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Has the time come for Trigant Burrow?

Nick Drury – 2017

This paper reviews the life and work of Trigant Burrow (1875-1950), a psychoanalyst who many have claimed was well ahead of his time. His central thesis was that we retain a sense of unity or resonance with each other and the world long after infancy, which we no longer recognise. The rediscovery of this unity, through further developments of his work by others, has not always been acknowledged as it might. In Māori culture we recognise this unity as whanaungatanga. The newest development of this way of thinking has been the development of the 4e-cognition paradigm.

Key Words: Phyloanalysis, Trigant Burrow, 4e-cognition, whanaungatanga, zen.

Although many psychologists have never heard of Trigant Burrow, a search for information on him reveals many biographers saying this was because he was “far in advance of his time” (Ackerman, 1964, p. vii). Which of course begs the question of when his time will come. Well, a paradigm shift has been occurring, mainly during the first few decades of this century, in cognitive science from ‘cognitivism’, often described as a computer metaphor of cognitive functioning, to ‘4e-cognition’. The ‘e’ in ‘4e-cognition’ stands for ‘extended’, ‘embodied’, ‘embedded’, and/or ‘enactive’ (Menary, 2010a, 2010b; Noë, 2009; Rowland, 2010). This new paradigm takes the position that cognitive science studies the circuits living things attention flows round as they engage in the various

activities of their lives. When our gaze shifts to these circuits, we find that the boundaries between perception and action, self and world, fade, as we enter a “lived world”. Trigant Burrow’s principle insight, made about a hundred years ago, and subsequent life work may serve as an introduction and bridge to this new cognitive paradigm; for he too saw a unity between ‘mind’ and nature. Of cultural interest, this new paradigm and Burrow’s work can also be seen as providing a central value to the primacy of *whanaungatanga*, and thus may be of immense interest here in Aotearoa. This paper reviews the life and work of Burrow, showing links to the new paradigm.

Brief ‘Bio’

Nicholas Trigant Burrow was born in Virginia in 1875, and went on to qualify as a psychiatrist, psychologist and psychoanalyst. He was ejected from the American Psychoanalytic Association for ‘deviationism’, and subsequently went on to describe himself as a ‘social psychopathologist’, ‘clinical anthropologist’ or ‘clinical sociologist’, at various times in his career. He called his research topic ‘phylobiology’, as he claimed there is a widespread social or phylic disturbance in humans that is causing conflict, not only within and between us, but also with nature. He was primarily concerned with the ‘madness’ of humanity as a species, rather than the variations this manifests in individuals. Most biographers (e.g., Ackerman, 1964; Galt, 1984; Pertegato & Pertegato, 2013) comment on how he was deliberately marginalized not only by the psychoanalytic community, but also by others who appear to have used some of his ideas. For example, most texts on group therapy either fail to mention or minimize the fact that he was an

originator of group therapy, and Maclean (1973) makes no mention of Burrow's (1968) earlier description of the 'third brain' in humans. Burrow accused H.S. Sullivan of plagiarising his work (but continued to send him reprints of his papers!).

After studying literature at Fordham University in New York, where he developed a life-long interest in writing plays, he went on to the University of Virginia where he qualified as an MD in 1900. He then obtained a PhD in psychology at the John Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland in 1909. His education at John Hopkins was fortuitous in that they were bringing together the experimental psychology that was developed in Leipzig under Wilhelm Wundt (the first person to call himself a psychologist), the scientific psychiatry of Bleuler from Zürich, and Freud's psychology from Vienna. James Baldwin had just taken over the experimental psychology department when Burrow arrived, and Baldwin's primary pitch was that an over-focus on the individual loses sight of the fact that humans are fundamentally social beings. So we find in Burrow's writings, which began from the time of his inception as a psychoanalyst in 1911, till after his death in 1950, descriptions of phenomena that make sense from all three perspectives, as well as the social. Further, his doctorate thesis was on the theme of attention, and this remained central throughout his career.

A month after moving from John Hopkins to New York to do his training in psychiatry with Adolf Meyer (a student of Bleuler), he was introduced by Abraham Brill (a psychoanalyst who had had no training or analysis himself), to Freud and Jung. They were still together at the time, and were in New York to

deliver five lectures, following an invitation from Stanley Hall. Immediately after the meeting, with Meyer's encouragement, Burrow took his family, despite financial hardship, to Zurich to do a year-long training and analysis with Jung. He returned to Baltimore as the first US-born individual to study psychoanalysis in Europe. In 1911, he joined Ernest Jones and seven others to form the American Psychoanalytic Association. At the time, he was secretary of the American Psychopathological Association.

