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## A Theory for the True Self

**I**t is next to impossible to account for what transpires in a psychoanalysis. Although clinicians collect vignettes, remember interpretations that make sense, and isolate important psychic themes, the sheer unconsciousness of a patient-analyst relationship makes it a difficult occasion to describe. How do I talk about the qualities of silence in an hour? How can I describe the mix of tonal stress and narrative content that constitutes the analysand's unconscious emphasis of the emotional reality of a session? How shall I ever be able to narrate my inner dialogue with myself as I silently shadow the analysand, agreeing, disagreeing, querying, wondering, co-imagining? If it is possible for me to state precisely why I choose a particular interpretation, why in that moment? Why do I allow clear themes to pass without comment, only to pick up something else the patient says?

Some people find themselves incapacitated by the question 'What did you get out of your analysis?' Pressed to be specific, often by a friend who is on the verge of seeking an analyst but still needing some clear evidence of accomplishment for the considerable investment of time and money, the friend may want to know details of what was found out that was previously not known. The reply of the analysand will often be most unhelpful. 'It changed my life.' 'I was very confused and it helped to sort me out.' The unanalysed cannot be blamed for considering this a mystifying reply.

What does happen in an analysis? How can we discuss the unknown benefits of our intervention?

In some respects the history of the psychoanalytic movement can

be read as a progressive effort to understand the unique situation that Freud invented and psychoanalysts inherit. Michael Balint's (1968) works on the nature of the analytic setting and the ordinary regressive features of the process, Milner's book (1969) on the role of illusion in the transference, and Winnicott's (1954) ingenious discoveries of the infant-mother memories latent to the analytic relation typify the spirit of continuing inquiry into the nature of clinical psychoanalysis within, for example, the Independent Group of the British Psycho-Analytical Society. Each of these authors believes that the success of an analysis rests not simply on the transformation of unconscious conflicts into conscious awareness, but also on fundamentally new psychic experiences generated by the analytic situation, in particular those sponsored by transference states. Naturally, some transference experiences are interpreted and cease to be unconscious, but certain uses of the analysand and of the analyst are of a different category of meaning from that represented by the concept of repressed unconscious conflict. When Winnicott introduced the term 'true self' to stand for an inherited potential that found its expression in spontaneous action, I think he conceptualized a feature of the analytical relationship (and of life) that had heretofore been untheorized.

If we explore the theory of the true self further, I think we may position ourselves to discuss previously unrepresentable features of our clinical work. I refer to that psychic movement that takes place when the analysand is free to use the psychoanalyst as an object through whom to articulate and elaborate his personality idiom. This use of an analyst is difficult to describe, but because I think it is an important part of analytical work, we must try to find a conceptual category to represent this type of psychic movement. Winnicott's theory of the true self is, in my view, just such a concept through which we may describe something we know about analysis, but have until now been unable to think.

Winnicott defined the true self as 'the inherited potential which is experiencing a continuity of being, and acquiring in its own way and at its own speed a personal psychic reality and a personal body scheme' (1960, p. 46). The spontaneous gesture was evidence of true self, and Winnicott found its earliest manifestations in the muscle

erotism of the foetus. The true self was aliveness itself, and, although he saw it as an inherited potential, he did little to extend this understanding of the concept. If we are to provide a theory for the true self, I think it is important to stress how this core self is the unique presence of being that each of us is; the idiom of our personality. We are singular complexities of human being – as different in the make-up of our characters as in our physiognomies; our person design finds its expression in the discrete living villages (composed of all those objects we select to cultivate our needs, wishes, and interests) that we create during our lifetime. A genetically biased set of dispositions, the true self exists before object relating. It is only a potential, however, because it depends upon maternal care for its evolution. As its gestural expressions and intersubjective claims are never free of the other's interpretation, its evolution depends upon the mother's and father's facilitations. No human being, however, is only true self. Each inherited disposition meets up with the actual world and one of the outcomes of this dialectic between personality idiom and human culture is psychic life.

The psyche is that part of us which represents through self and object representations the dialectics of true-self negotiation with the actual world. Conflict is essential to the usefulness of the psyche which depends, in part, on the healthy balance of forces between the true self and the actual world. If a mother, for example, forecloses her infant's true self, impairing the dialectic of self and other, her infant will have a diminished psychic capability, as psychic representations owe much to the freedom of expression guaranteed by the mother and the father.

