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**The Neuronal Crisis:
Meditate to Comprehend
the Nature of Psychosomatic Epidemic***

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Abstract

This article describes the “neuronal crisis,” the epidemic of psychosomatic illnesses observed all over the world, particularly in the West. The paper looks into the deeper real causes and seeks the most effective kind of cure for this malady. This leads to rational consideration of the metaphysical dimension of the human being and the fundamental problems (those of evil, of freedom, of God, of the soul, and of the body), where lack of sufficiency plays a major part in the etiology of these pathologies, as the desire for the Absolute is the basis of the unconscious. This approach presumes the Freudian model but denies its purely libidinal interpretation that substitutes desire for the Absolute with libido. Hence, an explanatory system applied to increasingly serious pathologies: ailments, neuroses, depressions, and psychoses. Frustration of one’s desire for the Good gives rise to a sublimation of finite goodness. The inevitable desublimation, caused by anguish because of the Evil, intense guilt, and the dramatization of evils, causes neuroses as awkward but inevitable solutions to the existential problem that is still unresolved, due to lack of functional and experimental knowledge. Psychiatry and even medicine must take into account the metaphysical layer, and, therefore, operate within an existential dynamic, aiming to progress in wisdom and to discover man, man’s brain and body, as these are structured around the axis of his desire.

* The article presents a restructured version of the fragments of my book *Ce monde qui nous rend fous: Réflexion philosophique sur la santé mentale* (“This World That Makes Us Mad: A Philosophical Reflection on Mental Health”) [Hude 2019].

Keywords: depression, desire, metaphysics, sublimation, dramatization, medicine, psychiatry, humanism.

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Нейрональный кризис: размышления для осознания природы психосоматических эпидемий*

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Аннотация

В статье обсуждается «нейрональный кризис» – эпидемия психосоматических заболеваний, наблюдающаяся во всем мире, особенно на Западе. Автор анализируются глубинные истинные причины недуга и исследуются наиболее эффективные способы лечения. Для понимания причин требуется рациональное рассмотрение метафизического измерения человека и фундаментальных проблем (проблемы зла, свободы, Бога, души и тела), отсутствие решения которых играет важную роль в этиологии этих недугов, поскольку стремление к Абсолюту является основой бессознательного. Автор принимает фрейдистскую модель, но отвергает ее сугубо «либидозную» интерпретацию, которая подменяет стремление к Абсолюту либидозным влечение. Вследствие этого предложенная система объяснения применима и к более серьезным патологиям: недомоганиям, неврозам, депрессиям и психозам. Разочарование в стремлении к благу приводит в итоге к сублимации добродетели. Неизбежная десублимация, обусловленная болью, причиненной злом, а также сильным чувством вины и драматизацией зла, вызывает неврозы как неудобные, но неизбежные решения экзистенциальной проблемы, которая тем не менее

* Статья представляет собой переработанную версию фрагментов моей книги «Ce monde qui nous rend fous: Réflexion philosophique sur la santé mentale» («Этот мир, который сводит нас с ума: философское размышление о психическом здоровье») [Hude 2019].

все еще остается неразрешенной из-за отсутствия функциональных и экспериментальных знаний. Психиатрия и вообще медицина должны учитывать метафизический уровень и, следовательно, действовать в рамках экзистенциальной динамики, стремиться к совершенствованию в мудрости и постижению человека – его мозга и тела, поскольку и мозг, и тело структурируются вокруг оси его желаний.

Ключевые слова: депрессия, желание, метафизика, сублимация, драматизация, медицина, психиатрия, гуманизм.

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Introduction

These meditations start from a major public health problem in our countries: the “neuronal crisis,”¹ the best-known core of which is the epidemic of *depression* [WHO 2020]. Let us start with this problem and then go back to it again, after having made all the detours necessary to solve it. The detours that are essential, that is to say by the Good, and by the Evil. They seem to be outside the topic, but these are the only ways whereby real solutions can be found.

