

PSYCHOPATHOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE HUMAN

Pidato

Diutjapkan pada peresmian penerimaan djabatan Guru-Besar dalam mata peladjaran Psychiatry, Neurology dan History of Medicine pada Fakultas Kedokteran Universitas Airlangga di Surabaya, hari Rabu tanggal 18 Maret 1959.

Oleh :

PROF. DR HEYGSTER



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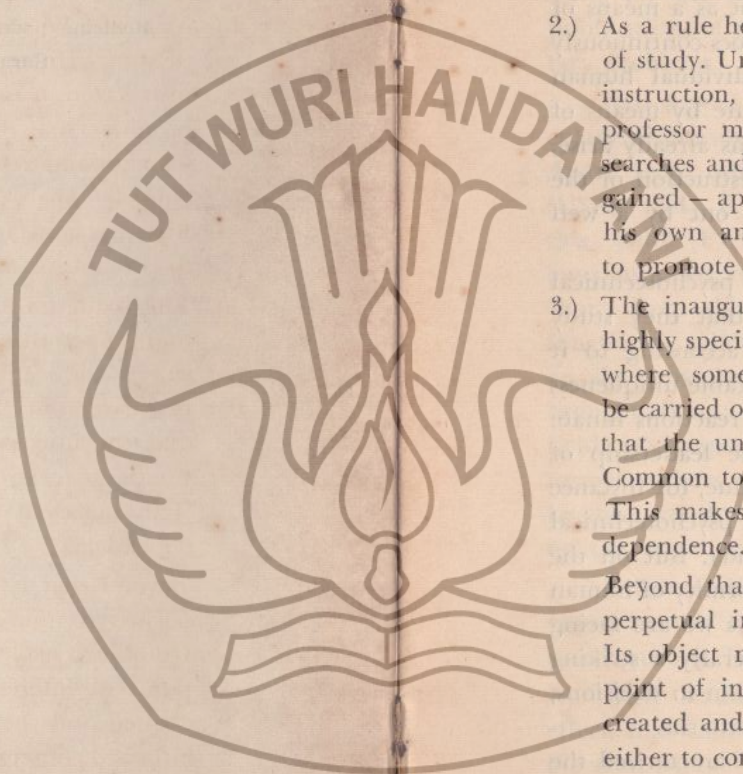


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It is a deep-rooted tradition of universities to make it a duty of each university professor to present an inauguration lecture, when being invited to take a chair at a new university. I am having the honor to present this lecture today, but may I begin with brief interpretations as to what can be expected from such a lecture and in which way its fundamental ideas ought to be responded.

- 1.) At such an opportunity the university teacher presents himself as a representative of a particular branche of science to the entire university, her staff and her students, and moreover before the public and the interested friends of the university.
- 2.) As a rule he will not only put forth some topics of his special field of study. University, in fact, is not simply an institution of academic instruction, it is likewise a place of study and research, and, therefore, professor may be demanded to give a record of his own scientific searches and achievements. The academic teacher is expected to have gained — apart from his sovereignty over his special field of study — his own and independent concepts, that are meant to serve and to promote science in general and in particular.
- 3.) The inauguration lecture, however, is not supposed to be merely a highly specialized lecture. The university is not destined to be a place, where some instruction and research in any special field may be carried out. The ancient idea of the universitas litterarum implies, that the university embodies the principle of unity of all sciences. Common to all scientific study is the strive of recognising the truth. This makes it to the deepest rootes free of prejudice, dogma and dependence.

Beyond that it includes one fundamental subject as a center of our perpetual interest: man. It was made by men and it serves men. Its object may be the biological or spiritual structure of man, its point of interest may be the antithesis of man towards the world created and the sociological existence of man, or its essence may be either to contemplate man in terms of governing actor of technology, or to consider him as a dependent of his transcending philosophical and theological order. The principles of the community life as established by gouvernement and its laws, language as a means of human communication and thinking, technology as an instrument to rule the powers of nature — all these factors stand in relation to man as much as the special sciences, which deal with the Human, such as Psychology and Anthropology.

Therefore I would like to make an attempt today, to investigate certain aspects of the Human in the light of the special field of psychiatry

and neurology, as to search for what can be considered the essence of the specifically human in man. Biological points of view will not be touched. Moreover it should not be understood, that our object „man” is to be looked at in his spiritual singularity. In dealing with distinct problems, however, I rather got the motion of several aspects by which essential dynamic powers of the human in man may become apparent. These powers are to be imagined as shaping elements in the psycho-spiritual existence of man and in his strive for self-fulfillment.

