A Conversation between Sergio Benvenuto & Cornelius Castoriadis: Autonomy, Politics, Psychoanalysis

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Benvenuto: You are a philosopher of politics, but you are also a practicing psychoanalyst. Does your profession of analysis have an influence on your philosophical concepts?

Castoriadis: There is a very strong bond between my concept of psychoanalysis and my concept of politics. The aim of both is human autonomy, albeit via different processes. Politics aims at freeing the human being, making it possible for him to accede to his own autonomy through collective action. The prevailing concept during the 18th and 19th centuries (including that of Marx), according to which the object of politics was happiness, is a mistaken, even catastrophic, one. The object of politics is freedom. And politics is collective-conscious and considered-action, aimed at transforming institutions into institutions of freedom and autonomy.

Benvenuto: The American Declaration of Independence does not proclaim that the aim of the state is happiness, but it ensures everyone has the freedom to pursue happiness. That individual quest for happiness has gradually been identified

in America with the criteria of ‘problem solving’. However, does the quest for happiness for every man not imply also the autonomy of every man? The idea that society must permit everyone to search for his own happiness implies a certain liberal concept of autonomy. Is it in that American sense that you intend ‘autonomy’?

Castoriadis: No, not in the American sense. The American Declaration states, “We believe that all men are created free and equal for the pursuit of happiness”. But I do not believe that God created all human beings free and equal.

In the first place, God created nothing at all because he does not exist. Secondly, since human beings came into existence, they have practically never been free and equal. Therefore, it is necessary that they act in order to become free and equal. And once they have become free and equal, there will doubtlessly be demands regarding the Common Good, and that is the contrary of the liberal concept according to which each and everyone must pursue his individual happiness which would imply, at the same time, the maximum happiness for all. There are certain kinds of social services which are not exclusively directed to the interests of individual happiness and which are the object of political action-for example, museums, or roads-and all the same it is in the interest of my own autonomy that others are autonomous.

However, if society interferes with my happiness, the result is totalitarianism. In that case, society will tell me: “it is the opinion of the majority that you should not buy records of Bach’s music, but those of Madonna. That is the will of the majority, and so much for your happiness!” I believe that happiness can and must be pursued by each individual on his own. It is up to each individual either to know or not know what his own happiness is made of. At certain moments, he will find it here and at others elsewhere.

The very notion of happiness is a fairly complex one, both

psychologically and philosophically.

However, the object of politics is freedom and autonomy, and that will only be possible within an institutional, collective framework, which permits freedom and autonomy. The object of psychoanalysis is the same. And there is the response to the question as to the fin of psychoanalysis (to which Freud returned often), in the two senses of the word fin (aim/end): the termination in time and the objective of the analysis. It is the aim of analysis that the individual become as autonomous as possible.

This does not mean autonomous in the Kantian sense, that is to say complying with moral dictates, established in the same way, once and for all. The truly autonomous individual is one who has transformed his relationship with his unconscious to such a point that he can - to the extent that it is possible in the human universe - know his own desires and at the same time succeed in mastering the acting out of those desires. Being autonomous does not imply, for example, that I am moral because I do not covet my neighbor's wife. I have not mastered this desire for my neighbor's wife, besides which each one of us began life desiring the wife of a fellow human being, since each desired his own mother. If one has not begun life thus, one is not a human being but a monster.

However, it is quite another thing to put that desire into action. Individuals of fifty or sixty can still have incestuous dreams, which proves that that desire remains. An individual who at least once a year has not wished the death of someone because that someone has in some way wronged him is a seriously pathological individual. This does not mean that he must necessarily kill that person, but it is necessary to realize that "in that moment I was so furious with that person that if I could have made him disappear from the face of the earth, I would have. But then, I wouldn't have, even if I could". That is what I call autonomy.

Benvenuto: You speak of autonomy. Other analysts who, like you, tend towards the Left prefer to speak of psychoanalysis as an instrument for emancipation. Is this the same thing?

Castoriadis: It is; however, autonomy is more precise. Psychoanalysis cannot be an instrument for social emancipation, it cannot free us from our money-dominated society or the immense power wielded by the state. Psychoanalysis does not have the capacity to make revolutionaries of patients, but it can help them to overcome their inhibitions, rendering them more lucid, more active citizens.