Everybody knows the symptoms that accompany a *neural crisis*. Across all classes, there is growing psychological vulnerability: stress, uneasiness at work, absenteeism, fragility, and burn-out. We think of “resilience” and ways to obtain it. Insomnia and massive use of sleep-

¹ I prefer to use the term “neuronal crisis” to emphasize that, in an epidemic of psychosomatic diseases, there is more about somatic, embodied, and medical crisis rather than just about cultural, or existential, or mental crisis. These disorders do arise from moral or social difficulties in dealing with existential, human, or metaphysical, deep problems; but habits of inappropriate behavior are formed from them. The repetition of these inappropriate habitual forms of behavior ultimately forms structures in the brain that embody very unreasonable choices and logic, which ultimately disrupt the natural play of all functions and restrict human freedom and choices. The phrase “neuronal crisis” seemed to me necessary in order not to forget about the body from the very beginning, but it would be deceiving if it seemed to imply a materialistic exaggeration of this intention.

ing pills, anxiety and use of tranquilizers, hypochondria, massive drug addiction (we associate these with an “opioid crisis,” especially in the United States, a high mortality from overdose, often bordering on suicide²), especially among young people³. Troubling too, in “depressed societies” [Anatrella 1993], is fear of commitment and of life as such, going together with very low rates of marriage and fertility. Finally, let us note the auto-intoxication by overconsumption of entertainment (cinema, television, social networks, etc.), as these provide a lot of background noise and intense agitation, to lower the abnormal level of anxiety.

To sum it up, in the 21st century, developed societies combine the highest global and historical level of physical well-being and health with an apparently increasing high level of mental disorder and morbidity. The World Health Organization has expressed alarm over a massive phenomenon⁴.

These are the facts on which we further meditate.

When the neuronal epidemic continues to spread and its effects extend far beyond the medical field, it can no longer remain the monopoly

² The neuronal crisis in France does not seem to be accompanied by an increase in the number of suicides, on the contrary [Béguin 2018]. On the other hand, in the United States, over the last fifteen years, the suicide rate has increased by 25%, rising to 13 per 100 000, a level slightly lower than that of France. (Cf. the research of sociologists [Baudelot & Establet 2006].)

³ In France, according to studies by the Economic and Social Council, the number of deaths by suicide has dropped by half over the past twenty-five years, thanks to prevention policies. Nevertheless, the total number of suicide attempts would be 22 times higher, or 0.5% per year, for the age group of 25–35 year-olds.

⁴ The depression epidemic is reportedly growing steadily at a rate of 2% per year and already affects one-twentieth of adults worldwide each year. If the depression really increases, it is more likely that other psychic or mental pathologies will increase as well. In fact, the 2017 annual report of the French Ministry of Public Health says: “Globally, the WHO considers that five of the ten most worrying pathologies in the twenty-first century relate to mental disorders: schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, addictions, depression and obsessive-compulsive disorders, responsible for the major part of suicide mortality, severe disabilities and handicaps as well as a deteriorated quality of life for those affected.” Should we put these alarming assertions into perspective? In any case, in 2010, according to the WHO, 298 million people suffered from depression, or 4.3% of the world’s population. The scourge hits more developed countries more severely. This UN health ministry estimates, in a March 2017 press release, that depressive disorders are the number one morbidity and disability factor in the world. Between 2005 and 2015, they increased by more than 18%.

of certain professionals – doctors, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, and specialists in neuroscience. Narrow specialization, instead of ensuring higher objectivity, locks us among so many subjective philosophical belief systems: materialism, positivism, or nihilism. These systems are *normal illusions of specialized reason*, the blinders of the mind that knows more and more, but comprehends less and less. Moreover, these illusions make man ill by frustrating his need for meaning. Therefore, we need fundamental conceptual advances, breakthroughs, and in order to obtain that, we are ready to take certain theoretical risks.

I believe that a philosopher does his duty by modestly expressing his reasonable opinions on unresolved problems, especially when these are very sensitive and affect the common good.