To some extent the inherited potential is objectified through self and object representations in the subject's internal world although this is always only a derivative of the true self, much as we know the unconscious through its derivatives. The idiom of the person is not, however, a hidden script tucked away in the library of the unconscious waiting for revelation through the word. It is more a set of unique person possibilities specific to this individual and subject in its articulation to the nature of lived experience in the actual world. The life of the true self is to be found in the person's experiencing of the

world. The idiom that we are finds its expression through the choices and uses of objects that are available to it in the environment. If the mother knows her infant, if she senses his figural intentions, his gestures expressive of need and desire, she will provide objects (including herself) to serve as experiential elaborators of his personality potential. In this way, she assists the struggle to establish self.

### The Unthought Known

That inherited set of dispositions that constitutes the true self is a form of knowledge which has obviously not been thought, even though it is 'there' already at work in the life of the neonate who brings this knowledge with him as he perceives, organizes, remembers, and uses his object world. I have termed this form of knowledge the unthought known (Bollas, 1987) to specify, amongst other things, the dispositional knowledge of the true self. More complex than an animal's instinct, which is another manifestation of an unthought knowledge, how much of this knowledge is ever to be employed and brought into the subject's being depends entirely on the nature of this child's experience of the mother and the father. If the mother and father have a good intuitive sense of their infant, so that their perception of his needs, presentation of objects for his 'use', and representation of the infant (in the face, body gestures, and language) are sensitive to his personality idiom, then he will experience the object world as facilitating. When this happens, we have children who take joy in re-presenting themselves, celebrating the arts of transformation because they have experienced transformative mothering and fathering and know from the authority of inner experiencing that latent knowledge can be given its life.

### The Primary Repressed Unconscious

Perhaps the theory of the true self – as an inherited personality potential – is compatible with Freud's concept of the primary repressed unconscious. In 'The Unconscious', Freud wrote: 'The content of the unconscious may be compared with an aboriginal population in the mind. If inherited mental formations exist in the human being – something analogous to instinct in animals – these

constitute the nucleus of the 'unconscious' (1915, p. 195). These 'inherited mental formations' that 'constitute the nucleus of the unconscious' – the primary repressed unconscious – may be equivalent to the idiom of the true self. Laplanche and Pontalis (1973) understand Freud's effort to conceptualize inherited schemata: 'The typical phantasies uncovered by psychoanalysis led Freud to postulate the existence of unconscious schemata transcending individual lived experience and supposedly transmitted by heredity; these he called "primal phantasies"' (p. 315).

To be sure, Freud's view of mental preformation expressed his adoption of Lamarck's theory of the genetic transmission of acquired characteristics, an argument I do not support. Human idiom is the derivative of a genetically biased disposition, but I do not know what factors suggest this determination. The experience of each foetus, inside the womb, will also contribute to the infant's personality idiom, as will birth itself. Still, if I see, as do most parents, not only physiological but personality resemblances between my child and myself, my wife, and members of our families, it is clear to me – in a most unscientific way – that my child has inherited features of his ancestral family idiom. But such a transmission need hardly be the inheritance of acquired traits, as I presume the ancestral idioms are not acquired but are derivatives of their own genetic history. This does not speak to the question of the genetic origins of idiom, but such a consideration is far beyond my capability. For me it is enough to say that infants, at birth, are in possession of a personality potential that is in part genetically sponsored and that this true self, over the course of a lifetime, seeks to express and elaborate this potential through formations in being and relating.

Freud did not develop his theory of primary repression, and used it mostly to mark the baseline in the journey of mental contents from the unconscious, through the preconscious, to consciousness. His theory of the unconscious was devoted to repression proper: to the banishment of an idea to the system unconscious. When mentioning the primary repressed unconscious, he characterized it as the domain of primary instincts that have a nucleus to them (by virtue of the repression, not as an intrinsic organization) that attracts conscious ideas, pulling them into the system unconscious and thus

co-operating with the anti-cathexis exerted by the system pre-conscious to sustain repression.

