

THE QUESTION OF GENUINE FREEDOM – PART TWO

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THE PSYCHOANALYTIC TRAP

We may agree, as John Hospers does in answering Professor Schlick, that “if the question is asked whether every event is caused, the answer is undoubtedly, yes; if it is whether every event is compelled, the answer is clearly, no. Free acts are uncompelled acts, not uncaused acts. . .” But, with Hospers, we may go on to ask, “May it not be that while the identification of ‘free’ with ‘uncompelled’ is acceptable, the area of compelled acts is vastly greater than [Schlick] or most other philosophers have ever suspected?”¹² Having asked the question, we must answer it, as Hospers does, by saying that, indeed, the area of coercion is much wider and deeper than often realized, because man is coerced not only by external forces, but also by those internal forces which reside in what modern psychological theory calls the unconscious mind. Man chooses what he chooses because of hidden unconscious compulsions.

The conscious life of the human being, including the conscious decisions and volitions, is merely a mouthpiece for the unconscious. . . The important point for us to see in the present context is that *it is the unconscious that determines what the conscious impulses and conscious actions shall be.*¹³

Schlick declares that an act is free when it is determined by a man’s character; when he operates unfrustratedly from his character. Against this the question to be asked is the one Hospers asks: But what is the real situation (the true condition of freedom and moral responsibility) “if the most decisive aspects of one’s character were already irrevocably acquired before he could do anything to mold them?”¹⁴

Psychoanalysts sometimes speak of the “illusion of freedom.” That freedom as an illusion is a conclusion which arises out of numerous

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¹²“Free-will and Psychoanalysis,” *Readings in Ethical Theory*, edited by Wilfred Sellers and John Hospers, N.Y.: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952, p. 562.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 563; 564

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 563

case studies which indicate that although persons believe they are making free choices, they are, in fact merely deciding and acting upon the coercion of hidden compulsions. Now, if what people mean when they talk about freedom is the idea that "conscious will is the master of destiny," then they are deluded in ascribing freedom to many (perhaps even any) choices they make. Schlick admits that mental illness could be regarded as a compulsive force. A neurosis acts as if it were an alien agent compelling the person to decisions against his will. Hospers simply points out that the evidence of modern psychiatry finds "neurosis" as the rule more often than the exception. Hospers states the lamentable situation as follows.

Between the unconscious that willy-nilly determines your actions, and the external force which pushes you, there is little if anything to choose. The unconscious is just as if it were an outside force; and, indeed, psychiatrists will assert that the inner Hitler (your super-ego) can torment you far more than any external Hitler can. Thus the kind of freedom that people want, the only kind they will settle for, is precisely the kind that psychiatry says they cannot have.¹⁵

It seems to follow from Schlick's admission of the compulsive nature of neurosis and Hospers' extension of this "disease", that much human behavior (much more than normally suspected) is unfree. One could say that freedom does exist where external restraints are missing and where neurosis is not involved. One could say psychoanalytically that "a person's freedom is present *in inverse proportion to his neuroticism*; in other words, the more his acts are determined by a malevolent unconscious, the less free he is."¹⁶ One might, therefore, speak of degrees of freedom. The mentally undisturbed are freer than those who are victimized by a malevolent unconscious. But if freedom means choosing independently of unconscious determination (i.e., independently of psychic coercions) either malevolent or benevolent, then modern psychiatry would declare for nonfreedom. All of the motivations and volitions that structure our basic attitudes toward life and activate our major life-style actions are based in and coerced by the unconscious. "Only the comparatively 'vanilla-flavored' aspects of our lives—such as our behavior toward people who don't really matter to us—are exempted from this rule."¹⁷

We must conclude, then, that either all important human freedom

¹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 571-572

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 574-575

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 575

is to be denied (freedom is an illusion or operates only in trivialities), or that a different position must be taken with regard to man's character or disposition and to the compulsions of the unconscious mind. We shall make such a proposal, arguing that the character of a person can be, by a radical or converting choice, reconstructed and freed from the domination of the *present* hidden impulses and habitual responses.