Bergson believed that the progress of science would put an end to their divorce from wisdom because metaphysical theses would end up as truths that are able to function as hypotheses, susceptible to verification by the body of facts that supports them or not, to confirm the consistency of the facts. If the dialogue works true, a genuine humanistic knowledge will eventually unite science, wisdom, and the life experience of decision makers.

Therefore, the public health problem, from which we started, cannot be solved independently from the examination of a very vast problem of wisdom, cultural and existential, – the crisis of global, Western, and European humanism. Ensuring proper development of the psyche, or healing it, also means overcoming this crisis, bringing to light a new humanism and inventing scientific and technical, political and social modes, capable of expressing it: a society that does not drive people crazy.

Need for humanistic medicine

Faced with the spread of the neuronal crisis and the relative powerlessness of medicine in curbing it, decision-makers and all active citizens must reflect on its *root* causes. Its effective treatment would require exploring and attacking these “root” causes. But what will “exploring” mean here?

Not just replacing materialistic medicine with the psychoanalytic approach: “The debates on psychotherapies and drugs are stalling. They wander from one dualism to another, alternating the whole psyche without the brain and the whole biological substance without a psyche” [Jouvent 2013, 217].

Medicine using pharmacology above all is justified to the extent that serious mental disorders are accompanied by certain imbalances in

the brain chemistry⁵. Molecules can restore the natural balances, bring patients back to normal life, and rid them of distressing symptoms. However, the molecules cannot act upon the causes. Psychologists and psychoanalysts are quite right when they say that a madman is paradoxically “rational” (including one who goes crazy every now and then, as each of us may [André 2008]). He adopts an expensive strategy, but it was the only one that seemed “rational” to him, the only one allowing him to overcome his anxieties, frustrations, and contradictions. He reacts to a deep state of alienation, in such issues as family, linguistic, social spheres, etc. His “insanity” has meaning and corresponds to all of his great human interests, and this certainly cannot be “cured” unless the person is offered a better solution to his existential problem – provided of course that his state allows reasonable confidential communication.

However, this is rarely the case, and that is why, while this type of solution is necessary, it is absolutely not sufficient. Psychologists lack an adequate explanation of what is involuntary and suffered in alienation. A “physical” explanation is also necessary to account for the alienation itself, which cannot be reduced to “excessive normality” or “ordinary suffering.” But it is very likely that physical therapies will not get far if they are not based on a “physics of meaning,” a “neurology of the metaphysical and the mystical.” We must therefore propose a satisfactory coordination, fully sufficient, of the two necessary explanations.

Besides the forgetting of the body, another weakness of psychological explanations, which is common in materialistic explanations, is, in general, the forgetting of metaphysics.

The “psychology” of a human being is that of a metaphysical animal. The existential human problem is, at its core, metaphysical. For example, many children suffer from anguish at the thought of their parents’ death, but deep down this is due to the enigma of death itself. There is nothing pathological about it: it is just proof of intelligence. The primary causes of psychic discomfort lie in an insufficient or defective self-interpretation, both existential-metaphysical and family-social. As Stoic wisdom had already understood, changing this understanding is the only way to truly heal. The man who wants to be cured cannot do without research leading at least to some substantial truth, even if the result remains incomplete.

⁵ According to some specialists, the chemical imbalance is a prejudice [Göttsche 2014].

Such a therapeutic practice would authentically deserve the name of humanist medicine. The core of such a reform is to put medical science, and first of all psychiatry, *as sciences*, in an essential, intrinsic relationship with wisdom.

Western and partly Westernized societies, therefore, need a new humanistic thinking uniting science and wisdom and taking up again the traditional problems of human unity and the relationship between soul and body, of evil and of freedom.

The fundamental desire and its sublimations

Seeking to understand the human heart requires starting from our first Desire, identifying it, becoming aware of it with clarity, with certainty. This Desire is the constitutive foundation of our action and the unifying factor of all that it includes. So, let us summarize the tradition of Desire – of our Desire, for we are all alike in this regard – in order to understand ourselves and truthfully tell our life story.

What does tradition say? That men are guided in everything by their desire for *happiness*, even “those who hang themselves” [Pascal 2003, 113]. Frequent failure of their efforts forces them to reflect.