When Freud and Jung split in 1913, Freud invited Burrow to come to Vienna for analysis. Because of Jung's "deviationism", Freud had begun plotting with others to get rid of him from the International Psychoanalytic Association. Although he declined this invitation, perhaps for financial reasons, Burrow later offered Freud refuge at his home in Baltimore when the First World War broke out. From their correspondence (Burrow, 1958), both appeared concerned by the rift created by the Freud-Jung split. Possibly, Burrow was also concerned about the differences between his own work and Freud's, and wanted to invite Freud to a more informal setting to explore this. These differences became more apparent as time passed, and despite being the President of the American Psychoanalytic Association in the 1924-1925 year, Burrow was expelled from it in 1932. His "deviationism" had also become problematic, especially to Ernest Jones who appears to have taken a particular dislike of Burrow (Burrow, 1958; Paskanskas, 1993). By this time he was writing extensively on his "insight", which has radical implications for psychoanalysis (and, as we shall see, not only the 'psy' disciplines, but social structure), if accepted.

Burrow's "Insight" and its context

Burrow (1926a) identifies a 1914 paper (published in 1917), read at the Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association as being the preliminary to a subsequent paper that formed the nucleus of his central idea. He goes on to say (1926a) that this central idea was first expressed in detail in an unpublished paper read at the Seventh Annual Meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association in 1917, entitled "The Preconscious or the Nest Instinct". This thesis, expressed again and again in various forms in his later publications, is that in the development of consciousness, mother is not, as Freud and others would have it, the 'love object' but the 'love subject'. What this means is that it makes more sense to regard the separation or individuation process as one where we objectify ourselves and retain a sense of unity, or oneness, or primal consciousness, with 'mother'. This way of viewing the individuation process has all sorts of implications for our subsequent relationships, not least are numerous theological, philosophical, psychological and political/cultural implications. But it would appear that Freud at least, and many others either did not understand Burrow's thesis, or deliberately ignored it.

To get some context to this it is useful to briefly review the conversation between 'psy' sciences and religion that occurred between about 1870 and 1940 (Hustvedt, 2011; Whitley, 2008). Enlightenment philosophers had predicted the triumph of 'rational science' over 'religious superstition' (Nisbett, 1994). 1870 marks the approximate time when psychiatry began venturing outside the walls of the asylum, as the asylums had not proved effective in the treatment of

insanity (as originally envisaged), and were increasingly been seen as “living cemeteries” for the incurables (Scull, 1991). If psychiatry was to enter the barracks, the classrooms, and the factories, as it subsequently did, it needed to deal with the Church, who already had a claim to the souls of the public. The dissertation that was developed by the ‘psy’ disciplines was reasonably unified. (Although, as we shall see, there was some division as to what aspects were considered pathological.) Also, some of the later metaphors expressed the central idea better than some of the earlier ones. For example the term “oceanic consciousness” to describe the sense of unity or oneness was not used until it was introduced to Freud by his friend Romain Rolland in the later 1920s, although the idea was there from the time of Charcot in 1870, onwards. And it wasn’t until 1913 that the psychiatrist and early existentialist Karl Jaspers brought to the discussion the early 19th century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard’s idea that every child’s development replicates the Biblical story of the fall of Adam (Merkur, 2009). So the central idea, to which there was reasonable agreement, is that we start off in union with nature (oceanic consciousness), but with the development of knowledge we no longer feel this connection.

In the hands of Freud the breast feels like part of the infant, until it is wanted and not there, at which time the infant comes to realise that the breast is separate from itself. The breast and mother become the ‘love-object’ that the infant longs to return to. Thus any subsequent feelings of an oceanic consciousness are just fragments of an infantile consciousness, a persistence of the neonatal state of the ego. From this perspective Freud’s oedipal complex makes some sense, and sex

retains a central place in the story of 'the fall'. For Freud and his followers, mystical experiences were regressions to wishful fantasies of mother-child fusion, and should be considered pathological. This had been demonstrated to Freud by Charcot, the French neurologist who held public displays at the Salpêtrière Hospital on Thursdays; where his star female "hysterics", under Charcot's hypnotism, would display the religious ecstasies of the mystic saints (largely to a male audience). It was claimed miraculous cures and faith healing were due to the hysterical roots of the apparent problem, and thus suggestion, in some form or another, could result in healing. He claimed that the various Christian mystics like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Teresa of Avila were just hysterics like those he held in the Salpêtrière, leading other hysterics by suggestion to 'heal'. Thus for Charcot too, mysticism is a pathology and not a saintly state.

