

PAPERS

Refereed Articles and Plenaries from our National Conferences

Therapy in/and/of/by the World*

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The author begins by owning the personal circumstances and history that inspired him to write. He moves on to discuss how certain changes in Western political processes and structures deserve the tag of 'transformative politics'. A third section explores in a critical spirit whether or not therapists can have a collective impact in relation to current pressing social and political problems. The next section, entitled 'the inner politician', offers an experiential approach to the politics that irradiate people's inner worlds and personal stories. Finally, the author reflects on the links between therapy, politics and spirituality.

Everything I am going to say in this paper will be wrong but everything that will be said against it will be wrong as well!

My intention is to explore and test out the boundaries which (so we have all been taught for decades) are supposed to exist between therapy and politics, between the inner world and the outer world, between being and doing, and even between what people still call 'feminine' approaches to life and 'masculine' approaches to life—no matter how problematic those words are.

The paper divides into a number of different sections. First of all I'll address the question: 'Why me, why here, and why now?' Then I'll discuss how politics in the West is changing into what I call 'transformative politics'. Thirdly, I'll ask 'Can therapists really make a difference in the world today?' Fourthly there's a rather experiential section entitled 'the inner politician'. Finally, to conclude, I'll give a few reflections on therapy, politics and spirituality.

WHY ME, WHY HERE, WHY NOW?

A couple of years ago, with other people in Britain, I was involved in founding two organisations. One was called Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility. We started it with great anxiety because the rules

of most individual psychotherapy practice generally, not just psychoanalysis, say that therapists should keep out of the social area, must remain neutral about political and social issues and must, to use the psychoanalytic word, remain 'abstinent'. We must, so to speak, deny ourselves the pleasure of joining in on social and political concerns and issues. To our amazement, hundreds of therapists and counsellors in Britain joined this organisation. It now has over 800 members and actually it's one of the biggest organisations in the therapy field. This group tries to bring the insights and some of the ways of thinking of psychotherapy into the political world, but it does so as a professional group. Only therapists and counsellors can join it. It will be interesting to hear from therapists in Australia and New Zealand whether they think there is a possibility of such an organisation happening here.

The second organisation is rather different and it's called Antidote, like the word in medicine. Antidote, which I started together with the feminist psychotherapist Susie Orbach, is a campaign for what we call emotional literacy. But we don't restrict emotional literacy to the family or to personal relationships. Antidote seeks to take the notion of emotional literacy out into society, so that we aim at participating in the building up of a culture in which people are emotionally literate and articulate about politics. It's not that people have lacked emotion about politics, it's a question of how articulate, how literate they might be with that emotion. Antidote is very different from Psychotherapists and Counsellors for Social Responsibility because, whereas PCSR is restricted to mental health professionals, Antidote tries to make linkages between therapists and academics, media types, political people and what are referred to in England as 'opinion-formers'.

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So Antidote is a kind of think-tank, based on therapy ideas.

Both of these two projects have excited a lot of media interest in England and there is a considerable discussion about whether psychotherapy might not be one source of new ideas that might refresh a political vocabulary which has gone flat and stale.

Each year for the past few years, together with colleagues, I've taken a meeting to the Labour Party Conference, which is the annual political convention of the Labour Party, and these meetings are quite well attended. Now this audience is very significant, because these are not just people interested in politics, these are amongst the most politically active people in the community and they are very hard-bitten. It's an extremely difficult audience to talk to, because very few of them have had anything to do with therapy whatsoever, and they come and they question us absolutely intently and rigorously, often quite rudely: 'What the hell do you think you have to say to us?' It has been a good experience for me to go there and be confronted by 65 year-old Trade Unionists who say: 'Well, okay, maybe if someone has an emotional problem they have to see someone like you, but politics?' You have some very interesting experiences when you try and work with a conventional political party.