Disappointed by superficial aims, the reflecting man understands that he desires deep and true happiness, which he will call *beatitude/bliss/blessedness*. Then, it is a question of identifying this Good whose possession, says Spinoza, is equivalent to this beatitude [Spinoza 1985, 7]⁶. If happiness is possible in this world, it is through union with that Good which is not of this world, but wherein only all that composes this world exists. This Good is assuredly neither power, nor riches, nor glory, nor pleasures, nor entertainment, nor recognition, nor even friendships, love, the sciences or the arts⁷. This Desire is metaphysical. Its object is what Plato calls Good. This is, according to Plato, what thoughtful men call God.

While having a very earthly conception of happiness, Aristotle also goes beyond powers, honors, pleasures, riches, etc., and even *philia*, friendship. He sees that virtue is very necessary for happiness, especially prudence, precisely so as not to lead us astray in these dead ends, and he culminates his search for happiness in the search itself, not for a pretext object of entertainment, but for eternal truth.

⁶ In E. Curley's translation [Spinoza 1985] of the *Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect*, it is translated as the “greatest happiness.”

⁷ Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *S. Th.*, I–II, qq. 1–5.

In his lineage, Saint Thomas explains very clearly how we organize our lives, by setting up subordinate systems of means for higher and higher ends. The whole of existence takes shape and is finally explained on the basis of the aim of the final goal which, for him and for Aristotle, is happiness. As he goes in depth in his exploration, he calls its beatitude (like Spinoza, later): the Desire to see God.

This Desire for God, at the start, is most often unconscious. To tell the truth, it is the very unconscious of Man, of which he sometimes gradually becomes aware. The proof is that the word “desire” designates, according to the experience of Hobbesian social life, a barbaric and irrational swarming, which Man strives to civilize by disciplining himself under laws and the rule of reason. But among these desires, there is also trivial curiosity. If we delve deeper into it, we find that reason itself is animated by pure desire. All Men aspire for this: to know the truth.

Every man, by nature, desires to know; to know is to know the cause; to know the root and constitutive cause of all things, that is the goal. It is not an artificial or arbitrary desire: it is the very nature of the animal endowed with reason, the nature of Man, ineradicable, universal, necessary, and inexhaustible – Freud would say “the fundamental drive” of Man.

The tradition does not end there. The founder of postmodern culture, Friedrich Nietzsche, does not love God. However, he intends to explain “our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of one basic form of the will – namely, of the will to power” [Nietzsche 2010, 48]. Now, “will to power,” that is to say for him, infinite power and unconscious will, is the name he gives to the metaphysical principle, to “what we call ‘God.’” He sees that Man does not only want to see God, but to become God. Sartre thinks that Man is a desire to be God and “man makes himself man in order to be God” [Sartre 1992, 796]. And Nietzsche announces the death of God, because if there was a Creator, he could not be God. Reading Pascal, who almost convinced him of the contrary, was painful to Nietzsche. In short, man’s relationship to God is as close and certain as it is difficult.

The desire for the Absolute is common to all, theists and atheists. “God” is the name given to the Absolute when we see that he is Someone; if we do not see that, we just speak of “Absolute”; in the West, an atheist is someone who does not want God, but who still desires the Absolute, like everyone else, without realizing it sufficiently [Hude 1991, 36–37].

If we admire the works of Chinese scholars [Escande 2018], we understand with evidence that their culture or art (*yi*) is first and foremost a “culture of oneself,” which consists in living in harmony between calm Man and moving Nature, against a background of vaporous Absolute. God stands here beyond the horizon, although... It is possible for the artist’s brush, the sage, or the meditative scholar, to “trace the intention.” Not just his own, but that of Nature, the “spiritual sense” of nature – the mysterious purpose of the Spirit?