However, the problem of psychoanalysis is the relationship of the patient to himself. There is Freud's famous comment in the New Lectures on Psychoanalysis: "Wo es war, soll ich werden", "where it has been, I must become", that is to say, substitute the It (or Id) with the I. That phrase is more than ambiguous, even if its ambiguity is removed by what follows in the paragraph: that is an effort of drying out, similar to the Dutch efforts to drain the sea of the Zuyderzee. The intent of psychoanalysis is not to drain the unconscious; that would be an absurd, as well as impossible, undertaking. What it does intend is to attempt to transform the relationship of the I instance, of the subject more or less conscious, more or less reflected, with his drives, his unconscious. The definition of autonomy on the individual plane is: knowing what one desires, knowing what one would really like to do and why, and knowing what one knows and what one does not.

Benvenuto: Today a sort of official ideology of autonomy prevails. It is enough to look, for example, at the advertisements in the media to realize that there is an ideological sale of a pagan song to happiness pursued by autonomous men and women. Isn't your ideal of autonomy close to the ideas dominant today? You wrote that Marx was anti-capitalist, but that in reality he shared the same prejudices and the same assumptions of the capitalist society. You could

be accused of the same thing, because you propose as an alternative an ideal which is today altogether dominant, even banal.

Castoriadis: There is clearly, on the part of contemporary society, an extraordinary force of assimilation and recuperation. However, I began speaking of creation, the imaginary and autonomy approximately thirty years ago. At that time, it was anything but an advertisement slogan. Gradually, the ad-men appropriated my words because they became the ideas of May ’68. However, the mystification of these ad-men becomes apparent when they speak of creativity. “If you really want to be creative, come and work for IBM” - that is a publicity slogan. But at IBM, you are neither more or less creative than you are elsewhere. The creativity I speak of is of human beings who must be freed, which is quite a different thing.

In France, one does not speak so much of autonomy as of individualism. Now, individualism as it is referred to in publicity, in the official ideologies, or in politics, has nothing to do with what I call the autonomy of the individual.

> ***In the first place, individualism is: “I do what I wish”, while autonomy is: “I do what I believe it is right to do, after reflecting; I do not deprive myself of doing what pleases me, but I do not do something simply because it pleases me”.***

In a society in which each one does what he pleases, there will be murder and rape. And then, that publicity and ideology are deceptive, because the alleged individualism, the narcissism with which we are inundated, is a pseudo-individualism. The current form of individualism is that at 8:30, every evening in every French household the same dials are tuned to receive the same television programs, which propagate the same rubbish. Forty million individuals, as though obeying a military command, do the same thing, and that

is called individualism! By “individual” I intend someone who attempts to become autonomous, who is conscious of the fact that, as a human being, he is absolutely unique and attempts to develop his singularity in a reflected way. Consequently, there is no relationship between the ideology of publicity and what I have said.

Benvenuto: Apparently, your idea of the aim (fin) of psychoanalysis is virtually opposite to the one proposed by Lacan. He strongly criticized the idea that that aim was to create an autonomous ego, calling that theory an “American ideology”. Do you consider Lacan’s criticism to be fair?

Castoriadis: Partially so. For, in it there were two potential-perhaps even real-deviations. The first was the absolute over-estimation of the Ego and consciousness. Freud’s expression, “where It was, I must become”, should be completed by the symmetrical: “there where I am, the It must be able to appear”. We must succeed in making our desires speak. Letting them pass into reality, allowing them to be translated into action, is obviously quite another thing. Therefore, it is necessary to let drives rise; it is necessary to know even the most bizarre, monstrous, and abject drives which could appear in our everyday, conscious life. On the other hand, the autonomous Ego referred to by certain Americans was in fact the socially constructed individual: the Ego was constructed by society; that is, an individual knew that he had to work to live and that if he opposed his boss it was because he had not resolved his Oedipus complex. There have been job application questionnaires in American companies in which, if the candidate responds to the question “when you where a child, did you love your mother or your father more?” by “I loved my mother more”, he earns a negative point. Because, clearly, if he opposed his father, he could be a potential troublemaker in the company. That is an ideological utilization of psychoanalysis for the purpose of adaptation.

In 1940, when there were 15 million unemployed in the United

States, an article appeared in the International Journal for Psychoanalysis by American psychoanalysts interpreting the psychoanalytical roots of unemployment: one is unemployed because of an unconscious desire to be unemployed. This is an aberration, as well as idiotic, since unemployment is clearly an economy-related phenomenon.