Nevertheless, religious apologists began joining the discussion, refuting these claims of pathology as accounting for mystical states. In the courts Charcot often found himself up against another neurologist, Bernheim of Nancy, who argued that hypnosis as suggestion did not require the subject to have a neurotic condition. The power of suggestion could create an impenetrable witness for the court in almost anyone. (Thus false memory syndrome, albeit not under that name, was already being discussed in the 1890s. And we see in this a forerunner to twentieth century experiments on obedience and conformity by Stanley Milgram, Solomon Asch, and Philip Zimbardo.) Writers such as William James in the US and Evelyn Underhill in England were claiming that secondary centres of consciousness (a mystical centre) could exist in healthy persons. A number of

these 'explorers' were experimenting with drugs such as mescaline, in order to induce the oceanic feeling. No doubt some had "bad trips". (Charcot wrote "I love you Jennifer" whilst under the influence of mescaline; but to this day no one knows who 'Jennifer' was.) The conclusion to this debate as to whether this was a regression to wishful fantasies of a mother-child fusion (an intrauterine or neonatal fantasy), or instead a higher state of consciousness, was never resolved. But there was agreement that such mystical experiences belong back on the shelf of rare anomalies. And of course that is where the Christian churches had largely relegated them anyway. So a "received view" had been arrived at on the nature of consciousness, and it was a Cartesian view of an individual mind being the 'norm', and mystical states or oceanic experiences as relatively rare forms of either regressive pathology or higher state of consciousness. With this established the psy-disciplines increasingly turned away from the religious question in the twentieth century, for with the acceptance of Cartesianism a positivist science such as behaviourism, which relied on observation of other by a separated mind, could become the dominant credo.

However, Burrow's contention that mother is the 'love-subject' (and not 'love-object'), calls for a wholly different understanding of how we develop a sense of an independent mind. Like the Mahayana Buddhists and Taoists (whom Burrow (1964) approved of), Burrow is saying we still have the sense of being the 'one mind', but we have objectified ourselves; and in so doing we blind ourselves into not recognising our unity. The Mahayanists express this when they say 'samsara is nirvana'. For Burrow, we have developed ideas about ourselves, and our preoccupation with them is keeping us from being ourselves. According to the

popularizer of Zen Buddhism, Alan Watts, when Bodhidharma, who brought Mahayana to China, was asked who he was, he said “I don’t know” (1972, p.209). As Burrow saw it, a collective or ‘phylogenetic’ disorder exists in humans, and “individual discord is but the symptom of a social discord” (1926b, p.87). Thus the various psychoses, depressions, obsessions, etc., that psychiatry deals with (as well as crime and conflict) are just variations, in a more intensified form, of a common underlying species-wide disorder. There is a physiological harmony and feeling-continuity we have with the ‘mother-organism’ and/or the world, which has been interfered with by the process of cognitive objectification, leading us to become divided within ourselves. It is difficult not to recognise this primary ‘feeling-continuity’ as anything other than what is called ‘*whanaungatanga*’ in Māori (or ‘*ubuntu*’ in Zulu, or ‘*shimcheong*’ in Korean). Burrow’s life work was on exposing his version of ‘the fall’ (Burrow, 1968, p.296), which we glimpse in these religious and cultural ideas, and offering us a way to address it.

The “I-persona”

Gregory Bateson (1972) approvingly took up Aldous Huxley’s assertion that the central problem for humanity is to recover our grace as an animal. In a letter written to a student in 1932, Burrow picks up on a parallel first noticed by the anatomist G.E. Coghill’s (1929) in his work on the evolution of movement patterns. Burrow (1958) reports that Coghill had noticed that the Mexican Salamander (Axolotl), will have a forelimb, “*let us say – take on at times a quite independent, reflex action. These localized and independent departures in function*

assume ...a quite hoity-toity air. They even assume an 'antagonistic' manner of behavior toward the primary total action of the organism....[T]hese arbitrary and partial activities remain quite 'discrete'...They do not assume any total or integrated or centred principle of individuality or identity....As long as they do not get organized, do not form a union, as it were, they cannot threaten the vested capital, so to speak, of the central salamander principality" (p. 252). These part-actions are also short-lasting. However for humans, this is what Burrow (and Coghill) saw was happening, a part function had taken over, and hence our loss of grace or organism-as-a-whole functioning.