I also have some experience in running what I call 'political clinics', which are usually composed of people who have nothing to do with therapy or psychology at all, but who come together to explore their emotional and feeling-based reactions to major political issues, such as Northern Ireland, racism, homelessness, the Middle East, Bosnia (these are some of the ones that I have done). I have discovered that people who say 'I'm not interested in politics' are often deceiving themselves. Quite a few people who come to these political clinics say 'I'm not really interested in politics, I don't know why I came.' Then you discover, as the event evolves, that they are indeed extremely interested, knowledgeable and wise about politics, but have always doubted, because they have been taught to doubt, that the emotional reactions they are having are legitimate as part of a political debate. You see, we have educated our peoples in the Western countries, not exactly to deny that they have emotions about politics, because they obviously do, but to put those emotions rather low down on the scale of what we value in political debate and political discussion.

Sometimes, at the conclusions of these political clinics, we start to talk in terms of citizens as therapists who have a notable countertransference to the political culture in which they live. Now you all know that, in most psychological theories about citizens, the citizen is regarded as a kind of baby, who has a sort of transference and a set of fantasies towards the 'parental' society in which she or he lives. Reframing that, so that the citizen is seen as a kind of therapist or parent towards the society in which she or he lives, has a radical, uplifting and empowering effect. It completely overturns the tradition, especially in psychoanalysis, in which the

citizen is seen as the baby and society as the parent. This claim, that the citizen is capable of being the parent, and hence the therapist of the world, is one that I think embodies a lot of possibilities.

I have also done some work with an American senator called Bill Bradley, who is a very exceptional man indeed: an intellectual and also probably the most talented white basketball player there has ever been in the US. He captained his team to an Olympic gold medal. Bradley says: 'Politics is broken.' That's a very interesting image with which to resonate. The very language of politics has broken down. That's why I said at the beginning that I intend to explore whether or not the boundary between the inner world and the outer world is as firm and fixed as many of us have been taught that it is. What I like to do is to try to set up a two-way-street between inner and outer, with traffic going in two directions. There is a secret politics of personal life. Feminism taught us that family, relationships, and gender issues are full of secret politics. What I want to suggest in addition is that, when we think of politics, there is a secret psychology to consider. For example, what does being engaged in politics, whether mainstream or marginal, mean for individuals in psychological terms? What differing styles of leadership will be needed and will work in the next century? What models of human nature underpin economic theories and policies, whether so-called realistic or so-called visionary? What is the role of projection in phenomena such as racism and ethnocentricity? To what extent is there an ineradicable tension and ambivalence between the sexes that makes social policy aimed at eliminating gender-based injustice quite unworkable? Later in the paper, I will give examples of how we can explore the interface and track the dynamics between personal history, emotional experience and internal processes on the one hand, and explicitly held political views and consciously entered into political actions on the other. If you only go down one side of the street then this whole project starts to lack something and becomes one-sided and rather thin. But if the traffic is going both ways then you get a psychology-politics articulation.

The last point I want to make in this first section has to do with 'Why now?' Why is it that meetings like this are starting to happen in so many countries? I think what's happening, as a big cultural and intellectual background issue, is that the nature of knowledge is changing. How we learn things, how we discover things, is beginning to change. Some people would want us to put this out in the language of 'the decline of Cartesian science'. Other people would want to say that what is happening is that the inner world and the world of experience are at last being given their epistemological due. Certainly, at this point in history, at the end of the century, a realisation is taking place that the internal perspective is as valid a source of knowledge as any outside or external perspective. These then are the background issues as to why I feel I can write about this kind of thing and why it's happening now.

TRANSFORMATIVE POLITICS

We move on now to the second section of the paper, which is about how politics is changing in Western countries. We are at a very interesting moment in political consciousness. What used to be an elitist insight about how political everything secretly was is on the verge of becoming an element in mass consciousness. For years now, feminists, academics, intellectuals, some therapists, and writers have happily lived with the idea that the personal and psychological and private worlds are full of political tensions and dynamics and energies. But actually this has been an elitist form of knowing, a kind of high-class gnosticism about politics. So 'we' have known that politics has expanded its definition to include all the private stuff. But the people, the masses, have not. They continue to be taught, but I think to accept rather less, that politics is official politics, party-politics, parliamentary politics, power politics, finance politics and the like. But I think that is changing. The huge eruption of feeling in Britain over the death of Princess Diana has led a lot of people to start speculating about a move from an elitist, gnostic, private knowledge about how politics has changed to an awareness of this which is much more general, collective and mass-based. I think the most successful politicians of the age, Blair in England being one, are right in there close to this knowledge.