If we substitute the idiom of personality (or true self) for the instincts,\* as the nucleus of the primary repressed unconscious, then we can argue that the core of unconscious life is a dynamic form that seeks its being through experience. Winnicott erred, in my view, when he linked the true self to the id and the ego to the false self. He intended to emphasize the true self's representation of instinctual life, but in so doing failed to convey the organization of person that is the character of the true self. If the true self is the idiom of personality, it is therefore the origin of the ego, which is concerned with the processing of life. Naturally instincts are a part of the ego, and without delving into psychoanalytic metapsychology, I will only add that there is no reason in Freudian theory why we cannot hold that the energy of the instincts is intrinsic to and inseparable from the economics of ego life. But the drives are always organized by the ego, because this true self that bears us is a deep structure which initially processes instincts and objects according to its idiom.

If the ego is synonymous with the true self at birth, then the infant's negotiation with the mother and father establishes mental and organizational structures that subsequently become a part of the ego, but are not equivalent to the true self. The unthought dispositional knowledge of the true self inaugurates the ego, but increasingly the ego becomes an intermediary between the urges of the true self (to use objects in order to elaborate) and the counter-claims of the actual world. (This distinction is very similar to that made in classical psychoanalysis where the ego is seen as a derivative of the id, increasingly differentiated from the id as it manages the child's relation to the outside world.) We are still addressing the issue of process and not of mental representation. A part of the ego processes the demands of environmental reality, and its structure changes

\* I do not propose that instinctual life does not exist. I simply do not give it that primacy that it holds for Freud. Somatic urges work all the time upon the mind. The drives of the id do demand expression, a task performed by the ego. But each person organizes the id differently and this unique design that each of us is is more fundamental to the choice and use of an object than the energetic requirements of the soma which themselves express the idiom of the true self.

according to the nature of the interaction with the object world. When this dialectic is thought about, the thinking occurs in the psyche, where that which is thinkable from true self experiencing is represented in the internal world.

Perhaps the primary repressed unconscious consists originally of the inherited potential and then those rules for being and relating that are negotiated between the child's true self and the idiom of maternal care. These rules become ego processes and these procedures are not thought through, even though they become part of the child's way of being and relating. They are therefore part of the unthought known and join the dispositional knowledge of the true self as essential factors of this form of knowledge. Freud's letter to Fliess of 6 December 1896 suggests that he knew there were unconscious registrations of experience not unlike theories of being and relating and he termed them conceptual memories: 'Ub [*Unbewusstsein*, unconsciousness] is the second registration, arranged according to other, perhaps causal, relations. Ub traces would perhaps correspond to conceptual memories, equally inaccessible to consciousness' (1896, p.208).

Rules stored in the primary repressed unconscious differ from the mental contents that are repressed to the system unconscious. **The secondary repressed unconscious stores thoughts** which give rise to other derived ideas as they seek disguised representation in consciousness. **The primary repressed unconscious stores processes** (of self experiencing and self-other relating) that are operationally determined in the infant's, then child's, negotiation with the mother's mothering. In *The Shadow of the Object* (Bollas, 1987) I argued that through a receptive frame of mind, a patient evokes news from within the self whereby new internal objects are created.

Perhaps this is so because the process knowledge of the unconscious ego is thought through. That is, that which has never been thought about but is a useful bit of working knowledge is mentally processed. Topographically speaking this means that through a kind of active reception to internal information the preconscious indicates interest in the unthought ideas that process both self and self-other relating. Perhaps Freud gives us a clue as to how this can happen through his theory of endopsychic perception – that mental awareness of 'the structural conditions of [our] own mind'

(Freud, 1913, p.91). Certain mental representations depict the working of the ego itself, rather like a cinema projector casting the imagery of its own internal operations on the screen. It is possible that some internalized paradigms that are part of the working structure of the ego find representation in the internal world, a projection of the workings of the ego.

In my view there are differing moments in analysis when the patient transforms process knowledge into ideation, through the representation of dream, daydream or phantasy. This may occur in a period of self-experiencing during an ordinary regression to dependence, when through a particular kind of attentiveness and due to deepening of emotional reality, the analyst transforms a scrap of unthought knowledge into its thinking. Most frequently, however, it is through the interlocking logics of the patient's transference and the psychoanalyst's countertransference, when both persons psychologically enact a process, that this knowledge is first thought about by the patient. In some respects, then, it is the paradigm potential of the transference-countertransference category that elicits unconscious rules for being and relating, and transforms these lived processes into mental representations. Indeed, the analyst's countertransference is often just such a journey of transformation from the object of the patient's process to the affective and ideational representation of the process.