This loss of grace or elegance of movement, which, incidentally, Burrow (1958) was discussing with the likes of D.H. Lawrence and John Dewey, and was being mentioned by Alexander (*The Alexander Technique*) in his work (2000), was brought about because humans' attention has become divided against ourselves. We have a part that has taken over, evaluating the symbolic value to us of everything we encounter. A part that is looking "from *without in*" rather than from "*within out*" as other living things do (Burrow, 1968, p.204). This is the "I-persona", the human axolotl forelimb, so to speak, that has become 'independent' and taken charge of our total being. Nietzsche (1887/1967) had noted, just as there is no flash apart from the lightening, so there is no "I" apart from the walking or thinking; the noun-verb (subject-predicate) structure of our grammar creates these Cartesian ghosts or fictions. Descartes' error was to think there must be a thinker; however there is just thinking going on. Nonetheless, we have made this fictional "I" real; we have created and maintain a number of

neuromuscular tensions, or attention circuits that we identify with. This divided state of attention has become the normal everyday mind or experience of most.

One of the frequent criticisms made of Burrow (and which he acknowledges) was that he was something of a “lone wolf” in his research and didn’t relate his ideas well with others who thought along similar lines (Burrow, 1968). Like Burrow, Bakhtin (1986), Levinas (1998), Merleau-ponty (1945/1996), Shotter (2016), and Wittgenstein (1958), (and others), have all proposed in their own way, the existence of a primary unity or intersubjectivity between us, or us and the world. For Heidegger (1962) the car feels like part of me (I feel the wheels on the road), until something goes wrong, and then a gap is created. We don’t infer someone is in pain, we see it immediately; this is seldom a guess or conjecture (Overgaard, 2007). Merleau-ponty (1945/1996) describes a living direct resonance of bodily behaviour that we have from birth which he calls our ‘primary intersubjectivity’. (Burrow (1964) called this the ‘preconscious mode’, but I will use Merleau-ponty’s term here due to its growing popularity.) This phenomena of ‘we-ness’ is largely unrecognised in Pākehā culture, but as noted above, we refer to it as *whanaungatanga* in Māori. For Merleau-ponty when we mediate our interactions through symbols or our intellect, he calls it ‘secondary intersubjectivity’ (Daly, 2014). Shotter (2016) notes that when a conversation takes on a “life of its own” it’s all primary intersubjectivity. In this regard Wittgenstein (1958) wrote: “(I)t is correct to say ‘I know what you are thinking’, and wrong to say ‘I know what I am thinking’. (A whole cloud of philosophy condensed into a drop of grammar)” (p.222e). This is because when I have given myself to the conversation I am not looking at myself, and so have no idea what I

am thinking, but hopefully showing you by how I talk and what I say. Burrow (1968) gives an ethical slant on this primary intersubjectivity, that could be straight from Levinas (1998), when he states: “there exists in the child an inherent, instinctual, biologically healthy feeling for what is right in the sense of man’s unity and coordination as a common species. It is as innate to a child as is his sense of physical equilibrium or his visual response to a moving object” (pp.36-37). Burrow describes this primary intersubjectivity as the *within out* way of functioning; no looking in the rear view mirror yet to see what we are doing (*without in*). Now today, this new cognitive paradigm of ‘4e-cognition’ is tracing these circuits our attention flows around when engaged in *within out* ways of functioning; so Burrow can be seen as a forerunner to this way of thinking.

Like these other writers, Burrow had seen that when we lose touch with or ignore this primary intersubjectivity, our *whanaungatanga* if you like, our risk of conflict and disharmony is high. We become *too* individuated. He first wrote this as a book entitled *Our Common Consciousness*, which he never published; but re-wrote it and published it in 1927 as *The Social Basis of Consciousness*, which he immediately sent to Freud. Freud (1918) had claimed, in relation to war, that it was “a mystery why the individual members of nations should disdain, hate, and abhor each other at all, ...I do not know why this is” (p.38); and Burrow was offering him an understanding of why war or conflict is almost inevitable, given this common social neurosis. Freud replied, thanking Burrow, but noting “I am sorry to say that its first chapter already presented great difficulties for my comprehension” (quoted in Campos Avillar, 2016; p.50).

Although Freud turned away from Burrow, he was influencing lesser known psychologists of the time, such as Gardner Murphy, Franz Alexander, and Nathan Ackerman. He continued exploring in a variety of ways how our “social instinct” to attune to each other (and the world), is being overshadowed as we develop secondary intersubjectivity. To those sceptical of the notion that a universal social neurosis plagues humanity, to which we are largely oblivious, Burrow noted that malaria is ‘normal’ to many indigenous people in the tropics. Those people, “without exception, regarded the incidence of intermittent chills and fever as a condition natural to their kind as a tribe or group” (1968, p.27). In this respect consider the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (2000) who uses the term ‘misrecognition’ for our current collective condition, rather than ‘false consciousness’. ‘False consciousness’ is a Marxist term for a state of mind induced by the ruling class; but here we are talking about a failure to recognise that we are primarily relationally responsive to each other. Bourdieu was discussing this in terms of Foucault’s (1977) account of the ‘fabrication’ of the self, especially in industrial cultures over the past thousand years. Although Foucault’s focus was on how selves were ‘fabricated’ for governance of population purposes (Rabinow & Rose, 2006), and Burrow’s on this being the inevitable cost of being “enveloped in a compact mesh of conditioning stimulus” (1968, p. 273) (confining ourselves to the symbolic or social values of things), the two are not incompatible.