Another way in which politics is changing is that politics becomes, as time passes, more and more of a transformative process. By this I mean that engagement in political activity and processes of personal growth and development are seen increasingly as the same thing or at least two sides of a single coin. If you talk to people active in the environmental movement or in certain sectors of feminism, or in what I call ethno-politics, or in the politics associated with complementary health and complementary medicine, you will see that what they are doing is in many respects similar in the function it performs for them to what personal growth and development in psychotherapy would do. So politics starts to carry a psychological, transformative burden in the way it has not up until now. This kind of transformative politics is somewhat new and very difficult to understand. But the implications are enormous, because what it means is that inner growth and outer political engagement start to blend, start to blur.

Anyone reading this who was active in student politics or on the New Left in the 1960s and early 1970s will probably know what a big shift this represents. At that time, on the Left, it was extremely difficult to get any discussion about why the people in the room were there at all! Personal motivation (for example to do with families and with parents or with complexes) was absolutely forbidden and could not be discussed. What it meant psychologically to be doing the political activity could not be discussed. Feminism, certainly in Britain, managed to get much more of that kind of discussion going. But politics on the Left did not, and that's one reason why socialism and feminism in many ways went

in rather different directions. I think now we are witnessing the coming together of those two different traditions: the tradition of hard-hitting rational, political discussion, and the tradition of emotional, personal confession. I call this entire phenomenon 'transformative politics'. I want to repeat: by now this is not an elitist thing. The number of people involved in these kinds of activities in most countries where I've researched this, and that's several in the Western world, runs into millions. In Britain there are more members in the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds than in all the political parties put together. I don't think it is just British love of animals—there really is something quite significant going on.

A third way in which politics has changed is that there is now something which I want to call 'political energy' to be considered alongside political power. Let me explain what I mean. Political power is what you would imagine it is. It is control over resources, such as land or water or oil—or, indeed, information and imagery. Especially today, the issue of who controls information and imagery, for example on the Internet and satellite television, is as important as the issue of who controls land, oil and water. Political power is held by the people you'd expect to hold it: men, white people, middle- and upper-middle-class people and basically people who run the big institutions of finance, of the military, of the academic world and the like. I don't really have much original to say about political power. It is what you think it is, you can have whatever attitude to it that you like, it isn't always bad, it can have good and benevolent aspects. But we know what political power is. We live in it, we live with it, some of us have it, some of us don't, some of us despise it, some of us envy it.

Political energy is different. It's almost the polar opposite of political power. Political energy involves idealism and an imaginative and visionary focus on certain political problems with a view to bringing about a creative outcome of those problems. Political energy seeks out more political energy in an attempt to sort of build up a kind of critical mass. It's very different from political power because people who have political energy, imagination, commitment, idealism, real compassion, almost by definition lack political power. And equally, almost by definition, people who have political power tend to lack political energy. This is a fundamental and radical claim that I'm making that people can disagree with, but I need to make it anyway. People with political energy are doing something rather new and different in the world today from what people with political power have done for years and years. It's extremely important if you are working in a small neighbourhood group in some community, social or political project, if you are working in gender politics, if you are working with people who have been abused, if you are trying to build up a kind of environmental movement or working for sustainable development, trying to do away with third world debt or whatever it is, it's extremely important to find a way to come to terms with the fact that you probably don't have much political power. The notion

of political energy is intended to empower people who don't have official political power. Very often when I talk about this, people start to say: 'Yes, and what would happen if we lived in a political culture that valued the possession of political energy as much as it values the possession of political power?'

These have been some of the ways in which I think politics in Western countries is changing. The definition of politics has expanded enormously. There is a transformative element inherent in political activity these days and we can see the operation of political energy as well as the operation of political power.