Freud also wanted to explain the discomforts of the psyche on the basis of a fundamental drive. He is wrong to qualify it as sexual, even in the broad sense, because this drive is *metaphysical*. But the soul animates, gives life and itself *lives*. If, instead of the sexual drive, we said the living drive, the *vital* drive of the person, it would be very true. The fundamental drive is partly a desire for Beauty (this is Plato’s definition of metaphysical *eros*), but also a desire for Life, for immortal life, for eternal life, for eternity. The drive is also a desire for beatitude, for an enjoyment which would consist in sharing the pleasure of God, “single and simple” (Aristotle, *EN*. 1154b25)⁸.

Of course, our life includes many other desires in addition to Desire, but all of these other desires are pitiful and unclean unless they are part of the fundamental momentum. Such participation is not easy to achieve, precisely because the relations of Man with the Absolute-God are particularly complex.

The most original disciples of Freud went on in this direction but stopped halfway. Viktor Frankl speaks of the “will to meaning” [Frankl 1969], Erich Fromm of the desire for love [Fromm 1956]. What gives meaning is always a consummation, at least provisionally. Depression often stems from disillusionment, which seems to show us that a certain desire that structured our life, despite our hopes, was not actually cut out to have a consummation – and here we are suddenly left without a meaning. The desire to love is genuine within the desire for truth; because does loving someone mean to love a false image?

The sexual has a lot to do with the discomforts of the psyche, especially in postmodern times. But this factor is not the main one. We must therefore first let our fundamental Desire, and therefore our fundamental project, emerge from the unconscious.

⁸ Our great poet had this enigmatic formula: “But the vision of justice is the pleasure of God alone” (Arthur Rimbaud, *Une saison en enfer*).

Freud understood *sublimation* as a derivation of the fundamental drive which, in his doctrine, was sexual in the broader sense, on non-sexual objects [de Mijolla-Mellor 2012; Ricœur 1965, 476–529]. It was the aspect of his thinking that shocked the most, by its materialist and reductionist character⁹. What he calls “sublimation,” we see as a particular form of *compensation*.

Once the fundamental drive has been correctly identified, the transfer or the derivation of the desire for the Good onto certain secondary and particular goods becomes a certain fact. The notion of sublimation, thus defined, is irreplaceable. *Idealization* is the cognitive aspect of sublimation. Sublimation is not just about things like money or power, but also family feelings like filial love.

Treatment for frustration requires above all the liquidation of sublimations in the sense indicated here *and* resublimation in the sense that will be indicated below.

In sublimation, Man is only moving towards a finite good, but he is able to imagine that he is moving towards the Good. He desires beauty, hoping to enjoy the Good and the Beautiful. He thus temporarily avoids frustration and achieves a certain balance, until the time of disillusionment and disappointment. The individual uses his brain as a means of producing a fictitious representation which gives him a vague *approximation* of pleasure [Jouvent 2013]. The latter sometimes becomes a common criterion of validity for representations. Hence the movement towards an unreasonable excess of subjectivity.

We will name *libido* not sexual desire in the broad sense, but sublimated, twisted, and complex sexual desire, in particular because of this sublimation. The continuous and vague desire of such desire, smoldering in the psyche, will be called *concupiscence*.

Freud formed concepts essential to any comprehensive model of the dynamism of the psyche, but he was wrong in his interpretation of this model. It was so, probably, because he had sublimated his sexual desire into *libido*, and he always lacked the critical sense necessary to overcome this unconscious sublimation. This is how he proposed a very enlightening image of Man, except that it hangs upside down, as in a dark room, and that you have to make a 180-degree turn in your thinking, to get a true idea of Man.

⁹ Freud's real thinking was probably less reductionist. He wrote to Ludwig Binswanger: “I have always confined myself to the ground floor and basement of the edifice called man” [Binswanger 1957, 96].

A kind (which we might call the *Hobbesian*) of repression of sexual desire was a major event in the first neuronal crisis, generally “hysterical,” around the 1890s. But this pre-Freudian trend ended with the postmodern sexual revolution, and the present neuronal crisis coexists with nearly absolute sexual deregulation. The pre-Freudian collective neurosis has even been succeeded by a post-Freudian collective neurosis, in which there is as much sexuality as in the previous one. Therefore, the practice of sexual liberation (at least, in its most common form) did not heal the psyche.