Trapped Within a Symbolic World

Burrow was praised by Korzybski (1933/1995), the founder of general semantics, even though “neither man [probably] fully grasped the basic concerns of the other” (Galt, 1969, p.441). Korzybski acknowledged Burrow’s interests were broader than his, in that Burrow was looking at the underlying cause of ‘map-territory’ confusions, but was convinced their work complemented each other (Galt, 1969). Korzybski would demonstrate his general semantics thesis by thumping the table at lectures and saying “this is not a table”. This is because we use the “is” of identity with words; and “whatever we handle is unspeakable, yet we say ‘this is a pencil’, a statement which is unconditionally false to the facts” (Korzybski, 1933/1995, p. 35). René Magritte’s famous *The Treachery of Images* or *Ceci n’est pas une pipe* is a famous illustration of this. Although the symbol is a time- and labour-saving device, Burrow, like Korzybski and Magritte, saw that we get ensnared within a symbolic world where we are endlessly responding to the symbol (the bell) and not what it represents (the meat powder). That is to say from a learning theory perspective, the symbol is the conditioned stimulus. The philosopher Wittgenstein (1958) described this as our intelligence being bewitched by language, which gives us the therapeutic task of showing “the fly the way out of the fly bottle”.

We can observe the development of the pseudo-identity or ‘I-persona’ in the infant, when our symbol system first begins to “revert upon its inventor” (1968, p. 295). This is the time when we learn to be a “good boy” (or girl), to be ‘right’ or ‘wrong’. We inhibit our behaviour not because we see the other was hurt by what we did (a primary intersubjectivity response), but because we wanted parental approval for being ‘good’. (Or in some cases, parental attention for

being 'bad'). We now start to relate to the world no longer as a whole organism, but with a substantive "I" monitoring ourselves (Burrow, 1930a). (One may recognise Foucault's (1977) 'panopticism' here.) So the parent is puzzled when the infant comes back from 'time out' and hits grandma again. The child is learning that it has the power to hurt, but the parent just sees 'good' or 'bad', 'right' or 'wrong'. If trusted, and grandma shows she's hurt, the infant will stop hitting; not because it is 'right' or 'wrong', but because the infant recognises grandma's pain in herself (our primary intersubjectivity). It is in scenes such as these, where we respond to the parental judgment rather than the world itself, that we develop our 'I-persona'. "The sense of right imparted by the adult generation definitely distorts the child's innate capacity for organismic coordination with his fellows" (1968, p. 37).

With the development of the 'I-persona' we are now living in a world of "private advantage, of socially sanctioned personal gain" (1968, p.37); "watching the faces of his elders, he must sense their tone of voice in order to determine what is the "right" as contrasted with the "wrong" response", and such divisiveness within ourselves "must lead finally to armed conflict" (p.39). (Burrow notes that the word 'moral' stems from the Latin word for customs.) We might say, although he never studied Burrow, that Foucault's contribution to this perspective, is that he showed that this individuation process has been immensely intensified under neoliberalism (Read, 2009). Burrow (1968) acknowledges that a number of anthropologists and philosophers criticise his work for not paying due attention to variations in the intensity or degree of dissociation of the 'I-persona' in different cultures. Burrow also pointed out that

if the dog that has been abnormally conditioned is allowed to go free it will return to its biologically normal behaviour (i.e. 'extinction' occurs), but this doesn't generally occur in humans as we are enveloped in a symbolic mesh, and mostly we trade one narrative and identity for another. Most psychotherapies encourage this; although no doubt numerous monks have found some degree of liberation through social isolation. Further, Burrow noted, the conditioned response is weaker than the unconditioned response. The dog does not salivate as much to the bell as it does to the meat powder; and hence we struggle to get satisfaction when living within a totally symbolic world. He described us as 'superficial' (1968, p. 119) and 'restless' (p. 335).