It is no coincidence, that such considerations occur and recur to us right now in our 20th. century; as a matter of fact, they are challenged by the reality. The human keeps losing its value concept as a means of scaling all things nowadays, an era in which solid power blocs continuously vulnerate the respect and the impeccability of the individual human existence; an era in which our technology starts to imitate by means of electronics the human functions; in this era the symptoms already arise, that the decision as to the maintenance or else to the destruction of the entire world by a nuclear war threatens to be carried out by a well organized and automatized electronic warning system.

However, not only our technology, but also so-called psychotechnical methods are a menace against the human in a way, that they study uniformly patterns of behaviour of social groups and according to it state uniform types, which consequently neglect the unalterable uniqueness of the individual. Undoubtedly such uniform manners of reactions innate in all individuals do exist; the successful results in the leadership of man — if we apply such methods — seem to justify their value, for instance in the political massleadership of populations, in the psychotechnical aptitude-tests for specialised functions, in sales propaganda. But on the other side this is developing into an alarming state of uniformity of human behaviour, thinking and value statement, which nowadays we are facing in all spheres of life. We can observe, that there is generally a striking uncertainty, a blindness to scales of value, a lack of freedom in decisions, if man is challenged by demands beyond their uniform patterns.

The German philosopher Max Scheler once characterized the 20th. century as „the first era, in which man does not know anymore, what he is, but simultaneously also knows, that he does not know it”.

This formulation states unambiguously the situation, in which man finds himself in our days and by which his balance gets split up. Its essence lies in the demand to reflect the specifically human in us.

Now I would like to report about real problems of research of Psychiatry and Neurology, which delivered the impulses to approach such problems. In dealing with distinct deviations of psychical life, I recognized that their analyses urged to raise the question about the normal psychical

existence of man. In the same manner as the knowledge on Psychology gets enlarged by and with pathological phenomena, also the psychopathological deviations often sharpen the attention and the view as to the essential in normal Psychology and Anthropology.

During the second world-war I had the opportunity to collect various experiences about psychical deviations from a large number of circumscribed brain injuries, which appeared as a result of *different* localisations in the brain. These investigations were continued after the war.

Especially the frontal brain injuries were analysed and their results were, for the first time, published in a monography in 1948. Further publications of the meanwhile enlarged material supplied new supplementary problems.

It is a well known fact, that the frontal brain appears to be particularly responsible for the integrity of psychical functions of personality. Apart from other modern authors we are indebted to Goldstein (USA) and Rylander (Denmark) for significant progress in this field. Feuchtwanger (Germany) and Kleist (Germany) have supplied results about it already before and after the first World War; from this they have derived some ingenious hypothesis on the functional validity of the frontal brain. My own investigations, based on the most comprehensive and uniform material ever published, have brought about a sort of stabilization of opinions about this rather disputed field. My respect towards the magnificent studies carried out by these former authors, especially those by Kleist, is not meant to be affected by the fact, that, in essential points, I had arrived at different and, as I believe, more up-to-date conclusions.

A lecture like this does not give us the chance to present an even approximately exhausting picture of what is considered essential in these investigations. I restrict myself, therefore, to some outlines.

1.) Only stationary permanent-defective states were examined to the effect, that concomitant and neighbourhood = symptoms could not affect the transparency of the syndroms anymore. The 242 individuals injured underwent the following examinations: Clinical examination, X-Ray, most of them also encephalographically, moreover experimentally and functional-psychologically. In all cases the development of life was kept track of over a longer period of time in order to record eventual alterations of the personality. The neurological deviations discovered including aphasia and apraxia were separately studied and will be ignored today.

2.) I want to point out, that the frontal brain — like any other part of the brain — may not be regarded as a bearer of a distinct psychical partial-function such as intelligence, will, a.s.o. The normally integrated

psychical life can not be localized. A causal connection between psychical normal phenomena and distinct areas of the brain or else a psycho-physical parallelism is a conception of past times. The pathological process interferes — as far as the psychical is concerned — with the *total* structure of the brain function. The direction of the deviation of the psychical life, however, is determined by the specificity of the affected brain part.

3.) The frontal brain syndrom is marked by psychical deviations. We can understand this being aware of the fact, that the human frontal brain formations are conspicuous by their specific anatomic and developmental differentiation.

4.) Every anatomic lesion of the brain — regardless of its localization — leads to a more or less significant alteration of the psychical life. In other words they are not local-specific: They become aequally apparent with the same structure and intensity in injuries of the parietal — temporal — occipital and frontal brain. They are summarily termed „traumatische Hirnleistungsschwäche“ or functional-organic defect; it means disturbances of elementary functions such as perception, memory, capability to concentrate, as well as disturbances of emotional life and of the will.