### **In-Formative Object Relating**

If unthought knowledge begins with inherited dispositions, the infant will soon know about the laws of interrelating through the relation to the mother, and this then will also become a feature of the unthought known. Such knowledge is composed of all those 'rules' for being and relating conveyed by the mother and father to the infant (then to the child) through operational paradigms rather than primarily through speech or representational thought. In other words, the child learns theories for the management of self and other through the mother's mothering. As the mother's transformational idiom alters the infant's and child's internal and external world, each transformation becomes a logical paradigm replete with complex assumptions which no infant or child can think out. These are meant

to be the rules of this infant-child's existence, and they are determined by the mother's presentation of them to her infant, in interaction, of course, with his unique idiom.

As infant and mother are mutually in-formative, they act upon each other to establish operational principles derived from interrelating. Of course, the mother forms an internal object representation of her infant. But she is also in-formed by the infant's true self, so that her unconscious ego is continuously adapting to her infant. And to a far greater extent the infant is given form(s) by the mother's logic of caretaking. Object relations during the first years of life are always in-formative, so much so that such conveying of information could be termed in-formative object relating, to identify object relations that sponsor ego structures. In-formative object relating can refer either to an alteration of ego structure or to the contents of psychic life or to both. As the mother transforms the child's self states, she may induce significant ego alterations, a change in the child's processing of self and other, that may yield only minimal mental representation in the psyche. In-formative object relating at a later period of psychic development may result in the child mentally representing attitudes, actions, and other communications from the parent. This is less fateful than early in-formative object relating when the child's adaptations result in more ego change.

### **Signs of the True Self**

A question arises. How does the analyst identify the presence of the patient's true self? Unlike the latent thoughts which constitute a manifest text, or the chain of signifiers that link the freely associated, or the familiar, if various, constellations of defences, the true self cannot be easily isolated as an object of study. A latent text, several signifiers, a network of defences can all be pointed out to a patient. As the true self is, however, only a potential, it comes into being only through experience. It does not have an established meaning (unconscious or otherwise), as its significance is contingent on the quality of object experience. Yet in the course of a clinical hour, the analyst can sense when the patient is using him to elaborate an idiom move, and, afterwards, it is possible – indeed often quite meaningful – to indicate how a patient has used one to achieve a self experience.

If the psychoanalyst has reached a decision to allow himself to be used as an object, then he is in a position to know something of the nature of such use. He knows the analysand's true self through his very particular use of those elements that constitute human personality. For example, a patient may commence a session in a lighthearted mood, initiating a relation to me based on a sense of joy. The patient may need me to facilitate this use of an element (joy) in relation to an object. Perhaps he will need, as well, my sense of humour, which I may provide (in Winnicott's sense of 'facilitate') by chuckling when the patient tells a joke or makes a wry comment on life. If the analysand's comment is amusing, then the analyst's reception to amusement is essential to the patient's use of the analyst at that moment. This is indicative of true self use of the analyst, where the patient is using the analyst's sense of irony, or sense of humour. If the patient's comments constituted an effort to be ironic and amusing, then more likely than not, the communication is evidence of false self and the analyst's sense of irony or humour will not be inspired and therefore not used. Perhaps the analyst's senses of awkwardness or irritation will be evoked by such a false self act and this may complement the patient's own discomfort.

Perhaps a patient becomes highly articulate, evoking the analyst's capacity to interpret unconscious communications. The analyst, then, is used for his ability to concentrate and bring his analytic intellect to bear on the task. This could constitute a movement of true self as it uses the object.

On another occasion a patient, perhaps after reporting a dream and its associations, searches for the analyst's sense of intellectually creative freedom. He inspires the analyst's free associations. Such associative freedom might be warranted one moment in working on a dream and then not be correct on another occasion when the patient wants the analyst to 'hold' the dream and its associations, needing the analyst to be in a quiet and reflective state.

The aim of these reflections is to suggest an important clinical differentiation in the patient's use of the analyst. **True self use of an analyst is the force of idiom finding itself through experiences of the object.** Although at times such idiomatic use of the analyst may reveal patterns of personality, the analysand's aim is not to communicate a

child-parent paradigm script, but to find experiences to establish true self in life. At other times, however, a patient does indeed create an object relation to convey some rule for being and relating derived from his relation to the mother or father.