We see that as language develops the infant starts positioning herself in the most advantageous position with regards to the social values of the milieu she is in. As Foucault's work showed this can intensify, and Burrow accepts this intensification by referring to the prophetic dream of Raskolnikov in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1866/2001). In this dream, a plague had come to Europe, where the microbes attacked the intelligence and will, in a way where the sufferers considered their mad decisions and scientific conclusions as infallible – each thinking that he or she alone held the truth, and were now killing each other. Even when they formed armies to do this, the soldiers would turn on each other too. Such a state of "war of every man against every man" is of course, known to us as Hobbes' vision of how it is in the state of nature (1651/1996, p.62). Like Freud, and numerous prominent thinkers in between, Hobbes believed that humans were by nature "dissociated" from each other and in need of a symbolic artificial agreement, contract, and/or strong leader/authority to

hold us together. Rousseau and Locke put forward social contract theories, suggesting that we as individuals have consented, either explicitly or tacitly, to surrender some of our freedoms to the authority of the state in exchange for a “society of security” (Foucault, 2007, p.11). But as Foucault’s analysis (2003) (or Burrow’s) show, such social contracts are the very things keeping our social neurosis alive, for they are premised upon the assumption of us being separated. They are repressing our innate sociality, our *whanaungatanga* if you like. And Burrow, like Foucault, is indicting the ‘psy’ disciplines for being major culprits in maintaining this social neurosis.

Burrow arrived at a similar position as Foucault did at the end of his career with regards to liberation. Foucault spent the last couple of years of his life exploring the Greek idea that “one could not be impure, immoral, and know the truth” (Foucault, 1984, p.372). Both saw that one’s primary intersubjectivity needed to be cultivated or deepened, so that one could ‘enjoy’ a total, or what Burrow sometimes called an ‘*orthotonic*’ pattern of responding (1968, p. 275). Whereas Foucault stresses *parrhesia* (‘fearless truth’) as the outcome of liberation, Burrow stresses loss of prejudice (which is a result of the partitive responding of the ‘I-persona’). And like the Mahayana Buddhists, Burrow claimed we “may do so only as a species or phylum”; for any individual who made the return “would be straightaway reconditioned environmentally, inter-relationally” (1968, p.273). As we shall see, this led Burrow into a unique life-long experiment that gave birth to group therapy on the way.

‘Ditention’ and ‘Cotention’

By 1930 Burrow's attention had shifted to specific neuromuscular activations accompanying the 'I-persona' as compared with those present during more *orthotonic* responding (Burrow, 1930b). He believed that understanding these tension patterns would further our comprehension of our subjective processes, which are embryonic compared to our knowledge of the world. Early in that decade he introduced the term '*cotention*' as a label for this more instinctive *orthotonic* total response pattern, and then a few years later the term '*ditention*' as a label for this partitive reaction or symbolic mode of the 'I-persona'. By 1937 he and his colleagues were beginning to measure respiration, eye-movements, and electroencephalogram (EEG) brain patterns to chart out the distinction between *cotention* and *ditention* physiologically. In their first published study, in *Nature* no less (1938), they found that the respiratory rate of their subjects decreased markedly as they went from *ditention* to *cotention*; they were now breathing more slowly and deeply.

However Burrow (1968) reports it was tensions in the eye muscles that first caught their attention, although these became less central to their investigations as they turned to respiration and EEG studies later. They developed electrical and photographic devices to measure eye-movement; finding that there was a reduction in blinking and eye movement as people became more *cotentive*. Burrow reasoned that the *ditentive* mode involved projection, which finds resonance in the new e-cognition paradigm today by way of inattention- or change-blindness experiments (Noë, 2004, 2009). These have shown that we can be so busy looking ('projecting' in Burrow's terms) we don't see; and

conversely we often see without intentionally looking (O'Regan, et al., 2000). The best known of these experiments is where we do not see the man in the gorilla suit walking through a group of basketball players as we are so busy counting the number of times the players pass the ball. One of the editors of the *Wikipedia* (2016) article on Burrow claims his interest in eye movement makes him the father of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), although that might be considered a 'stretch' by some.

When attention was brought to these tensions around the eyes, Burrow and his colleagues noticed that many of the accompanying postural tensions begin to relax. They had discovered their own form of meditation or relaxation, and began to issue instructions to each other and friends.

"To induce cotention," Burrow writes to a friend in 1942, "it is necessary to secure quiet conditions, as for example when you take your three quarters of an hour rest on returning from work in the afternoon. If with the eyes closed you will let yourself become aware of your eyes as organs in your head, you will close out all the restless images that make us such mental gadabouts. In the effort to hold the eyes steadfast, in the absence of any point of focus, you necessarily develop an increasing awareness of the muscles about the eyes that maintain them in a position of equilibrium. As you first undertake this experiment you will probably become drowsy and will fall asleep, but you have fallen asleep in a healthy posture as far as your eyes are concerned.In first undertaking cotention you will find it difficult, and you will find every excuse for not continuing with it. Thinking, especially emotional thinking, is so much a habit with you now, as with the rest of the people, that it is easier

to be pushed on by this habit than let go of it. It is precisely this restless mental habit prompted by emotion that you need to alter..." (1958, pp. 435-436).