5.) Injuries of the frontal brain, however, cause — apart from this above mentioned general syndrom — another type of pathological psychical deviations. Their statistical frequency proves their local specificity.

The analysis of these specific alterations was the focus of my own studies. It could be revealed that the multivarioussness of the appaering alterations can be reduced in their basic structure to two basic syndroms of fundamental significance for the human psychical life: Perturbations of the impulses and alterations of the fundamental structure of personality. The perturbations of the impulses were associated with the lesion of the frontal brain convexity. On the other hand a specific type of desintegration of the structure of personality becomes relevant, when the phylogenetically young parts of the frontal brain basis, the so-called orbital cortex, are damaged.

For the sake of better understanding I would like to make the attempt to give a definition of the fundamental terminology. First of all: What means impulse? When we make a move, when we carry out a motoric action or when we make an emotional turn towards a person or a thing, there is always a primary driving power behind such an action. This power is it, that actually initiates the start and the maintenance of those psychomotoric and psychical manifestations. The impulse as a potential energy is and has to be present, prior to the formation of will, action and emotional reactions.

We know of personalities, whose constitution reveales an abundance or else a lack of impulse, — an individual with no impulse at all is hardly conceivable, as the impulses are essential as a prerequisite for the manifestation of the human existence and its dynamic course. Clinical experiences of brain pathology give remarkable evidence of the fact that this primary irreducible basic phenomenon is liable to receive perturbations from two different brain parts, namely from the frontal brain and from the brain stem. Distinct localized alterations of the brain stem can, under certain conditions, bloc the impulse to psychomotoric acts; but the patient is capable to be aware of this defect, to face it and even, up to a certain degree to compensate it by thoughts and by will. The impulse perturbation especially occuring in frontal brain patients is a part of the personality structure itself; it is no subject or personal experience and therefore it does not become conscious, but manifests itself directly in both: thinking and will. Therefore, my frontal brain patients display a lack of spontaneous activity, in that they exhibit in performing their life a peculiar rigid and automatic uniformity. Routinelike actions are still possible, but every activ shaping of life process is absent. As long as sufficient stimuli from outside keep the personality of the patient activ, he maintains, within the rang of the habitual, his rather colourless and mechanical way of living. As soon as these stimuli stop their influence, all shaping power fails to become effective.

The other side of the psychical frontal brain syndrom, which is associated with the basal parts of the frontal brain, reaches even much deeper into the structure of the human existence. Undoubtedly this syndrom also includes a perturbation of impulse. As a matter of fact, there are several publications, that claim disturbed impulses as a central symptom of all psychical frontal brain syndroms, regardless of their localization. Nevertheless I believe, that deeper reaching and specific structural desorganizations of local diagnostical value do occur in case of orbital brain defects.

This opinion is supported by a modern therapeutic mass-experiment. Surgical treatment of the brain is carried out on patients with some well defined mental disorder by interrupting the connections between frontal cortex and certain other parts of the brain. The operation called leucotomia was first introduced by Egas Monis, a Portuguese scholar, and later applied all over the world, especially by Freeman and Watts (USA). This operation can, indeed, lead to the latency of specific types of mental disturbances, deriving especially from schizophrenia.

Nowadays, however, we become more cautious in applying this so-called psychosurgical method. The reason of it lies in the fact, that after this

operation certain alterations of personality tend to occur. These alterations are largely strikingly similar to the psychopathological deviations after lesions of the different parts of the frontal brain.

I will try to describe briefly what I have termed the orbital brain syndrom. Here some difficulties arise. For it becomes evident that partial functions of the psychical life, which we commonly analyse, — such as functions of intelligence, processes of will, emotional acts — are not in a state of primary disturbance. On the contrary, their appearance, their activation, their integration tend to fail to be effective. Apparently the disturbance lies on a higher level of human function. It is not only disclosed by the clinical examination and by the psychological experiment ; it rather becomes transparent in considering the shaping of life by the capacities of the patient.

The patients loose more or less significantly their capability to grasp situations and conceptions by their specific value. Their life does not follow any plan anymore, which corresponds with the disposition of the personality and its environmental conditions. The substantial existence in the flow of time is no basis of the flow of life anymore. The present concret situation harmonizes neither with the past nor with the future anymore. The horizon of life turns out to be strongly limited. The shaping ethical and moral patterns of value loose their efficiency. When we look at the behaviour of such patients, we gain the impression, that only the accidental, the momentary response, and, what only unsatisfactorily can be motivated, prevail.