From the solution of the problem of evil to the position of the problem of salvation

From a rational point of view, the problem of evil is not that difficult to solve, although the solution is extremely paradoxical. And the fact that there exists a solution does not mean that the suffering becomes easier to bear; since if it became so, there would be no more problem with evil.

First stage, moral evil. If there were no freedom, there would be no moral harm. Moral evil, like moral good, requires responsibility and, therefore, freedom. However, a finite freedom is what can unite with the Good in a free and perfect order, but this also opposes the Good by desire for a radical autonomy and thus produces disorder in relation to the Good. It is therefore thanks to the position of freedom that moral evil is explained, without being denied. It does not go beyond the limits of reason.

Then, two questions remain, the answers to which may seem satisfactory but exceed these limits, or lie on the border between probable arguments and acts of faith:

- Why does God allow moral evil to exist?
- Why does God not create impeccable freedoms (incapable of sinning, of doing evil)?

Second stage, physical harm in general. If we disregard Man, physical evil easily fits into the universal physical order. In this, the Stoics are right. For example, why complain about earthquakes? Life requires rivers. Rivers and mountains. And because of the erosion, new mountains are required. It is the same with geological plate tectonics. And they result in earthquakes. So, life requires earthquakes, even if they destroy lives. That is all. General physical evil is part of the Universal Order. – Let it be. But what to think of this *specific* physical evil that befalls Man, to be free and moral? Of his suffering and his death?

Third stage, the physical evil that affects Man. Suppose that human thought does not want to recognize anything other as existing objects, except Man and Nature. In this case, his physical illness does not pose *any* problem. It is easily explained by Man's existence in the whole of a non-human Nature, entirely indifferent to his fate. Man may seek to technologically reduce the unpleasant effects of this insertion, but it is absurd to raise a protest if there is no one to hear it. However, Man does not only regret; he protests, that is a fact. Therefore, he invokes an Authority. It is therefore that he believes that there is, beyond Man and Nature, a Good that governs the world, a Good that is good, that should listen to him and free him from tribulations. So, therefore, we do not know *how* the problem is solved, but we know that it *must* be solved in one way or another, *since it arises* and the correctness of its simple position implies the existence of a primary Good, sovereign in the Order of the World.

The atheist, if he prefers to live in Nature alone rather than to go "over there" to the Father, has nothing to complain about evil, neither physical (it is obvious) nor moral because he lives without Good in a world where there is no real moral evil (since there is no absolute moral law, and it is as if his duty were not clearly defined anywhere) and probably very little freedom.

In other words, the problem of evil only arises for Man who believes at least implicitly in God – in the Good that is Good. And this problem does not implicate either God or his goodness, since if we were to suppose that God did not exist, or were wicked, the problem of evil would obviously vanish immediately. It must therefore be said that the persistence of the problem of evil is paradoxically convincing proof of the existence of the Good God. And if you do not want God, you have to stop torturing your mind with a problem that, hypothetically and rationally, no longer exists. Therefore, the problem of evil arises between Man and God – more precisely, between the Good God and Man who hesitates between wanting God and not wanting him. In short, it arises at the heart of another, much more concrete problem, which is the problem of salvation.

In this sense, the problem of evil, once freedom has been taken into account, is the demonstrative means of its own solution. Indeed, if finite freedom comes directly from Good, it can indirectly turn bad. And on the other hand, if there were no Good, either evil would go into order, or being would go into nothingness – and, therefore, there would be no problem; but *there is* clearly a problem. We are therefore

in a situation where the problem has its solution within it, because if there is a problem, the Good exists. The problem is therefore not to know if there is a Good, but to reach it despite the Evil. The theoretical and existential problem of evil does give way to the practical problem of salvation.

The healing of the psyche does not boil down to the salvation of man and his soul. Medicine and psychiatry cannot be replaced by morality, wisdom, or religion. But to heal a psyche (I do not mean, simply to relieve it), we must also initiate a dynamic of spiritual salvation.