As I have argued that the ego is the unconscious organizing process – the logic of operations – its choices will ultimately reflect both the innate true self (an organization that is its precursor) and the subsequent structures developed out of partnership with the mother and father. Therefore any ego operation in adult life will inevitably be some kind of mix of true self and true self's negotiation with the world. There is no pure culture of true self, just as there is no unmediated presence of the mother's structure of caretaking. Clinically, however, we see uses of the analyst substantially more on the side of true self movement which will override our immediate consideration of any related ego structure. The meeting point of the two factors in an analysis (of true self and internalized object relations) is often when true self movement is arrested by some paradigmatic diversion (or distortion) that is represented in the transference.

How does the analyst know how to distinguish a true self use of him from a paradigmatic use? The clue, I think, rests in the internal information provided in the countertransference. When an analyst is used to express a paradigm derived from an object relation, he is coerced into an object relation script and given a certain sustained identity as an object. He is 'set up' to play a part in the completion of a role that has become an ego operational paradigm. When, however, this does not occur, when an element is elicited in him to be used by the patient and then abandoned (with no aim to set the object up as part of the logic), then, in my view, this is more likely to be a true self movement to its experience through the object.

Are these systems of knowledge always distinguishable? I think not. As the mother operationalizes the infant's true self into the infant-mother object relationship, true self becomes part of the dialectic of interrelating. A true self idiom move will become part of a relationship. But in the first months of life, a good enough mother facilitates the infant's true self, so he experiences object-seeking as useful. If, on balance, a patient's use of the analyst is useful, where transference experience is sought in order to elaborate the core of the

self, then the clinician will not attend to the self-object paradigms latent in any segment of such use. Only when a pattern establishes itself, when a complex of uses is repeated, does the analyst shift attention to consider the laws implied in this category of unthought knowledge.

It is possible then to say that much of what occurs in an analysis has not been articulated or thought before. Indeed, it is perfectly natural that this should be so as until the invention of psychoanalysis (so far as I am aware), there was no cultural space for the articulation of the unthought known in quite this careful manner. While I think it is possible for the psychoanalyst to understand and interpret those theories of being and relating that typify an analysand's approach to life, it is difficult, in my view, to see the journey taken by the true self in the analysis. Of course, there are many times when we sense that we are being used to process an idiom move, we know that some of our interpretations have a particular transitional function for the patient but such lucidity, significant though it is, is a derivative of that deep, silent, profoundly unconscious movement taken by the true self and effected, with equal unconsciousness, upon ourselves. We can analyse the rules for being and relating when they are recreated in the transference and its countertransference, but we cannot analyse the evolution of the true self. We can facilitate it. We can experience its momentary use of our self. We can identify certain features. But we cannot 'see' it all of a piece, in the way that we 'see' what unconscious meaning there is that lies hidden in the narrative text. To some extent this is because it exists only in experience and is contingent upon the nature of experience to trigger idiom moves. Perhaps we need a new point of view in clinical psychoanalysis, close to a form of person anthropology. We would pay acute attention to all the objects selected by a patient and note the use made of each object. The literature, films, and music a person selects would be as valued a part of the fieldwork as the dream. Photos of the interior of the analysand's home, albums chronicling the history of domestic object choice, dense descriptions of their lovers, friends, enemies might assist us in our effort to track the footsteps of the true self. But I fear we should know only a bit more than we otherwise would were no such effort made, as the choice of objects tells us little about the private use of the object. As I shall

explore in chapter 5, it is possible for an analyst to note how he has (or has not) been used by a patient, and to comment on how a patient's very particular use of the analyst, at a moment in the session, expressed a feature of this analysand's true self.

Although Winnicott's theory of an inherited disposition is related to Melanie Klein's theory of instinct (1952) as possessing an innate knowledge of the relation to the object (as for example the relation to the breast), his use of the concept to identify the inner originating source of the spontaneous gesture and my view that the true self exists through the use of an object suggest a different emphasis. The concept of idiom, to specify the unique personality potential of each individual – a potential that is only partly articulated through the experiencing of a lifetime – emphasizes the innate factor as a personality theory rather than simply as a universal phylogenetic knowledge. I agree that such phylogenetic knowledge of the breast, perhaps of the face, perhaps of the father, does exist, but it is more accurate to say that such phylogenetic knowledge is only a part of the inherited factor, as I think infants inherit elements of their parents' personalities by virtue of the genetic transmission of genetic structure.