However, Lacan's criticism of that tendency was somewhat in bad faith. In the first place, because he chose an easy target, in the second place because he wished to propose an ideology of desire. Now, that Lacanian ideology of desire is monstrous, because desire is murder, incest and rape. For Lacan, there is the Law, but that Law - as he is incapable of putting it in a social-historical context - perhaps could be any law. There was law at Auschwitz; there was law in the Gulag; and there is law in Iran today.

Benvenuto: But Lacan spoke of symbolic law, constituted by language, and with a universal structure. It is not a question of just any law, imposed by any regime.

Castoriadis: Of course, with language we can say anything we please. But what exactly does he mean by symbolic law? The word "symbolic" for Lacan is a skeleton key, a word to conceal the fact that one is speaking of the institution and the instituted. However, in saying that it is symbolic, what he wants is to endow the institution and the instituted with a pseudo-transcendental dimension, as Kant would say. But the symbolic is quite another thing. Language belongs to the symbolic, in the sense that all signs are symbols of a referent, or that there are symbols of another order. But we must put an end to that Lacanian mystification of the symbolic.

There is no "symbolic" as independent domain; there is a symbolic as part and function of the imaginary. Otherwise, there are institutions, and there is a question of the validity of the institutions. However, the question is not

symbolic. Is then the institution valid by right? It will always be valid de facto, as long as it is sanctioned. But it was valid de facto at Auschwitz and is so also in Iran today. Is it valid by right? Now, there is nothing in the concept of Lacan to lead us to make a distinction between the law of Auschwitz and the law of ancient Athens, or the present laws in the United States. Thus, the famous expression of Lacan to the effect that the master relinquishes nothing of his desire. Now, it is the master who knows what his desire is, and if his desire is like the desire of Lacan - i.e., to transform his followers into slaves - then his desire is realized. But that is basically opposed to the scope of psychoanalysis, which is not that the desire of the master, or of everyone, be realized - particularly if one is aware of what desire implies in psychoanalysis - because that would be incompatible with real, social life. And I do not intend here the actual American society, but also the most ideal society conceivable. So, Lacan comes back to the most utopian aspects of the ideology of the young Marx and the Anarchists, although he would have laughed sarcastically at the consideration of these ideologies. The young Marx and the Anarchists conceived of a society in which there would be neither law nor institution.

Benvenuto: That accusation directed at Lacan as anarchist surprises me. His left-wing critics usually accused him of being repressive, due to his insistence on Law and castration. For Lacan remaining faithful to one’s desire means castration, i.e., renouncing the putting into action of one’s own fantasies.

Castoriadis: Not so, because the assumption of castration in Lacan is extremely ambiguous. It is the renouncing of desire directed at the mother, but that is the condition of realizing desire. For Lacan, there is neurosis because the individual has not succeeded in assuming his castration, and if he does assume it, then his desire is liberated, with the exception that he obviously no longer directs it towards the mother but

towards other women.

Benvenuto: But for Lacan, assuming one's own desire does not imply enjoying that which one demands in reality. He makes a distinction between desire, demand and enjoyment which occurs in reality.

Castoriadis: All this is very ambiguous. Lacan is, theoretically, all that which is most banal, most suspect, similar to one of those Parisian vogues which appear and then disappear after five, ten, twenty years.
But coming back to the history of psychoanalysis, the particular problem of the human being is to succeed in creating a relationship with the unconscious which is not simply a repression of the unconscious, or its suppression according to a given social dictate and, in particular, the social heteronomy. Here we have once more a point at which psychoanalysis and politics meet. To what extent might I call the social law also my law and not a law which has been imposed on me in a heteronomous fashion? It is my law only if I have been concretely active in the formation of the law. Only in these conditions can I be truly autonomous, given the fact that I am obliged to live in a society which has laws. Thus, we have a second point of conjunction between the sense of autonomy in psychoanalysis and the sense of autonomy in politics.

Benvenuto: The left-wing culture has often criticized analysis as a practice particular to a bourgeois society, because it is essentially based on a private contract of sorts. Above all, during the 1960s and 1970s, a certain sector of the left proposed substituting psychoanalysis with a social treatment of personal problems, reducing psychopathological disturbances to social alienation. What is your opinion of this left-wing, Marxist criticism of the psychoanalytical ethic?