THE CONVERTING CHOICE

Earlier we mentioned several forms of limitation on human freedom: the genetic condition, the kairotic condition, the mechanistic model. We must now deal with the fourth of these limitations, the "psychic set". By psychic set we mean what Ryle apparently means by the "dispositional because" in man, and what Schlick means by "natural desires," and by what Hospers, and in general psychiatrists mean, by the "unconscious that determines what the conscious impulses and conscious actions shall be."

A person makes his choices out of a matrix of dispositions; out of a psychic set. He may be said (1) to choose what he wants if he is not restrained by an external coercion, but (2) his choices are directed by his unconscious condition, his psychic set, which has been laid down in him by earlier conditioning and over which he has no control, or little control. We shall argue that there is evidence that this second assertion about control is not an absolute condition even always in major dimensions, but can be by an act, we shall call the converting choice, freely chosen, albeit only with difficulty.

It is the psychic set (the depth structure in our psychic equipment) which causes us to choose tea instead of coffee or a particular sort of woman to marry. To be sure, it does seem to stretch things some to claim that one chooses tea instead of coffee because of some deep seated neuro-psychical connection system, especially when occasionally, almost whimsically, we may briefly debate the question and choose coffee instead. But, of course, Hospers, and psychiatrists in general, would grant this "vanilla-flavored," trivial sort of non-coerced choice. Such choices may be exempt from the rule of unconscious compulsion; but all significant choices are not so exempt.

. . . our impulses and volitions having to do with out basic attitudes towards life, whether we are optimistic or pessimistic, tough-minded or tenderminded, whether our tempers are quick or slow, whether we are 'naturally self-seeking' or 'naturally benevolent' (*and all the acts consequent upon these things*), what things

annoy us, whether we take to blonds or brunettes, old or young, whether we become philosophers or artists or businessmen—all this has its basis in the unconscious.¹⁸

It is this critical form of non-freedom which must be challenged or true human freedom is bankrupt. And with this bankruptcy all the currency of moral judgments is devalued to zero. Unless man has some power to be a "cause" in his own motivational system, his own psychic set, he loses most of what he thinks he is when he calls himself a man. Unless he has some control over his basic attitudes towards life and over the actions which flow from them, the whole business of responsible living must be acknowledged as a farce. All criminals become helpless victims, and all heroes become mere puppets. All statements of approbation and condemnation become equally groundless. They are, in fact, silly assertions. One does not congratulate his cow when her milk is abundant and tasty, or beat her when the milk is scarce or of disagreeable flavor—unless, of course, he is a rather stupid fellow with odd notions about cows and milk. Likewise one cannot praise or reprimand his son or a student or a politician or anyone else for resisting or succumbing to an evil temptation.

But if man has any real form of conscious control over his psychic set, if he can change the ground of his natural choosing, he is free where it counts. He can be the master of his destiny, or at least the navigator plotting and setting new courses for his life. He can to the degree necessary, be free to be both *homo* and *sapiens*.

In our attack upon psychoanalytic non-freedom we will initially concede the two major contentions of Schlick's and Hospers' arguments. First, granted that choices are never uncaused and that freedom means uncoerced, and, second, that major choices are motivated and even determined by a pre-established unconscious, psychic set, we shall make the radical suggestion that the "psychic set" is itself available to a reconstruction which can occur in the trauma of a *converting choice*. The basic problem of human freedom is not that one makes choices according to his natural disposition, or even is coerced to do so, but that he can, when the need is great, or the desire sufficient, change the unconscious, psychic set by an act of free choice. He can convert. He can change who he is inside, in basic attitude, to who he has decided he wants to be.