With regards to Burrow's EEG observations, it is interesting to see that they found a reduction in alpha frequency during *cotention*, but unlike most later researchers of meditators, they did not find an increase in alpha amplitude (West, 1980). Indeed they report a decrease in amplitude (Burrow, 1943; Burrow & Galt, 1945). Despite this difference Shiomi (1969) reports finding similar respiratory and EEG changes in Zen students and Zen masters to those found by Burrow. Burrow and his colleagues initially researched and taught their colleagues his meditation method, but subsequent to his death his colleagues began using auditory feedback from the EEG to facilitate or enhance *cotention* (IBRO, 1968, p.50).

From Psychoanalysis to Group and then Community.

In an essay on the power relations in play in psychoanalysis Jay Haley described psychoanalysis as a game of 'one-upmanship' (1958). He argued that the patient has been using his/her symptoms to get 'one up' on others in life, but by accepting the symptoms the analyst remains one-up on the patient. The only way the patient can get one-up is to drop the symptoms, but the astute analyst sees this coming and discharges the patient just as they do this, thus remaining one-up on the patient. In 1918 Burrow was challenged by a patient, Clarence Shields, to reverse the power relations in their psychoanalytic sessions, to which

Burrow complied. When they swapped positions of analyst and analysand, he found that Shields “had merely shifted to the authoritarian vantage ground I had myself relinquished” (1927, p. xvi). Thus began an experimental study into the deconstruction of psychiatric authority; a reciprocal effort by both to recognise and explore the attitude of authoritarianism and autocracy both had.

By 1923 this study had expanded to include a group of students, but Burrow and Shields both report it was very difficult as the relationships became very tense and the impulse to abandon the study and flee was almost overpowering. In the same year that Burrow was president of The American Psychoanalytic Association (1925), he took their findings to the International Psychoanalytic Congress in Bad Homberg, hoping it would seem, to impress Freud on this shift to group analysis. Unfortunately Freud was ill, and didn’t make the conference. After returning to the US, Burrow and his group rented a house in Baltimore, where six of the students began living. Others came to meals there three times a day. The group included businessmen, nurses, and physicians. In 1927 Burrow closed his psychoanalytic practice, gave Adolf Meyer his resignation letter from the university (as requested), and became the scientific director of the Lifwynn Foundation, the name they gave their research group institution. One of the group took the position of housekeeper for the next twenty-seven years, and although they moved to New York, and later Westport, Connecticut, the Foundation out-lived Burrow himself (Galt, 1995).

As Pertegato (2014) noted the central thesis now was on “*the fallacy of the individualistic approach in psychiatry and psychoanalysis*” (p. 321), for to do so

keeps us blind to the *ditentive* 'disease' in the social mind. The focus has now shifted from seeing the individual as an individual, to seeing the individual as part of a larger social organism. This in turn meant that our own cognition as therapists also needs to shift, so that what is being called here our primary intersubjectivity, our relational responsiveness to each other, is central. Although using different words, this was his message to the Bad Homberg conference in 1925. As we become ego-less or *cotentive* ourselves as therapists, we give up our authoritarian position in the therapeutic relationship, and no longer attempt to manipulate our client into change. We let go of the medical model, and become more humble but responsively supportive to our clients (Drury, 2017). We see this today in Seikkula's *Open Dialogue*, the most successful approach by far to psychosis, which Seikkula (2011) says he feels "uneasy to name as a therapeutic method" (p.191). We see it evidenced today in the 'common factors' research which shows maintaining a focus on relational factors common to all therapies is more important than any individualistic model (Wampold, 2015).

Besides therapy there was the larger question of what a community might look like where members live in *cotion* with each other. "A leader as a central image of private authority has to be eliminated and our common problem met by us in common if we are to break through the bonds of a socially enveloping neurosis" (Burrow, 1958, p.197). So they also studied the process of decision-making in their community, with special attention upon somatic responses. The by-laws of Lifwynn were developed in a manner calling for cooperation and consensus with shared responsibility (Galt, 1995).

As noted above Foucault (2001) stressed the development of *parrhesia* (fearless speech) as an outcome of liberation from a fabricated self. In this respect D.H. Lawrence (1927) wrote of Burrow: "*Dr Burrow is that rare thing among psychiatrists, a humanly honest man.[S]ubjective honesty, which means that a man is honest about his own inward experiences, is perhaps the rarest thing, especially among professionals.*" (p.314). Lawrence went on to say the cure for this species-wide social neurosis Burrow describes "*...would consist in bringing about a state of honesty and a certain trust among a group of people, or many people – if possible, all the people of the world*" (p. 317). Privately Lawrence wrote to tell Burrow his writing style is excruciatingly bad (Burrow, 1958, p. 187).