Knowing that our suffering has meaning

In order to be successful, the healing of the psyche must be based on a wisdom providing a principle that is at least plausible, if possibly certain, allowing us to recognize a meaning in our ills. One of Viktor Frankl's patients said to him: "I don't mind suffering, but it should have a meaning" [Frankl 1969]¹⁰.

To say that evils have a meaning is to say that they are neither Evil nor proof of the reign of Evil, but these in some way belong to the Order dominated by the Good, without however becoming good, or ceasing to be evils. In fact, our suffering always has meaning. To be aware of this is the fundamental condition for making things less dramatic.

Demonstration? Either I say that suffering has a deep metaphysical meaning; or I admit that it does not have any of that sort. But if I say that the suffering that I absolutely reject is totally absurd, it immediately takes on another kind of meaning, in my revolt against it, to which it gives meaning.

The suffering that we struggle against gives meaning to our life as struggle against Evil. This heroic and tragic fight does not imply that Nature is completely hostile to us, nor that God is evil. Besides, these two ideas are still part of a form of metaphysics. Then if, in our opinion, such struggle involved these ideas, it would certainly have a metaphysical meaning, even if we stated the opposite.

¹⁰ In the book *The Will to Meaning: Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy*, Viktor Frankl speaks of "iatrogenic neurosis," that is, caused by doctors, because a materialistic approach to mental illnesses treats the patient as an object. This forces him to see himself as a thing and locks him into a depressive worldview [Frankl 1969].

In fact, there is no choice between suffering that has meaning and the same suffering that does not. The option obtains sense between two meanings of suffering (and death). The idea of absolute nonsense of evil is nonsense, as no one believes it. To all of us, Evils always have meaning, but one of them is tragic and heroic, in a story that probably ends badly; the other is part of a story of love and pain, which may end well.

Redramatization and resublimation

Let us face it: metaphysical considerations about evil are very elitist. And even for the elite, they lack de-dramatizing power. To convince the intellect is not to touch the heart. They are not readily persuaded. But, then, how to *de-dramatize*, not in the sense of playing down to the level of insignificance, but in the sense of “de-apocalyptizing”? By agreeing to reconsider our relationship to the humanist religion.

To heal the psyche is to de-sublimate, to deconstruct the desire for an illusory infinite finite. Re-sublimation starts with recognizing that in all these illusory desires there is an ersatz of the authentic (but unconscious) Desire of the Man-God. The sublimated reason, as well as the social Leviathan (moralizing and repressive), only know how to desubliminate, repress, and punish finite-infinite desires. Only Christ, truly finite and truly infinite, therefore truly sublime, gives an authentic meaning and provides a real Object for the mysterious desire of sublimation.

The human man would like to be God and cannot stand either being or not being such a God. Only Jesus Christ, the Man-God, the only Man to be God “in Person,” and communicating himself to all, allows Man both not to be God and to be himself.

Why and who is the madman afraid of?

Madness is scary for three reasons. Two are commonplace: (1) fear: a person who is not in control of his actions and acts according to delusional representations, could do us harm, as we are told; (2) hypochondria: just as the sight of a hemiplegic can inspire us with a phobia of hemiplegia, so can insanity. The third is a deeper anxiety, linked to “doubt.” This requires an explanation.

If our questioning is dominated by paranoid mistrust and by an individualistic sublimation of radical autonomy, then it becomes “doubt.”

We no longer want to be sure or can be sure of anything except what we can dominate. But, paradoxically, we only dominate what is quantitative (for example, electromagnetic waves). However, the immediate sensitive quality, such as the blue color of the sky, or the red of the rose, is not controllable. So, it does not seem real or true to us.

So, although we started from a realistic and materialistic scholar's conviction, when we reflect on this difference between the universe of physical science and the world of our perception, we may have the impression that reality is shifting, that matter is no more than a coherent dream, or that we live in a kind of cinema, always glued to our seat, without ever being able to leave it.

Thus, when in "doubt," we undoubtedly lose the "sense of reality." And if we define reason by "doubt," then we make an essential link between reason and insanity, as if reflected reason were insanity overcome.