Castoriadis: That was a radical leftist exaggeration of the 1960s and 70s, which found motivation in certain aspects of

establishment psychoanalysis. Every psychoanalytical process necessarily involves two persons: an analysand and an analyst. There cannot be a transference and a working through of the transference outside this relationship between analysand and analyst. There is, however, an aspect which is extremely difficult to resolve and to which no one has yet provided a solution: the financial aspect. On the one hand, the psychoanalyst has to make a living. On the other, as experience proves, even for the analysand an unpaid analysis is not psychically tolerable (because the debt he contracts with the analyst is enormous), and it will inevitably be ineffectual since the analysand can prattle on interminably, because the time of the session costs him nothing.

> ***There is in any event a problem: the enormous inequality of the distribution of wealth in today's society places psychoanalysis out of the reach of most of those who need it, unless they are reimbursed by the National Health System. This could be resolved effectively only within the framework of a general social transformation.***

Benvenuto: What then are your practical, political suggestions for countering the classic criticism against analysts: that they only treat the idle rich, and usually too few patients in ratio to the average population?

Castoriadis: This is not necessarily true. Of the dozens of patients I have treated up to the present, practically none have been rich. Some have made enormous sacrifices in order to go into analysis. I adapt my fee to the patient's economic possibilities. There are also those who cannot pay anything. But practically no one has come to me for analysis in order to be able to say at a fancy dinner party "I am in analysis".

The financial question is however a real problem, and it would be good to attempt to eliminate this great inequality of income in today's society. However, from a theoretical point

of view, we cannot remain blocked at the Freudian theory as it was formulated initially. Freud was an incomparable genius, and to him goes the credit for a wealth of ideas. But there is a blind point in Freud: the imagination.
There is a considerable paradox in Freud's works, in that everything recounted by him is formations of the radical imagination of the subject, of fantasies. However Freud, who was formed in the Positivist spirit of the 19th century, as a student of Brücke in Vienna, neither sees, nor wants to see, these formations. For this reason, initially, for some time he believed in the reality of the scenes of infantile seduction his hysterical patients described. He believed that the subject was ill because of something which had created trauma.

Benvenuto: For more or less the past ten years, there has been in the US the tendency to return to Freud's initial belief in the real seduction on the part of adults.

Castoriadis: These are political idiocies created by the politically correct vogue. The patient, when he says that his mother, father, nurse or neighbor seduced him when he was a child, is always necessarily right. But that is not the problem, because the basic response is that for any traumatic event, the event is real in that it is an event, while it is imaginary in that it is traumatic. There can be no trauma if the imagination of the subject does not give a certain meaning to what has occurred, and that meaning is not politically correct but is the meaning given to the fantasy of the subject and his radical imagination. Now, Freud does not want to acknowledge that basic concept.

Currently, in the US, there is the attempt to go back in time. It is touching and funny to see that during the analysis of the Wolf Man, Freud long believed in the reality of the primitive scene which the Wolf Man described to him-that is, the fact that he saw his parents making love from behind; and that it was not until the end of the analysis that he said-in a footnote-that perhaps, in a final analysis, the primitive

scene was only the patient’s fantasy. However, the matter is of little importance. Freud did not account for the role played by the imagination in what he called fantasmatisation. He attempted to attribute philogenetic origins to these fantasies, and he attempted to find them in the initial myth of Totem and Taboo, which is absurd.

To explain the origin of society, Freud created a myth.

At the outset, he posed the problem of the origin of society as simply negative-that is, the problem of the origin of the two major interdictions: that of incest and that of intra-tribal murder. Not murder in principle, because nowhere is murder forbidden in principle; if you kill the enemies of Italy or France, you have done well and are decorated-but one must not kill within. You can kill within only if you are an executioner, or a policeman on duty. Freud did not see that the problem of the origin of society is not exclusively the problem of the creation of two interdictions. It is the problem of the creation of positive institutions: the creation of language, norms of behavior, religions, meanings, and so on. Freud’s myth explains the creation of the two major prohibitions during the course of history of the primitive horde, where a father had all the women and castrated or drove out his sons in order to continue to reign over his harem. One day, the brothers killed the father and divided the women of the tribe. Then the brothers concluded a pact stipulating that on no one would attempt to take the woman of another or to commit murder. And so they portrayed their father as the tribe’s totem animal. And every year they would prepare a sacrificial meal, during which an animal was sacrificed and eaten, thus repeating symbolically-in the true sense of the term-the murder of the father.