This report may not raise the impression, that these frontal brain patients would appear as noticeable defective in all situations which life offers. The alteration of their personality may be extremely little ; their obviousness remain hidden before those who are not trained to study carefully human behaviour. But they do become nearly always obvious, if we follow the life process in its continuity and put it in relation to the life process before the injury. All this made it necessary to describe the biographic course of life of such personalities as sort of indicator for the transparency of the syndrom in question.

The publication, in which I have displayed my studies on these pathological alterations, ended by the statement, that apparently the frontal brain syndrom includes psychical disturbance, which touch the „specifically human and the secret of individuality“. Ever since I have been fascinated by the question about the essential human in man. It is the basis of all anthropology and philosophy.

Its nature prevents us ever to find a definite answer. Nevertheless this question recurrently is posed, not only from science-minded people.

It also is the source of artistic manifestations. What is it, however, that gives each artistic manifestation of man validity?

Certainly not the reproduction of its somatic-biological shape. That can also be done by photography. In fact, the reproduction of man in art gains only life, when it reveals a destiny, a development, a spiritual life process, the bearer of which also being a biological individual.

There are two sides to the human existence : A vegetative — emotional one, which places him in the reals of nature, and another one, a spiritual one, which places him in a polar relation to nature. As biological beings we are subjects of evolutionary process, which involves us in an alternating rhythm from creation to growth, from blossoming to withering. This unvoluntary drive is the foundation of our sensation of being, it bears our moods, is involves the basis of joyfulness and mornfulness, of happiness and anxiety, of awakesness and fatigue.

The dynamics of this side of human existence appear essentially rhythmical. They return perpetually to their starting point. Such repetitions of the same alternating rhythm exclude a progressive development. As to this life rhythm, man has it in common with all biological beings. It is the primary basis of his existence ; but it does not represent at all the substance of the specifically human in his existence.

The manifestations emerging from the vegetative emotional sphere, remain amorphic, if they are not experienced, structured and directed by an activ voluntary property of the human being, which lies in the fact of doing and in the ability of taking decisions. Man is capable to recognize, that he is in a distinct mood, or that he is seized by an emotion, and his reactions, his decisions are made up by this act of recognition ; in other words, man is capable to seize upon himself as an organized self-identic individual. He can separate himself from his identity and he is able to make reflections upon himself. He has the same capabilities in encountering the environmental world. The environment is not an unchangeable fact for him, man is able to recognize it, he has a power to acquire and to shape it. Man faces the world and he makes up his mind in a kind of relative freedom, as to which line he wants to follow on his own way facing the world.

For the pure biological organism the ways are prescribed, within which his existence will be performed. Independent decisions can not be demanded from it ; it never confronts the postulate of responsibility. Such a pure biological being is forged into an unseparately unity with its environmental world. The relations to the environment are maintained only by instinctive and reflectoric reactions.

The philosopher G e h l e n characterizes the exceptional position of man in the world to the point, that the animal is an integral part of

its natural environment, which is specific to it. Man, on the contrary, not only possesses his environment, but is related to the entire world as such. He faces the world in a recognizing, systematizing and selecting manner; with his responsible decisions he makes his choice among all practically unlimited possibilities, which are offered to him.

The prerequisites for directed doing, for arbitrary grasping and selecting consist of experiences collected, which have become conscious and effective already in former periods of the individual development. The direction of our doing is not only motivated by the constellation of the present moment. In the flow of the individual existence, which is being fed from the past, the actual present submerges to be continuously conveyed towards the future. In every instance of our life we coincide simultaneously with the past, the present and the future. All present situations are featured by the experiences and decisions of the past; the action done in the present, in fact, is directed, too, towards the shaping of the future.

This historical biographic character of the human existence comprises still another fact. The individual flow of life is not only seen as a logical continuity; it also contains a sense due to and according to the structure of the individual, which he is capable to experience and recognize as a driving power. The setting of aims and values become effective. They are picked up by man to realize special abilities or to renounce others. The individual performance of these propulsive tendencies differ individually: a powerful unperturbable activity; or an hesitating tentative conflicting trial to find his way; or a resigning effort of persisting on the stage reached. But in all these patterns of life the idea of realizing himself remains transparent to man within his capacities to put sense into the fulfillment of the individual existence.

The individual shaping process implies — from my point of view — an essential human disposition, which is found conspicuously in creative man: the phantasy.

In our view it means the capability to discover new significant connections by the free interplay of impressions and perceptions — apart from the daily schematism of thoughts and ideas. Up to the deepest roots, the human property to impart a new sense of valuation to natural facts, is displayed in the faculty to create a productive phantasy. Every cultural achievement roots in this faculty.

Culture is a specifically human creation. Nature as such has no culture.