Both Burrow and Lawrence (and others) were in agreement that sex would no longer be the neurotic problem at the heart of the community, where Freud had positioned it (Ackerman, 1964; Burrow, 1958). They saw that obsessive libidinal strivings are a product or intrusion of the 'I-persona'; an objectification of sex that we have become over-attached to. In Burrow's words, the grasp reflex has been perverted into a grab reflex (1968, p.353). Like Norman Brown's (1985) thesis that genital sexuality is itself a repression, and a world without repression would transform our erogeneity to a whole body communion with the world (or a return to what Freud had disparagingly called "polymorphous perversity"), Burrow too saw this ecstatic union occurring in all sorts of activities.

Cotention in Everyday Activities

"We see [cotention] readily demonstrated among skilled workers of all kinds. We see it in the home, the factory and the workshop. We see it in the artist, the craftsman, the acrobat, and ... in the expert swimmer, the skater, the bicycle-rider and the horseman. There is, in fact, no end of these instances" (Burrow, 1968, p.377). This fits well with the Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980) five-stage model of the development of 'expertise', which argues that as proficiency increases we abandon rule-following (symbolic thinking) in favour of embodied intuitions. Although the idea of specific stages in the Dreyfus model has been criticised, the idea that "pattern recognition reflexive responding" (or the circumvention of working memory) as the hallmark of expertise is now widely acknowledged (Ericsson et al., 2006). Indeed, when we consider such everyday activities as walking, sitting, and talking, we see that "wholeness is indeed our native state, [and the] problem is to discover, and if possible remove, the impediments that interfere with the experience of it" (Galt, 1995).

From this perspective, *ditention* then is "a preliminary stage of awkwardness" as we "bring about the needed coordination ...with the environment coincident with the organism's homeostatic function or cotention" (Burrow, 1968, p. 348). During the *ditentive* phase of learning a skill we are watching ourselves; making sure we are following the rules. In Burrow's analysis of our social coordination, this stage of 'awkwardness' has lasted thousands of years (if not since the advent of language). As we have seen, especially through the eyes of other writers such as Merleau-ponty (whom Lifwynn's Galt (1995) approves of), this is due largely to loss of contact with our primary intersubjectivity. The 'language games' (Wittgenstein, 1958) we have cultivated over the past centuries (especially the

past millennia in Foucault's (2005) account), punctuate the flow of events as if we are separate selves; thus maintaining our *ditentive* social position. Look at the prevalence of cartesianism.

Taking a solution-focused perspective, our 'language games' in a *cotentive* world would place greater stress on our unity with each other and the world. And this is the language of the new '4e-cognition' paradigm. Bateson (1972) for example described "mind" as the **extended** circuit that say, the axeman's attention flowed around as he engaged in his activity: "tree-eyes-brain-muscles-axe-stroke-tree" (p. 323). When Herrigel (1953) described the 'zen art' of archery, he talks of the arrow shooting itself. This simply means that the archer can no longer tell if this was a respondent or operant behaviour, whether this action was elicited or emitted. (This has created a great deal of difficulty to understand by some critics as they are not prepared for a language of unity (e.g., Shōji, 2001). In this new paradigm 'mind' and 'body' are two sides of the same coin, and 'Descartes error' was in separating the two and endeavouring to imply there was a causal relation between them (Damásio, 1994). Mind is **embodied**. Further, we have more nerves going to the senses, than coming from them; and thus we are **enactive** in that we use our senses like a blind-man with his cane to stay attuned to the world. Socially, at times we give ourselves to the conversation to such a degree that the conversation takes on a life of its own that carries us with it (Shotter, 2016). We are so united we might find ourselves finishing each other sentences at such times. This new paradigm is providing us with a way of languaging our unity.

Conclusion

Trigant Burrow was an excommunicated psychoanalyst who expounded the idea that we don't objectify the world so much as we objectify ourselves when we underwent the (Biblical) "fall". We retain a sense of unity or resonance with each other and nature that we no longer recognise. He attempted to demonstrate this through the development of group analysis and physiological awareness, long before the development of humanistic psychology, biofeedback, T-groups, and communal living experiments of the 1960s and later. The new paradigm of 4e-cognition which has emerged this century is the latest development to give expression to Burrow's central ideas. Such thinking is providing clearer steps to an ecology of mind.

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