From an anthropological point of view, this myth does not hold, although it is a very significant mythical construction not only because of the fashion in which Freud and the thought of his time functioned, but also from the psychoanalytical

point of view, in that it is in fact an Oedipus complex-the tendency to murder the father and eliminate brothers/rivals. But all this was already known through psychoanalysis without the myth of Totem and Taboo. The myth represents that which it should explain, because it represents the brothers' capacity for socialization on the day they joined forces to kill their father. That is already a social action, which presupposes the existence of language. Therefore, to explain the origin of society, Freud presupposes that society is already there, that is, that the brothers could converse among themselves, conspire and maintain a secret. Animals have never been seen to conspire.

However, because Freud totally dismisses the **creative role of the radical imagination**, of the fantasmatization, he is something of a reductionist or determinist; he tends to always attempt to find the connection of causes and effects in the subject's psychic life, which created in that subject that symptom, neurosis or particular evolution.

This is carried to the extreme in stories such as *A Childhood Memory of Leonardo da Vinci*, in which he attempts to explain one of Leonardo's paintings and his creative life on the basis of a childhood incident, which is here also supposed as mythical, and which, even supposing it all held together, fails to explain the painting of Leonardo, why that painting is great, or why we experience pleasure in looking at it. Also when it is a question of explaining the evolution of a singular subject-demonstrating the reasons for a certain neurosis and not another-Freud finally admits that it is impossible to know, and he calls it "the choice of the neurosis". An individual chooses his neurosis, and by two or three years of age she has already embarked upon the road to obsession rather than, say, hysteria.

Benvenuto: But is not the expression "choice of neurosis" contradictory to you assume to be his determinism? Because, evidently, to speak of choice is in itself to repudiate

determinism, and consequently to admit that there is no relation of cause and effect between the history of a person and his psychopathology.

Castoriadis: That is what I said. Freud inevitably attempts to find a connection between cause and effect. For example, in the Rat Man's Analysis or in the Wolf Man's Analysis, he says that a certain symptom exists because a given thing has occurred at a given moment.

However, in the first place, he does not see that the thing which has occurred at that moment has played this role only because the patient attributed to it that fantastic meaning. And secondly, Freud does not explain that which has occurred, and is consequently forced in the end to say that there is a choice of neurosis that he cannot explain.

He often refers to constitutional factors, but constitutional factors are like histories (heredity) in old medicine, or the soporific virtues of opium, as Molière said. Saying that there are constitutional factors does not constitute an answer. Here, once more one must be fair: when Freud spoke of constitutional factors he was not completely mistaken; for example, with infants, from the outset there is a considerable difference in their tolerance of frustration. Some infants, given the breast or the baby's bottle, remain calm for six hours until they are once more hungry, while others very quickly begin to cry, scream, demand the breast or the bottle, or do not accept the mother's going away. Then, constitution implies something innate. However, any effort at psychoanalytical determinism fails.

Freud said the same thing in the texts of 1936-30, as regards female homosexuality, when he stated that a girl, during adolescence, has three alternative ways. She can become a woman who loves men and who wishes to have children, she can become a dried-up old maid who detests sex and anything related to it, or she can become a tomboy in whom, even if it

remains latent, there will be a tendency towards homosexuality. Why does she choose one alternative rather than another? One could point to factors which have led to a given choice or inclination, but ultimately it can never be determined.

Benvenuto: Are not the problems Freud poses on "choice" of neuroses or ways of being a woman tied to problems inherent in all historical reconstitution, since a historian reconstitutes processes over time? There has always been this oscillation between determinism and in-determinism in historical reconstructions.

Castoriadis: Yes. It is precisely for that reason that determinist and scientist reductionism is false; one can never demonstrate the totality of necessary and sufficient conditions. That does not necessarily mean that there is an absence of any form of determinism; there are certain connections of cause and effect, but not always and not essentially. It is a question of domains.

Benvenuto: But in analytical treatment, does one act on the causes or something else?

Castoriadis: That is the most important and the most difficult question. Psychoanalysis attempts to transform the way the patient sees his world. In the first place, it attempts to make him see his world of fantasies. That is, it attempts to make him understand that the way in which he sees the world is a way which, for the most part, depends on his own psychic constructions and fantasies. Secondly, it attempts to lead him to an adequate relationship with his fantastic constructions. If you are dealing, for example, with someone who is on the paranoiac side, first of all he must be made to understand-not by logical persuasion, but through the analytical work-that it is not true that everyone wants to persecute him, but that, essentially, his view is his own fantasmatization, and that one might even say that when he actually does encounter

persons really intent on persecuting him, it is he who has chosen them.