To some extent, Bion's theory of 'preconception' (1962) emphasizes that need for experience defined by Winnicott as essential to realization of the true self. Infants are born with innate preconceptions, according to Bion, which, through experience that matches a preconception, lead to realizations that foster a conception. The true self is a highly complex idiom of personality preconceptions that come into realization through experiences in life that resonate with the preconception. As such, certain experiences in life feel incredibly valid or important to the person as they seem to register the essence of the self.

In fact, when an experience arrives to express the true self, the individual is able to be spontaneous, to be tru(er) in that moment. The ordinary joy, found by linking a true self preconception with the object world, is a very special form of pleasure. I think of this factor as well served by the word *jouissance*, which is an important part of Lacan's (1960) formulation of psychoanalysis. *Jouissance* is the subject's inalienable right to ecstasy, a virtually legal imperative to

pursue desire. Perhaps this is a good definition of the ruthless pleasure of the human subject to find joy in the choice and use of the object. Indeed, there is an urge to use objects through which to articulate – and hence be – the true self, and I term this the destiny drive, a topic which I discuss in the next chapter.

### Essential Aloneness

Something of what Winnicott (1963) means by the isolate that we are is determined by this true self. Shadowing all object relating is a fundamental and primary aloneness which is inevitable and unmoveable. And this aloneness is the background of our being; solitude is the container of self.

In his book *Human Nature* (1988) Winnicott poses the following question: 'What is the state of the human individual as the being emerges out of not being? What is the basis of human nature in terms of individual development? What is the fundamental state to which every individual, however old and with whatever experiences, can return in order to start again?' (p. 131). He replies: 'A statement of this condition must involve a paradox. At the start is an essential aloneness. At the same time this aloneness can only take place under maximum conditions of dependence' (p. 132).

Essential aloneness is a positive term for Winnicott, an isolation that is supported by a human environment. As this aloneness characterizes the environment out of which being emerges, we carry it with us through life. Before aloneness, according to Winnicott, is 'unaliveness': 'the experience of the first awakening gives the human individual the idea that there is a peaceful state of unaliveness that can be peacefully reached by an extreme of regression' (p. 132). This aloneness is a transitional state between unaliveness and aliveness characterized by dependence and instinctual life. For Winnicott, 'the recognition of this inherent human experience of pre-dependent aloneness is of immense significance' (p. 133).

Perhaps one day we will discover that we possess existence memories, that our experiences become a part of our being which itself is a form of remembering, and which in turn is available for transformation into representation through imagination, such as in the dream. If so, foetal experiences become part of our being, and are

available for mental elaboration through the imagery of dreams and phantasies which represent it.

In the long evolution of the foetus, from its pre-organic history (in the genetic make-up of the parents) to its birth, and then in the dramatically progressive evolution of the infant in those first two years, prior to speech, the human being lives a profoundly dependent life, at first literally inside the mother, then inside the postnatal interrelation – and all of this lived before speech. The progression from prenatal essential aloneness to the adult's capacity to be alone (the action of Winnicott's 'isolate') testifies to our early self, to the experience of the idiom of the true self, finding its trueness through movement pleasures (prenatal and postnatal) that exist in a precultural category of significance; its subsequent elaborations, though certainly using cultural objects, serve its own pleasure in articulating itself, rather than in understanding and conveying the meaning of the cultural objects used. The true self listens to a Beethoven sonata, goes for a walk, reads the sports section of a newspaper, plays basketball, and daydreams about a holiday – not to know these 'objects' and then to cultivate this knowledge into a communication, but to use these objects to yield self experiences. (Of course the use of an object will yield information about it. What we learn from object use becomes immediately available to another category of human experience: the repressed unconscious.)

In our true self we are essentially alone. Though we negotiate our ego with the other and though we people our internal world with selves and others, and though we are spoken to and for by the Other that is speech (Lacan's theory of the Symbolic) the absolute core of one's being is a wordless, imageless solitude. We cannot reach this true self through insight or introspection. Only by living from this authorizing idiom do we know something of that person sample that we are.

In some respects psychoanalysis is a place for the experiencing of essential aloneness. There is a *Waiting for Godot* silence to many analytic hours. The experienced analysand, dispensing with that pre-sessional foreknowledge typical of the novice patient (who is anxious to prove worthy of the analyst's concentration), lingers on the couch, just waiting. Inside the darkened and mute theatre of the mind