CAN THERAPISTS REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Although enthusiastic about psychotherapy's role in refreshing political culture, I am also somewhat sceptical. So my answer to the question 'Can therapists really make a difference in today's world?' is both no and yes. Let me castrate myself first! James Hillman and Michael Ventura wrote a book, called *We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy and the World is Getting Worse*. I think what they should have entitled their book was 'We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy Trying to Improve the World but the World has Stayed Pretty Much the Same'. It is not a new project for psychotherapists to want to do something in relation to the world. Freud wanted it, Jung wanted it, the great pioneers of humanistic psychology like Maslow, Rogers, Perls all wanted it too. All of these people invited the world into therapy, but the world didn't show up for its first session. And I think there is a good reason why the world didn't show up for its first session. Therapists want so much to be right!! Therapists want to reduce everything to the special knowledge that they have. This kind of reductionism has got therapy a bad name when it comes to political and social issues. For example, I remember reading in *The Guardian* in London a psychoanalyst writing about 'The phallic symbolism of cruise-missiles going down ventilator-shafts in Baghdad'. My Jungian colleagues are just as bad when they tell us that the military industrial complex is all the responsibility of the Greek god Hephaestus. The world won't listen to that level of explanation and is right not to do so.

But there is more to think about than an attempt to reduce everything to what psychotherapists know already. There is a very bad history, a bad record to own up to. Psychotherapists have colluded with oppressive regimes in Nazi Germany, the former Soviet Union, Argentina and South Africa. Psychotherapists have been involved in some very dubious things like sending soldiers, suffering from shell-shock, back to the line of battle in both World Wars. In addition to that kind of bad record, there's also the collusion of psychotherapy with all kinds of oppressive practices, for example the stigmatisation of homosexuals, or the easy joining in by therapists all over the world in right-wing politicians' attacks on father-lacking lone parent families—as if lone

parent families, usually headed by women, are exclusively responsible for all the troubles of Western civilization. I love fathers but I hate idealisations of them. These kind of collusions are really shameful.

Then there is the problematic matter of the universality of psychotherapy's claim that Western values and ways of thinking are superior to and can be imposed on the values and ways of thinking of non-Western cultures. The treatment of women by psychotherapists has, on the whole, also not been good, although the rise of feminist therapy has started to make a difference here. What is absolutely scandalous now is what psychotherapy has to say about men! It is often every bit as wrong as what psychotherapy once had to say about women.

Another reason why people are not so likely to listen to therapists who want to make a difference in the world is that therapists are completely crazy in their own politics and the way they organise themselves radiates that craziness. No profession has been as subject to splits as the therapy profession, no profession has so frequently used personal demonisation to deal with and get rid of troublesome outsiders and people who question from within. These have been some of the reasons why, if one is asking the question 'Can therapists really make a difference?', one might start to answer 'no'. But you won't be surprised that I also want to say 'Yes, we can'. How? First of all, by realising that multidisciplinary work is the crucial way of approaching social and political problems. My slogan would be: 'A psychotherapist on every committee, but please God not a committee of psychotherapists!'

This is because psychotherapy has not actually achieved what it wants to do in relation to the world because we have made a big split between the clinical side of our work and the intellectual side. For instance, the Frankfurt School was an attempt to marry psychoanalysis and Marxism in an analysis of society. But those writers never mention clients, they never talk in an ordinary way about mothers, fathers, families, marriages, dreams, symptoms, sexuality, aggression, the inner world. And when you read clinical texts, the external political world is hardly talked about. Most therapy seems (or claims) to take place in a vacuum—some family therapy as well as individual therapy! We have got involved in a horrific split and we are supposed to be critical of splits in our work. We have got involved in a split between the clinical side and the intellectual side. So, in addition to multidisciplinary work with a therapist on every committee, I think we need to begin to speak out of our clinical knowledge. Not just communicating to people outside the therapy community what the clients are saying, although that is very important and interesting, but also generalising about social trends and social processes on the basis of what we have experienced and listened to and gone through with our clients.