When we examine reports of the conversion experience, especially as recorded by William James, Edwin Starbuck, G.A. Coe, J.H. Leuba,

¹⁸*Ibid.*, p. 575.

and others who have examined such data from the point of view of psychology, we discover it to be an occurrence in the life of man which is not uncommon, and which is not an exclusively religious experience. Especially it is not an experience which must always be interpreted as an in-put from some external, divine or supernatural source, although it is often so regarded; i.e., as a theistic affair. But besides this it can be seen also as an "enlightenment experience," as "therapeutic talk," and as a "will-power insertion".

In all of these patterns, conversion appears as a dynamic personality change characterized by (1) a "dissatisfaction with", (2) a "struggle with", (3) a "turning from", and (4) a new structure of personality.

(1) Always in conversion there is a dissatisfaction with the person who is (the person I am) and a judgment that a basic change of personality is greatly to be desired.¹⁹

In the classical conversions of St. Paul, St. Augustine, Gautama Buddha, St. Francis, Zoroaster, Mahavira, Asoka, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Mohandas Gandhi, and numerous others, the first thing seen is their profound dissatisfaction with who they are and an overwhelming sense of error and wrongness in their lives. And by no means is this profound dissatisfaction (or conversion) limited to the giants of history. The following are conversion statements of more ordinary persons reported in James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*:

One Henry Alline reports: "I cried out within myself, O Lord God, I am lost. . .for the ways and methods I have prescribed for myself have all failed."

S. H. Hadley, who later became a rescuer of drunkards, reported of himself: "One Tuesday evening I sat in a saloon in Harlem, a homeless, friendless, dying drunkard. . .I said, 'Dear Jesus, can you help me?' . . . up to that moment my soul had been filled with indescribable gloom."²⁰

In these illustrations not only is distress obvious, but also (2) an awful inner struggle to overcome this distress is obvious. Conversion is never a casual affair. It is not like a simple role change—going quickly

¹⁹There are two general types of conversion in Christian religious tradition. One is predominantly an institutionally oriented affair in which the desired change is to be effected gradually by a "spiritual maturing" generally conceived to be the product of participation in sacraments and sacramentals. The other is essentially individual oriented, and is seen as the product of direct personal decision and effort. In this paper we are concerned with this second form because it is more clearly illustrative of the "converting choice," and because generally what it exhibits vividly is also contained in the first type but less obviously.

²⁰A Mentor Book, N.Y.: New American Library, 1961, pp., 177,166.

and easily from a father-type to a business type as the scenery changes from home to office, but conversion challenges basic attitudes and permanent dispositions and psychic energy directions. It is threatening and traumatic—a severe “struggle with”. And when it happens it is (3) always a sharp turning from, and (4) usually a new structure of personality.

Conversion as Theistic. On the Damascus Road, Paul turned from the old way sharply and became, in fact, a new man. Under the Bo-tree, Gautama changed dramatically from a distressed, longtime searcher after truth and became, in fact, Buddha—the enlightened one. In a room on Aldersgate Street, in low-key account of it (his own report: “I felt my heart strangely warmed.”), John Wesley stopped thrashing about the world searching for an answer big enough to live by and became a new and charismatic founder of a strongly conversionist religion. S. H. Hadley, in a derelicts’ mission house, after torturous hours of struggle suddenly “felt that Christ with all his brightness had come into my life; that, indeed, old things had passed away and all things had become new. From that moment till now I have never wanted to drink of whiskey.”²¹

Almost invariably in the conversion reports this claim of new life is made, and often the claim is supported by the subsequent criteria of actually changed living. To be sure, conversion is not a fool-proof system. The new life is not always a permanent affair. But our argument is not that the converting choice is always a better affair, or a permanent one, but that it is often so: a true choice that is both free and freeing.