He chooses the woman who will persecute him.

I have chosen an extreme example, because with a delirious paranoiac there is practically nothing to be done; it is necessary to take a borderline case. However, it is more convincing than when you take a neurotic and attempt to lead him to overcome that way of fantasmatization. There are other cases where it is a question of leading the patient to live more or less peacefully and reasonably with his fantasy world, as well with his new fantastic productions. The way in which that occurs is also one of the mysteries of analysis. Freud never succeeded in explaining why a real interpretation has an effect. And I cannot explain why a true interpretation at times produces an effect and at other times produces none. A dyed-in-the-wool analyst will tell you: “if an interpretation does not produce any effect, this is because it is not true”. That is not exact.

Benvenuto: Apropos of the effects of analysis, in recent years there has been considerable criticism by a certain epistemology of the validity, the scientific truthfulness, of psychoanalysis. For example, Popper, Grünbaum and Eysenck have criticized the scientific plausibility of psychoanalysis. Grünbaum in particular has said that analysis sometimes simply creates placebo effects. What is your opinion of these criticisms which consider the effects of analysis as being no different than the effects of magic cures? Because, at times, a magician can also cure.

Castoriadis: But how does he do it? Mr. Grünbaum, Mr. Popper, and even Mr. Lévi-Strauss have no explanation for that. Lévi-Strauss says that psychoanalysts are the shamans of modern times, and shamans the psychoanalysts of primitive societies. But why experiences in double blind (1)? Why is there a placebo effect? Because there is suggestion. But why is there

suggestion? Psychoanalysis responds that all suggestion is the result of transference. The patient to whom the physician gives a medicine is very likely to believe that that medicine will be beneficial, and for that reason there is a placebo effect and that faith can produce effects on the psyche. Secondly, it is for that reason that one makes experiments in double blind, and to say that the fact that someone goes to a psychoanalyst three times a week and that that is beneficial due to a placebo effect, is saying nothing at all. Why is there a placebo effect?

Benvenuto: Yes, but you say that epistemology and analysis both admit the existence of suggestion. I cannot believe that any analyst would be content to admit that the effects that he produces are due to suggestion, even if suggestion is explained in a psychoanalytic way.

Castoriadis: Psychoanalysis can explain suggestion, but suggestion cannot explain psychoanalysis. Because psychoanalysis is essentially-I do not say exclusively-the work of the analysand himself. These philosophers, perhaps because they often live in America, have in mind a psychoanalyst who says to the patient: “If you think that, it is because your mother did that”. However, other psychoanalysts worthy of the name would never say anything of the kind. Now, one has more sophisticated forms: one says that the patient who knows what the analyst thinks attempts to say to him that he knows what the analyst will think, and so on. But if one is experienced in analysis, nothing of the sort holds. It is a question of authority, but in the end I have an experience which Grünbaum has not. If one wishes to, one believes me, and if one wishes to, one does not. One sees how a patient changes in the course of a treatment, and one sees that he resists. How Mr. Grünbaum can explain why a resistance at a certain point gives way? Why does a patient for two years make no progress and then suddenly something moves and he shifts to another speed?

All these criticisms, beginning with Popper, compare psychoanalysis to an idea of science identified with positive sciences [sciences positives]. But anyone who expects psychoanalysis to be a positive science is a fool. Popper struggles against that fool. By Popper's own reasoning, one could say that there exists no history, because there is no possibility of falsifying in history. That is possible only as regards concrete facts. If someone says "there is no Parthenon in Athens", there is a falsifiable aspect of that thing because one can take him to Athens and show him the Parthenon. But if someone says, as Burckhardt did, that for the ancient Greeks the athletic element-that is, competition and the struggle against the opponent-was very important, that is an interpretation and not refutable in Popper's sense. Popper, with his would-be criterion, says that there are positive sciences in which there is experience, measure, etc., and all the rest is literature. That may be so, but this literature is more important, perhaps, than the positive sciences.

History, society, the psyche, our lives, are at least as important as molecules and atoms.

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(1) A "double-blind" experiment in medicine is when some patients in a control group are given actual medicine, while others receive a placebo, but without either the doctor or the patients knowing who has been given which. [Note of the editor].