But we have to ask, has every sort of human existence sense? Are not there any limitations? Limitations, which confine the shaping drive in

man? In every encounter with destructive events intercepting the continuity of life and in confronting death, man is perpetually exposed to the experience of logical senselessness. I am convinced, that there is an answer to all those challenging questions, which embody the empiric knowledge of our constant imperfectness and temporariness of our human existence. Even this contains one side of the human in man, it is immanent in man, but it lies beyond logical reasoning: It is the human faculty to believe: In the good, in a predestined fate or in the existence of God, who governs in a world which is beyond the sphere of our reality. In the faculty of man to assume religious feelings and belief, we deal with one of the basic properties of man focusing the very nucleus of the human.

Returning, finally, to the point where we started off, that is to peculiar pathological alterations in individuals with frontal brain injuries, than we notice the following: The ability to see himself in his existence, in his structure and to perform a senseful shaping of his own life accordingly, is called in question. Every productive impulse ceases to exist. Life runs no more in terms of a structured pattern, in which past, present and future are shaped as a senseful historical unity. Productive and transcending forces are no more effective. The moving experience of being sheltered in superindividual connectedness cease to appear.

Now we can recapitulate, that in the frontal brain syndroms even these capabilities are affected, which we have recognized as the essential of human being.

But I want not to be misunderstood. The points of view about the essential human in man, which have been discussed today, arised under a very distinct aspect. They are limited by the subject in question. Undoubtedly, different standpoints towards the human are possible, other considerations about it already do exist in some fields of science. They had to be ignored today, because I owe you in the first place to exemplify my own position towards these problems.

This inauguration lecture offers me the opportunity to express my gratitude to all authorities, who have taken part in the shaping of my local existence in Indonesia: Gouvernment, Kuratorium, president and fellowship of the university. Dealing with man makes all human communication worthwhile; each coming together gives an impulse, sometimes a gain, frequently a source of experiences. The here today presented ideas were born on Europe, they have their roots in the spirit of european thinking. But isn't it there any danger in fixing our thinking in a stereotyp pattern, if new stimuli faile to arise; or if ones living is continuously in one and the same cultural complex, which gradually has assumed solid dimensions?

During these three years of my life in Indonesia I was given the

opportunity to meet another part of the human world, the range and sources of which are becoming more and more familiar to me. My call to Indonesia, here to this university, made me face this other world and helped to loosen up seemingly fixed own opinions and to create a new preparedness to reconsider one or the other problem.

But simultaneously I could make also another experience : the natural border lines drawn by the different traditions, different cultures, races and patterns of living do not really mean absolut border lines. These border lines start fading, when we become conscious of the fact, that virtually we are all members of one and the same human community.

You all have — unconsciously — contributed to shape these considerations about the human in man by granting me some glances into the local way of human thinking, feeling and living ; This is a gain, which I am gratefully concern of.

Dear students, it is the same gain I got, when I could meet you, and I appreciate it certainly, that such communication can take place for some more years. The same attention, which I paid to you, because it comes also out of my interest in human problems, you have returned to me. The motivations, however, are probably a little different from my intentions ; you intend to learn from me some concret facts and, as a matter of fact, one day you want to do your examinations. But, on the other hand, I hope, that perhaps in some instances, besides your patient and attentive listening, one or the other among you could be attracted by something, that goes beyond all this ; all of you will sooner or later have to deal with man, in the function of a doctor, a lawyer, a teacher, perhaps somebody as a man of science too. Every human being is a treasure by his singular and unexchangeable individuality, that unviolability of which we have to respect and to preserve. In his farewell-lecture Professor S n e l l has told you, you should never forget, that all people, who will later be intrusted to you, are creatures of God. Under this aspect, as well as under the aspect of the human family, which all of us belong to, we all are equal, regardless of us being Indonesians, Chineses, Americans or Europeans.

There is still another thing, which I would like to point out to you, in connection with our excursion into the realms of the Human : Hidden behind all the work we have to do in carrying out our profession is the danger of routine and triviality. In daily life we tend easily to loose the property of getting astonished, the property of the immediate appeal. But the property of getting astonished and the property of the immediate appeal are the real sources of all new genuine recognition. We have to fight against the routine and against the selfsatisfaction and against the

contentedness, which easily arise from the monotony of the daily work. Life remains only then lively, if we understand ourselves always in our continuous search and in our imperfectness. We are striving for the truth despite knowing, that we will never reach to the bottom of its recognitions.

The foundation of human existence, in fact, does not lie in having reached set goals, but in the permanent awakeful strive, in the consciousness of responsibility and in the belief, that the grant of our human existence confronts us with the postulate of a perpetual task.