Conversion as Enlightenment. So far, although we have denied that the theistic position is essential to conversion, we have not given any support to this, and we have been talking and illustrating theistically. Therefore we should now make a few remarks to alter the theistic image. To do this we might, first, look at one of the most important conversions in the history of the world, and a conversion which cannot properly be called a theistic conversion, but is what should be called an “enlightenment conversion”. It is the experience of Siddhartha Gautama, founder of Buddhism in the last half of the 6th and the early decades of the 5th century b.c.

Siddhartha, sometime in his late twenties, leaving his palatial home, his young wife and child, took on the ways of a forest-dwelling monk seeking after the meaning of life. Legend has it that he fled his comfortable home after having seen three monstrous facts of life: a

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 167.

decrepit old man sitting by the roadside, a loathsomely diseased man, and a dead man being borne through the streets on a bier. From these horrors he went in search of the calmness he saw one day in the face of a yellow robed monk. For six years Siddhartha was an unsuccessful searcher. He tried, perhaps too hard, by giving himself rigorously first to the practice of meditation and then to severe ascetic disciplines—the two common paths to salvation in India. But none of it was to any avail. Then one day after years of enormous effort, he gave up trying and sat down under the Bodhi-tree, and there abruptly it happened. Suddenly, completely, he knew the answer. He experienced enlightenment, and with it liberation. He was converted.

Now, in this experience there was no sudden in-put of grace from some external god. There was no god (in a theistic sense) at all. What happened was that Siddhartha suddenly had an insight, and with it a transformation of personality. He saw what he was looking for: a principle of life which at once both shattered human reality and reformed it new. There is a story that Gautama after he had become Buddha was asked if he were a god. He said, "no". Then he was asked if he were a saint. Again he said, "no". Finally he was asked, "Then what are you?" And he answered, "I am awake." His conversion was an awakening; a transformation of inner life with no theistic base or even overtones. He simply saw a new way and in seeing it became a new man—an enlightened one and a liberated one.

Apparently the theological dimension which is so often a part of an explanation of conversion is not an essential feature of conversion. Concerning this, Professor Leuba states:

When the sense of estrangement. . . breaks down, the individual finds himself 'at one with all creation.' He lives in the universal life; he and man, he and nature, he and God, are one. That state of confidence, trust, union with all things, following upon the achievement of moral unity, is the Faith-state. Various dogmatic beliefs suddenly, on the advent of the faith-state, acquire a character of certainty, assume a new reality, become an object of faith. . . . But such conviction being a mere casual offshoot of the faith-state, it is a gross error to imagine that the chief practical value of the faith-state is its power to stamp with the seal of reality particular theological conceptions.²²

Conversion as Therapeutic Talk. A further illustration of a non-theistic type conversion, and a different form of conversion, is the one which happens in "therapeutic talk," and especially within the very

²²*American Journal of Psychology*, vii, pp., 345-47.

precincts of psychoanalysis. The basic technique of psychoanalysis is to talk to a therapeutic end, and that therapeutic end is exactly what we mean when we say conversion. Erich Fromm in the last chapter of *The Heart of Man* declares that

...every psychoanalyst has seen patients who have been able to reverse the trends which seemed to determine their lives, once they became aware of them and make a concentrated effort to regain their freedom. But one need not be a psychoanalyst to have this experience. Some of us have had the same experience either with ourselves or with other people: the chain of alleged causality was broken and they took a course which seemed "miraculous" because it contradicted the most reasonable expectations that could have been formed on the basis of their past performances.²³

In these conversion experiences we have seen that the persons affected "have been able to reverse the trends which seem to determine their lives," as Fromm put it. They have become new persons. But there is another kind of change which is not so much a reversal of trends as it is the willful stifling of trends. Here the person remains the same person, with the same old unacceptable drives and propensities. There is only one critical difference, and it seems to be nothing more than the insertion of a will-power item into the structure of the personality. But an item which holds in check the unacceptable behavior which "naturally" arises from powerful, inner drives. Hadley might say that never after his conversion did he have the desire to drink again, but not all sufferers from alcoholism are so fortunate. In fact, most of them are not.

