

EUROPEAN MAN OR DR. FREUD'S COUCH

(a C.S. appraisal of Freudian Man)

- The Age of Einstein, Marx, & Freud
- Facts- Theories- Method of Therapy- Philosophy of Man

I. FREUD: PHILOSOPHER OR HUMAN UNHAPPINESS

- A. **Three-headed monster:** Body- External world- Relations with others.
- B. **Fleeing the monster:** nine ways to seek “happiness”: unrestricted satisfaction, isolation, science, intoxication, Yoga, work, illusions (Imagination, Art, Religion) being in love, Aesthetic attitude.
- C. **Freudian Man:** self-preservation; love of aggression; need for love; impulse to attain pleasure & avoid pain (Epicurean).
 1. **Id:** unconscious, libidinal, sexual, aggressive.
 2. **Ego and Super-Ego:** derivative, survival, disciplinary.
 3. **Happiness:** direct, unrestricted satisfaction of basic instincts, not part of “plan of creation”; three-headed monster, **Society**.
 4. **Blind Evolution:**
 - **Structural** incompatibility of man and society
 - Nasty **and** sadistic: sublimation and sense-of-guilt
 - **Civilization:** built on human sacrifice and feeling guilty.
 5. **Guilt:** external and internal origins: Oedipus complex and primordial murder of the father.
 6. **Oedipus-Prometheus:** tragic vs. rationalistic atheism; moral indignation.
*Freudian Man: moral sense **not** original: no victory.

II. FREUD: DEFLATOR OF EUROPEAN “CIVILIZED” MAN

- A. Triple blow to **Self-image:** Copernicus- Darwin- Freud.
- B. On-the-couch: rationalist- romantic- spiritual Man
- C. Analysis:
 1. **Civilization a thin veneer:** progeny of frustrated parents, letting-off-steam, compensation prize; compromise, mediocrity; slave-labor, nature-renunciation.
 2. **Three-fold Delusion of Grandeur:**
 - **Rational man:** truth, beauty, goodness, in classical splendor and harmony.
 - **Romantic man:** rebel-creator, master morality, creativity, adventure, depth of feeling, self-fulfillment.
 - **Spiritual man:** joy, freedom, communion, spontaneous generosity and mercy, mutual service, delight in fulfillment of others, love of enemies
- D. The not-so-flattering truth: **Freudian “wisdom”:**
 1. Avoid being seduced by grandiose images of Man
 2. Forget about inherent goodness and purity
 3. You are not the master of your destiny
 4. Your greatest achievements are mere palliatives
 5. Siduri as Sage (a pretty clever chick for someone so ancient!)
 6. “the **adjustment** is all” (apologies to the **ripeness** man-Bill Shakespeare).

III. APRAISAL-DIALOGUE-FOOD FOR CVSP THOUGHT

- A. **Positive** contribution: “Critique of Un-Reason”- a powerful **corrective** to shallow intellectualism and naïve optimism.
- B. Unduly **pessimistic** ethos; no *eye* for authentic positive aspects of human life: **reductionist** ; *partial* theories.
1. Cynicism: **facile** negativity and tortuous obfuscation, debilitating complexity; **the real challenge**-provide **solid** basis for human trust and transparency.
 2. Victim-mentality: academic **excuse** for mediocrity..; over-permissiveness: self-control is **not** repression.
 3. **Over-generalization** of results of his own specialization: *partial* theories: biased *sample* of the human race.
 4. Neglect of Reason, will, Conscience, the Imagination as **autonomous**, **creative** powers of the Human: **reductionist** even in depiction of **instinctual** makeup (e.g. alternative theory: **Seven** basic instinct-clusters).
 5. **Inadequate** analysis of the phenomenon of **guilt**: **objective** counterpart of human freedom, solidarity, *empathy*, responsibility and **dignity**.
 6. A **travesty** of the infinitely **rich** human reality and experience of **love**.
 7. Reductionist analysis of Art, Science, and Religion as mere **palliatives**.
 8. **Cavalier** treatment of opponent views: the only **unforgivable sin** in C.S.!
 9. **Self-defeating** philosophy of man; status of Freud’s views reduced to sublimation, compensation, self-deception, etc...: obvious loss of power to compel.
 10. **Woman**