Let me give you some examples of the kind of thing I have in mind. At the moment economics and economic issues are really quite pressing in lots of countries. When people start to critique the present economic

system or to talk about moving to sustainable economic development (which means we use up resources only at the rate at which we can replenish them), or achieving a better balance between third world and developed countries, they are often referred to as 'idealistic' or 'over-idealistic'. The implication is that such thinking is kind of adolescent, a little bit immature. Fine in principle but useless in practice. In practice, the counter argument goes, we must accept that the economic person is ruthless, greedy, competitive, acquisitive, and so forth. This assumption was what underpinned the rise of free market economics in Western countries in the seventies, eighties and most of the nineties. The idea seems to be that the economic person is a very nasty person indeed. Now, at the heart of this kind of approach to economics lies a psychological theory about human nature and I am wondering whether there isn't another theory about human nature that therapists can contribute to establishing, in which the human being is also seen as benevolent, cooperative, collaborative and able to translate loving impulses into social and economic behaviour. I think there is a huge battle to be fought over what human nature is.

I don't think that human beings are just benevolent and cooperative, just as I don't think they are just acquisitive, competitive and cruel. I think they are both. What I would like to see is therapists contributing what they know and understand about human nature to a debate about economics.

Another idea that I have had, and have worked on with colleagues in relation to economics, is this. You know probably that if you are poor, and living in a relatively wealthy country, your health expectations suffer very greatly. You are going to get more illnesses, you are going to get them earlier and you are going to die from them more often than somebody with more money. This is now absolutely established. But something else has also been discovered that is relevant to health and wealth. If you live in a country where there are enormous inequalities of wealth, enormous disparities between rich and poor and where those disparities are getting greater, then in those countries the poorer people are dying and getting ill even more often than the poorer people in countries where such disparities are smaller. Inequality of wealth (not just lack of it) is also bad for your health. It is not just a question of whether you are rich or poor, it is also a question of the size of the gap between rich and poor in the country in which you live.

Now, what I've noticed in my clinical work is that for many people who do not have serious money problems or economic problems, simply living in an unfair, unjust, unequal economic system makes them emotionally ill. I want readers to hear the import of what I'm saying, because I suspect it would apply to most if not all of the people taking this Journal. We know quite a lot about the psychology of extreme wealth and extreme poverty, but living in an unfair economic system also has a damaging effect on your personality and on your psyche. That's a therapist's small contribution to the massive discussion

about how urgent and desirable it is to reduce the spread of wealth. We have been encouraged to believe that without a big spread of wealth nobody would have the stimulus or the inspiration to be productive. I don't know if that is true or not (I suspect it isn't true) but the counter-argument is very rarely put: ordinary middle-class, middle-income people are being driven crazy by living in an unfair guilt-inducing economic system.

Let me give you another idea which could be a contribution from the psychotherapy world to the world of political discussion. This has to do with something extremely controversial, namely the question of national psychology. Now national psychology is a very infant discipline. At the moment it often seems to me to be just a question of anecdotes: 'The Australians are like this, the English are like that, the Israelis are like that, the problem with Brazil is that the national character is ...' Now, you just cannot stop people doing this. I wonder if therapists could find out more about this issue. Very often, one is working with people from diverse national backgrounds. Therapists in countries like Australia will often see people who are immigrants to those countries, not only immigrants in the sense of economic migrants, but people who have moved voluntarily, perhaps because they in some way lost the feeling of connection to the country in which they were born. I've been noticing that more and more people seem to want to initiate a discussion about national psychology at a far higher level than the anecdotal. Do I know how to do this? No, I have no clear idea how to do it, except to suggest that therapists and counsellors start to think about pooling what they have learned from their various clients about national psychology.

THE INNER POLITICIAN

Now we become more experiential and personal. Where did you get your politics from? I think this is a question worth asking. What influence did your mother have on the politics that you now have, or your father? And what about differences in political outlook between your parents? Some people have been influenced in their political development by significant other people: teachers, priests, an older child at school. Was that your experience? The sex you are is really very significant indeed in the kind of attitude to politics that you will have. Your sexual orientation is equally important. Lesbians and gay men live much more close to politicality, to the political aspects and nuances of life, than straight people do. Class and economic factors are obviously important, and so too is your religious, national and ethnic background.