"My name John Jones. I am an alcoholic. I have not had a drink today. . . ." so goes the almost ritual form of introduction to witnessing in Alcoholics Anonymous. Not like a miracle, but like a mighty, continuing effort, this converting choice is made. It is not a swearing off for keeps, or for a year, or a month, or a week—but for today. Yet it is a choice, made out of great distress, at a tremendous effort, and it jams up Schlick's "realization of his natural desires," and Hoppers' "inner Hitler."

It is possible, as a matter of observable fact, for one to choose to alter the ground of his own choosing, the character of his unconscious, with whatever hidden compulsion it is composed of. A person can, and sometimes does, choose to change from what he is to what he is not—to a new kind of man, making new kinds of choices "naturally",

²³N.Y.: Harper and Row, 1964, p. 127.

i.e., from a new kind of unconscious motivation. He can convert. He can become a reformed man, a reconstructed man. The history of religion is filled with this phenomenon—with persons who stopped being what they “naturally” were and became dramatically and naturally something else. Indeed, what man has not taken a stand at some critical moment in his life and said, “This I will never do again. This I will never be again.” And not infrequently the decision so made has become not a transient resolution, but an ordering and living fact from that moment on. This kind of freedom is exactly the kind of freedom man expects and demands in order to have personal worth and moral validity as part of his human condition.

Said differently: it is possible for me to choose to change not just a mundane choice (my usual choosing of tea instead of coffee), but to change the structure of my whole character, with whatever depth elements it has, and become a new man. I can become concerned with my “ground of choices,” with who I am, or with who I am as reflected by the choices I make. I can begin to suspect that my emotive and reflective responses, my habits, my attitudes, my neurosis, my psychic set, is not all that it should be. It is lacking. So I decide (I choose) to change “myself.” I decided to become what I am not normally and naturally; and I do it.

That conversion happens is empirically demonstrable, but the basic nature of the choice that changes is not so obvious. However, two speculations of possible explanation seem promising and worthy of brief consideration here. The first speculation is that in his converting choice man is radically free. The choice is truly indeterminate; truly defiant of precise formulation, which means (not unlike the Copenhagen interpretation of the Heisenberg Principle) that the freedom involved is indeterminate on principle. The second speculation sees the converting choice as a catalytic choice made between alternative psychic sets by the mechanism of repression.

RADICAL FREEDOM

As we have observed the term cause can have several meanings: it can mean a descriptive or reportorial because, or it can mean a dispositional because. A further examination of the meaning of cause can result in another kind of because—a creative because. To answer the question, How do you account for the masterpieces of Shakespeare? one might say, “Because of the creative genius of the author.” Or we read a line of poetry (e.g., “Something there is that doesn’t love a wall. That wants it down. . .”) and we say, “Ah, how exactly right it is put. How charming. How beautifully expressed. I wish I had said

that." Or we hear how the great haikuist Matsuo Basho corrected his student Kikaku one day. They were going through the fields when Kikaku, seeing the darting dragonflies composed a haiku poem.

Red dragonflies!
Take off their wings,
And they are pepper pods!

But the master Basho cried, "No, you have missed it. It should be:

Red pepper pods!
Add wings to them,
And they are dragonflies!"

Even in translation one acquainted with—what?—creative expression, poetic beauty, knows on impact why Basho was master and Kikaku pupil. Or in a different medium, with initial shock perhaps, one looks at the Brillo boxes and Campbell Soup cans painted by Andy Warhol, and then after a few moments concedes, in some amazement perhaps, that looked at as Warhol sees them, and arranged for our seeing as he sees them, Brillo boxes are not just boxes and Campbell Soup cans are not just cans. They emerge as exciting objects of creative art.

