dynamic of the leadership of Hitler, the sort of stuff we find in the Primary System of neurotic children came to be taken for reality and ultimately given actual expression in reality.

A remarkable study of individual Nazi camp officials has recently appeared, written by Dr. Lingens Reiner in a book called "Prisoner of Fear", a description of a woman prisoner-physician's experience of Auschwitz and Dachau. This courageous book bears out exactly what has been said and shows the camp guards, doctors and officers not to have been organised individuals at all but persons in whom disintegrated clusters had become animated - each taking charge in turn of the actions of the individual's body, so that guilt was evaded because one part of the personality was dissociated from the other in the way that clusters are often separated from one another in the Primary System.

The mapping of the Primary System is only in its beginnings, and what has been set forth here is only some of the highlights, as it were, of the experience gained. It takes a full three years to train workers in the understanding of the nature of actual clusters in actual children, and in the acquiring of adequate skill in the use of this knowledge in therapy. But these scrappy notes, most inadequate to the vastness of the subject with which they attempt to cope, may have provided something to stimulate interest in this pregnant subject and perhaps to form a basis upon which to be considered later - the use of the Primary System in psychotherapy.