Sometimes when I talk to people about what has formed their politics they start to speak about an event or a moment in history that they can remember. What was your first political memory? When was the first time you became aware that there was a political system with power issues, including disparities of wealth and influence? Then ask yourself: 'Did I discuss this with my therapist?' For people on the whole do not.

Another way to look at this notion of the inner politician is to imagine a political energy scale, where ten stands for political fanaticism, extreme political commitment, even martyrdom. Zero stands for absolute passivity and a total lack of interest in politics. Where would you place yourself right now in your life, what level of political energy do you have? Then you can start to play around with the scale. When you're with people of the same sex does the level of energy go up, down or stay the same? Is it higher or lower at work or at home? Are there some issues that send it skyrocketing and some issues that bring it down? Think of the last big disagreement or row or fight with somebody you love. Could it be that there was a different level of political energy at work in each of you? Let us take this right into the traditional areas of psychotherapy. What was your mother's level of political energy compared to yours or to your father's? What was your level compared to the level of the street in which you grew up?

I have noticed in the conflict resolution work that I've done that quite often the difficulty is that the various people in conflict are operating at totally different levels of political energy. What I've come to see is that the context in which there is a conflict is extremely significant. Gender is obviously an extremely important factor as regards context. But so too, quite literally, is the place of conflict: at home, at work, in the parliament, in the neighbourhood group. People's levels of political energy vary enormously according to context.

Here is another way to get in touch with your inner politician. Do you do your politics as a warrior, or as a terrorist, a martyr, a mystic, a philosopher, a diplomat, a bridge-builder, a negotiator, or an ostrich? Obviously nobody does all their politics as a mystic with piercing visions. Nobody does all their politics as a negotiator—very calm, very reasonable, very decent, hearing both sides of things. Very few people are completely terrorists or ostriches. We are political mixtures and one of the great difficulties in official, conventional ways of talking about politics is that these kinds of differences get overlooked. There is a colossal assumption, which I want to challenge, that people do their politics in the same way whoever and wherever they are. They don't. I am suggesting that quite a lot of conflict in the political world can be understood not only as people disagreeing over the *content* of the issues. Rather, they are actually *functioning completely differently in relation to the issues*. When somebody is in a terrorist mode in relation to a political dispute, he or she is simply not going to be able to agree with or get along with somebody who is in his or her mystic mode, whatever the content of the dispute.

The intellectual background for these little tags (mystic, ostrich, whatever) is Jung's typology in which he had basically the idea that there were four functions (thinking, feeling, sensation and introversion). What he did for consciousness is worth doing for politics. There are just an enormous number of different ways of doing politics and we need a relevant political typology.

Everything I have been proposing in this next to last section of my talk can be used responsibly in a clinical

situation by those who are therapists, counsellors or mental health professionals. It is possible to explore with clients and to discuss with them where their politics came from. For example, are they identifying with the politics of a parent, are they in reaction or in rebellion to those politics? Are they confused by a conflict between the politics of mother and the politics of father that they have internalised? Similarly, it's possible to look at political energy in a person. Let me give you a very simple example. I'm working with someone at the moment who believes that she was born with a very high level of political energy. As a baby she stood up for herself and for her siblings but, gradually, as time passed, her family, her school, the social milieu in which she was functioning sent less and less favourable messages about her high level of political energy and it was repressed. This wonderful word 'repression' is both a psychological word and a political word. It is extremely interesting and valuable in work with clients to follow through what has happened to the level of political energy they believe they were born with.

As regards political type—those little one-word tags—here again if you think about what your clients tell you, it's usually about conflict, about trouble, about difficulties at work, in home and in life. Simply understanding that the other person in a conflict (or the other institution or the other country) is approaching the conflict in a completely different psychological manner, under the aegis of completely different psychological images, is a useful idea. I remember working in Jerusalem with a mixed group of Jewish Israelis and Arab Israelis and of course you can imagine the kinds of things that this group talked about. What I began to see was that actually it wasn't only the content of their discussion that was causing the very obvious difficulties in communication. They were doing what they were doing in completely different ways. And it didn't simply amount to all the Israelis being 'terrorists' and all the Arabs being 'negotiators', or vice versa. It varied enormously and I was able to point out that some of the Jewish Israelis were working on the political issues in ways that were very similar to the ways in which some of the Israelis of Arab background were doing it. I was able in a tiny way to start to destabilise the rigid group identities that seemed to be stopping the discussion.