In these sorts of situations we do not have just descriptive explanations—the painter with paints painting the picture in spacetime coordinates or the poet writing words on that day in that place; or just dispositional explanations—Brillo boxes/soup cans disposed to art objects in the eye and capacity of an Andy Warhol, or wings added to pepper pods rather than taken from dragonflies by a master haikuist. Instead, we have something bursting new and fresh and demanding explanations which includes words like "different" and "novel" and "exciting" and "beautiful", and (a bit more technically) "creative" and "creativity", "emergence" and "emergents." A new sort of category seems in order. Certainly statements of "descriptive because" can be used in art pieces, and "dispositional because" statements can be used, but so also must we use statements of unexpected occurrence and explosive newness. There are objects and happenings which seem to relate to their prior conditions of space-time connections and/or their dispositional propensities in ways different from ordinary "because" happenings.

Whereas there is a reasonably accountable connection between the force of a rock hitting the window and breaking it, or the brittleness of glass causing it to shatter when hit by a rock, there seems to be only a kind of accidental connection between a Brillo box and a new, vital art form. Here it would appear that prior conditions seem

to be little more than the grounds from which unprecedented and unpredicted (and even unpredictable) qualities emerge. Quantities (definite amounts of paint and canvas or ink, paper and word signs) are involved, and coordinates are involved (in this place at this time it is painted or written) and dispositions are involved (the paint and canvas are disposed to pictures, as the words to poetic forms), but in the arrangement of the quantities into certain coordinates and according to certain dispositional propensities, something unaccountable emerges.

And this kind of creativity or emergence cause has its parallels in non-human nature. When, for example, hydrogen combines with oxygen in the relationship of H_2O what results is not just a molecular change, but a substance demanding new categories to define its new qualities. Water emerging from two gas forms not simply as a new quantity, but as a whole spectrum of qualities. Wetness, quenchableness, refreshing, delightful, thundering, mysterious, exciting, beautiful are just a few of the words necessary to describe water; words which were not necessary to describe hydrogen and oxygen. This qualitative character of water (and especially its valuableness to life) is not explained adequately by the words hydrogen and oxygen, or even by the hidden dispositions of hydrogen and oxygen to combine into water. More and different explanation is demanded: It is an emergence (not unlike a Basho haiku and a Warhol painting) which simply happens out of the context of hydrogen-oxygen combined in parts two to one. Water is a novel thing. (Only one of an infinite number of similar novel things in nature), and the first time that water occurred (or any of the others first occurred) it was a radical novelty which no Laplacean Demon could have predicted, any more than it could have predicted Basho/Kikaku pepper pod dragon wings, or Warhol soup cans.

In closing, let us look at some notions which seem to follow from the conclusion that by conversion the disposition or psychic set is itself changed. First, it would appear that the choice to "change myself" is not made because my unconscious, with its controlling depth dimensions, whatever they are, "tells" me to do so, or compels me to do so. The choice seems to be made in spite of my natural disposition. It seems to be made because my disposition is suspected of being inadequate. My dissatisfaction is not simply because of what does exist, but because of what does not exist. I do not like me. I do not like the choices and attitude and actions that are normally and naturally mine. It would appear in this that the "choice to change," the converting choice, is not caused by the present dominant and tyrannical

condition of my disposition or psychic set, because the very ground that would vote for such a change is lacking in the dominant structure. So far as the existing structure is concerned there is no compulsion or "because" to change. Yet there is certainly urgency and "because" involved. I can feel it agonizingly. It must be, then, that the cause to change is some kind of insurgent. I get the "idea" that who I am has to change. This idea is a rebellious notion which I, somehow emancipated at least temporarily from my immediate psychic set, choose to take seriously not because I have a certain structure of desiderative and rational awareness (a certain disposition), but because, whatever it would otherwise be (e.g., one with the capacity to appreciate art, or to understand logical inferences, or to be naturally kind, or to escape from alcoholism), I do not have it, and I want it. My decision to change is obviously in my consciousness. I am conscious of it. But it seems to be there as some kind of alien. One might say that it is not *of* my consciousness. The source of this insurgent thought, this rebellious attitude, may come from outside of me; e.g., somebody may have criticized me, or I may hear a persuading sermon, or read a wise saying. Or the insurgent may be from somewhere inside me; e.g., a sudden enlightening awareness that something is missing from the way I usually emote, or think, or act. But this insurgent clamoring for a new order in me, a new man, a new kind of being, and the decision to act for this clamoring, does not arise from the structure that immediately constitutes my psychic set. Rather it seems to come in defiance to that set. Alerted to do so by an insurgent suggestion, thought, proposal, encouragement, I (in some agony perhaps) stand in judgment upon "who I am" (how I normally respond) and decide for a change. I make a converting choice.