This is why the madman scares us – or rather distresses us. But if, on the contrary, we define reason as methodical trust and intuition, then the madman no longer distresses us, and if we are neither fearful nor nosophobic, he does not frighten us, either.

We know that the "madman" has hallucinations¹¹ and delusions when awake, as we all have during our sleep, when we dream.

In short, he is a patient whose illness consists simply of simultaneously sleeping upright and daydreaming. Let us meditate on all this, for it will always be difficult to heal the psyche if we do not collectively overcome the "fear of madness." Because it is also our fear of him that locks the madman within himself [Foucault 1961]. To cure madness, must reason therefore cure "doubt"?

Conclusion

Medicine and wisdom. The progress of science supposes a return of reason to metaphysics. Man is not a detail in the world of the living, he is its axis. And the axis of Man is an "I," a soul that seeks God. He is meant to have a body, but his body is that of a soul – the one and only of that soul.

¹¹ Strange images, such as that of the bursting of the body, can pass for perceptions, as in dreams, and become objects of hallucination.

As long as science has not carried out its humanist reform, taking metaphysics into account, the technique will remain uncontrollable, at the service of a sublimation of the temporal and of a collective psychosis of transgression, the two major risks of which are an ecological crisis and a nuclear war.

In this humanistic reform, medicine must take its due place. Humanistic medicine is endowed with morality and wisdom. Through our lack of wisdom, we make ourselves physically and mentally ill. Psychiatry must also put the patient back on a path of wisdom.

Humanistic medicine runs through Man from head to toe and body to soul. It sees in the most frequent source of brain disorders and disorders of the psyche, lack of wisdom of the soul and ignorance of the humanism of God; and in these disorders, it reveals disruptors of the body's functions.

Humanistic medicine is neither a demagogue nor an accomplice in the dynamics of transgression. It is there to tell Man how wrong he is in hoping to find peace of soul, mental balance and health without wisdom.

Wisdom and democracy. Healing the psyche also serves the common good of a free civilized society. Without a new humanism, political freedom will disappear from the horizon, because it will have lost its sense.

In the 19th century, the culture of modernity, moral and scientific, produced a collective neurosis. The man of Postmodern is characterized by the effort of his psyche to escape this neurosis. This is why, after the war of 1914 and to this day, the desire to escape guilt provides a key to much of our cultural history.

The rejection of the Universal, of Reason, of God, seemed essential to eliminate neurotic Morality. Unfortunately, these rejections frustrate the soul by depriving it of all enjoyment of an ideal order: enjoyment of Good, of Truth, of God. The frustrated man is then condemned to enjoy only life, or not to enjoy anything at all. This is why sexual freedom almost becomes the axis of individual freedom, enveloped in material and mental comfort. Sublimated sex is called *libido*. *Libido* explains postmodern madness and why this society is going mad and propagates madness. Indeed, a sublimation is never more than a reverie, always threatened by the experience of life. The way to keep a pleasure, by preventing the desublimation of the *libido*, is to set up a

powerful screen that preserves the psyche, always trying to escape this dreadful feeling of guilt, from any contact with the authentic reality, exterior or interior. This screen is transgression, socially organized, ruling the law, dominating culture, marginalizing everything that upsets it – and so on, and so forth. The whole cultural history of the postmodern West, at least since 1960, can be interpreted as a headlong rush into transgression, led by the most neurotic persons, who are also the most transgressive ones.

This is how postmodern democracies lose their minds.

Humanistic religion-faith. Both popular and profound wisdom is religion. The neuronal crisis that affects the modern and postmodern world is explained by primordial frustration, which is metaphysical, and, therefore, religious. To heal itself, the democratic humanistic world, therefore, needs a solid humanistic religion. The humanistic religion is one that says that God was made Man so that Man could be made God. Any approach of wisdom for the humanistic and democratic world must therefore necessarily take into account this religious faith with a new perspective, because it is fully relevant to shed light on the disorders of the psyche.

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