PSYCHOTHERAPY, POLITICS AND SPIRITUALITY

I think that what we are seeing in many Western countries is the rise of the 'religious left'. Readers will be familiar with American expression, 'the religious right'. The core values of the Labour Party in Britain at the moment are quite frankly Christian with a small c as well as with a big C. Several ministers in extremely influential and important posts are publicly committed Christians. I would not want to start to speak the language of religious right politics, but I do think that we should listen to what those people in the eighties and nineties have heard was missing in the way people talk about

politics. There was a missing element of spirituality. Obviously, I mean something somewhat different from, but perhaps also overlapping with, organised religion. What I want to do in this last section is give some ideas about spirituality which I think start to take the interface or interplay between therapy and politics a step further, so that one is actually here juggling with three things: therapy, politics and spirituality. I think that there are aspects of spirituality which, if understood in a certain manner, effect the linkage between psychotherapy, spirituality and politics I've just been mentioning.

First of all, there is a level at which spirituality is always democratic. One cannot imagine people being unequal spiritually. It's not like IQ or income or sexual potency or all the other pathetic ways which we use in the West to divide people up. There isn't a hierarchy when it comes to spirituality. That means that somewhere in the spiritual traditions there is the seed of a marriage between those traditions and democratic politics.

Another aspect of spirituality which is often forgotten has to do with what I call 'craft spirituality'. The spirituality of making things, of doing things, of work itself. This is important whether your work is manual work or whether your work is therapeutic work. I think people have tended to see spirituality as only something coming down from up there, something that is essentially 'natural'. I think there is also something manufactured about the spiritual—something 'artificial' in the best sense of that word. I'm wondering whether therapists in particular could generalise from their experience of what their work does for them and look towards a time when, in society generally, the craft aspect of spirituality would be more openly talked about. It would help us to locate ourselves *within* the world not outside it or at an angle to it. A sort of liberation therapy.

A third aspect of spirituality that I think is very important is what I call profane spirituality. This is the hidden spirituality of ordinary everyday life and of sex, drugs and rock and roll! These are things that therapists and politicians are equally bad at dealing with, because they want their material to come in officially sanctioned packages whether they be myths or fairytales, mother or father, system or structure, or economic statistics. Depth in modern life lies in this profane area of sexuality, of addictions, of popular culture, of sport and the like. There is something down to earth about the spiritual that needs to be recognised.

The last aspect of spirituality that I want to suggest to you is directly relevant for what I am trying to talk about. It is what I call social spirituality and I mean something very simple and I hope I can explain it succinctly. If you come together in society with other people to do things then a spiritual aspect of yourself is constellated or brought into being. It isn't a question of already spiritual people getting together to do good things in the world. It is a question of people getting together to do good things in the world and thereby becoming spiritual people. I'm sure readers will see the difference: spirituality doesn't come before collective social action, spirituality comes afterwards, as a result, as a by-product, as something that arises out of collective social action.

Now, we can put all these things together. If we do so, something quite different can be done with the notion of spirituality, by thinking about it as democratic, craft-based, profane and as utterly, utterly social. I will simply conclude with a quote that readers may know from Hillel, the first century AD Jewish philosopher and writer: 'If I am not for myself who will be for me? If I am only for myself what am I? And if not now, when?'

Editors and their Sheds

*When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,
I summon up remembrance of things past ...*

memories of articles in past issues come to mind. It's time to recall articles with a touch of the unexpected:

Birch, Jim, 1987. Waiting Without Purpose: A Discourse on *The Tao of Pooh*, *ANZJFT*, 8, 3.

Nayman, Ilana, 1995. Mary Poppins as Family Therapist, *ANZJFT*, 16, 2.

Jones, Sarah, 1995. Darling Robert ... , *ANZJFT*, 16, 2.

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