It would seem then that if I choose to change myself, I make the choice not because the present structure of my dispositions, attitudes, thoughts, subconscious hang-ups and energy directions, makes me make the choice. I make it in some rebellion to that structure. I make it insurgently, defiantly, and *freely*.

The new man created in the converting choice may be in fact *new*: the product of an utterly free act of creation; an act which is indeterminate in the strictest sense of the term—on principle it could not possibly have been predicted any more than, according to the Copenhagen group, can the position and action, the energy and time of micro-micro phenomena be simultaneously measured and/or predicted.

The author, being a poetic and romantic type, prefers this kind of speculation, but he must readily admit that it is not the only pos-

sible speculation or probably the most popular one. Scientists will probably continue to prefer determinate explanations.

CONVERSION: CHOOSING THE ALTERNATE SET

The radical creativity proposal which essentially proposes that conversion represents the assertion of sovereignty of the freely choosing self over the unconscious processes or disposition may be challenged by asking if it might not rather be that conversion is the almost paradigm case of unconscious processes dominating the conscious will. The depth psychologists understand this to be that the old conscious psychic set is replaced by a long latent unconscious psychic set becoming conscious and superseding the old. The experience of conversion might be seen as occurring through a "replacement mechanism". The subject chooses to replace or radically modify one psychic set with another set already latently available to him. Conversion is simply a choice among alternatives, albeit a complicated, strenuous, even agonizing choice.

What is being proposed here is that there exists in a person an intrapsychic conflict between a dominant psychic set and one or more latent psychic sets. Conversion occurs when the dominant psychic set is repressed in favor of a different, heretofore, latent set. In other words, and simply stated, the "good man" was there all the time, and he got there just as the "bad man" got there, through the previous experiences of the subject. But now the subject clearly conscious of both "men", represses the "bad man" and let's the "good man" take over. This conversion then "is one piece of human behavior, albeit a complex one, which may be understood as a resultant of just the kind of motives and past influences which have been causing the trouble all along. . ." Or, as Hosper's puts it, if freedom means choosing independently of unconscious motivations and drives, either malevolent or benevolent, then modern psychiatry would declare for non-freedom.

This sort of position will surely reject the proposal of a creative cause in which a kind of unpredictable explosion of new personality occurs; but, it seems to me, that it does not necessarily reject the argument that the converting choice is itself a real choice.

Consider it this way: confronted with two styles of life (replete with their underlying psychic sets), both of which are a part of the experiences of the subject, he makes a conscious choice which in fact changes his life-style and with it even his character. He does this in such a way that causal connections can be seen by a skilled psychiatrist (and could perhaps have been on principle at least "guessed"

if not precisely predicted). But the subject does in fact choose to change himself. And he chooses not because the present structure of his dominant psychic set makes him make that choice. He makes it against that structure in favor of a latent but preferable structure.

And this is all that is necessary to afford man the freedom he needs to be a morally responsible being. It means basically that man does have a "say so" in his own life where it counts the most. And if the say so is not easily said that is not the issue. We are not proposing that man makes his free choices easily, but that he can, perhaps only with enormous effort, make the converting choice, which gives him enough authority over his own life to make him master where it counts, victim though he may be much of the time.

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