PSYCHOLOGY AS A SOCIAL SCIENCE

NIKOLAS ROSE

James Martin White Professor of Sociology
Department of Sociology
BIOS Centre for the Study of Bioscience, Biomedicine, Biotechnology and Society
London School of Economics and Political Science
n.rose@lse.ac.uk

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Note: this is the text of a spoken lecture and therefore does not have a proper bibliographic apparatus. Full references to all texts cited can be found in the following three books:

Rose, N. (1985) *The Psychological Complex*, London, Routledge.

Rose, N. (1996) *Inventing Ourselves*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

Rose, N. (1999 [1989]) *Governing the Soul, Second Edition*, London, Free Associations.

1. THE CENTURY OF PSYCHOLOGY

The twentieth century was certainly the century of psychology – will the twenty first century be the same? What do I mean by saying that C20 was the century of psychology? Not just that it was the century when psychology became a discipline, with university departments, professorships, degrees and qualifications, textbooks and the like. Nor just that it was the century in which psychology took off as a profession, with professional bodies, qualifications, employment and so forth. But more because I suggest that psychology across the C20 helped make up the kind of society that we inhabited, and the kinds of people we have become.

The development of psychology in the twentieth century had a major social impact: on understanding and treatment of distress; on conceptions of normality and abnormality; on techniques of regulation, normalisation, reformation and correction; on child rearing and education; on advertising, marketing and consumption technologies; on the management of human behaviour in practices from the factory to the military. Psychological languages entered common sense across Europe and North America, in Australasia, in Latin America and in many other countries. Psychological training affected professionals from child guidance and social work to human resource management. In the process, our very ideas our selves, of identity, autonomy, freedom and self-fulfilment were reshaped in psychological terms. Human beings in these regions came to understand themselves as inhabited by a deep interior psychological space, to evaluate themselves and to act upon themselves in terms of this belief. They came to speak of themselves in terms of a psychological language of self description - the language of intelligence, personality, anxiety, neurosis, depression, trauma, extroversion and introversion and to judge themselves in terms of a psychological ethics. This was not

just a process of individualization: we also witnessed a psychologization of collective life, the invention of idea of the group, large and small, of attitudes, public opinion and the like. Practices from factory to army were now understood in terms of the psychodynamics of interpersonal relations. Social problems from prejudice and warfare to criminality and poverty were analysed in psychological terms. Psychology was a 'generous' discipline, it gave itself away to all kinds of professionals from police to military commanders, on condition that they came to think and act, in some respects, like psychologists.

As we enter the twenty first century, we might want to reflect on this process: perhaps the self evidence of psychology as the mode of understanding and managing all these issues is on the wane. Perhaps the deep psychological space that opened within us is beginning to flatten out, and our discontents are being mapped directly onto the brain. Will the twenty first century still be the century of psychology – that is what I am asking in my current work. But here, let me return to some arguments I made about psychology some 20 years ago; while I would undoubtedly frame them differently today, perhaps they still do point to something significant about psychology's role as a social, perhaps as a political, science.

2. HOW TO DO THE HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY?

Every student of psychology knows the story –psychology has a long past but a short history, as Edwin Boring put it so succinctly. A long past – centuries of reflection on human mental life going back to the Greeks establish the credibility of the discipline. Yet a short history, one that dates from the adoption of empirical methodologies in late nineteenth century, which leads to the development of a real science of human mental

life and behaviour. This is, indeed, the founding myth of the discipline of psychology. But it is fundamentally misleading. Psychology as a modern discipline was not formed in the tranquil surroundings of the academy, nor the white coated empiricism of the laboratory and the experiment. In fact, psychology began to form in all those practical locales that took shape across the nineteenth century where problems of human individual and collective conduct were of concern to those authorities who sought to govern them – in the factory, the prison, the army, the schoolroom, the courtroom….

Psychology, that is to say, initially took shape, not so much as a discipline as a mode of expertise, an array of knowledge claims about persons, individually and collectively, that would enable them to be better managed. Hence this is not 'applied psychology' – the vectors did not go from knowledge formed in the academy to a range of applications, but the reverse. Similarly, the vectors of psychology's development did not go from the normal to the abnormal, but the reverse: a knowledge of normality, and of the norms of normality, derived from an interest in abnormality. For example, the idea of intelligence that would be a focus for psychology across the first half of the twentieth century, arose from endeavours to identify the feeble minded and direct them to appropriate institutions, whether that be special schools or colonies. The same could be said for personality and almost all of the 'key concepts' of the discipline.

3. CALCULABLE MINDS AND MANAGEABLE INDIVIDUALS

Initially psychology formed as a technology of individualization: that is to say, it emerged as a 'positive science' rather than a sub-branch of philosophy when it shifted its concerns from a general theory of mind to a practical task: the creation of calculable

minds and manageable individuals. This occurred within a specific problem space, one formed by the growing demands that individuals should be administered, or distributed to particular regimes, tasks or treatments, according to their abilities – in the school, in work, in the army, in the criminal justice system.

When Cyril Burt was appointed to his post in 1913, Sir Robert Blair, then Chief Education Officer in England, pronounced him "the first official psychologist in the world." His main task might seem a strange one to us: it was the examination of elementary school children who were thought to be mentally defective. In his book of 1921, *Mental and Scholastic Tests*, Burt tells his readers a parable (Burt 1921:172):

> In the history of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia, it is related bow a foolish barbarian once attempted to fly. He ascended an eminence, flourished his wings, sprang from the edge, and at once dropped headlong into a lake. But his pinions, it is added, which failed to sustain him through the air, sufficed to bear him up when he reached the surface of the lake. The episode was written as an allegory; and may not inaptly typify the fate of the defective at large. In a thin and treacherous atmosphere, at the difficult and dizzy altitude where highly civilized men, assisted by the newest machinery of a highly civilized community, alone can securely travel, and alone should venture to soar, there the simpleton, less fortunately equipped and oblivious to his ill-fortune, must crash instantly to ruin. But if he lights upon a humbler medium, dense enough and yet elastic enough, more buoyant and yet less variable, he may contrive, though quite mechanically, to support himself unaided. In one *milieu* he falls, in another he may float. He is there, as we say, in his element.

Each to their element – a noble dream, perhaps recalling another – from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs. The key to Burt's technology for achieving this goal was the invention of the norm – that peculiar little term that condenses, in one word, ideas of the normal, the average, the statistical mean, the desirable, the healthy…. For the psychologists, the norm was not derived from any knowledge of the organic functioning of the human mind – as were the norms of medicine in relation to the normativity of the body: psychological norms derived from the normativity of institutional requirements – of the school system, the factory, the army and elsewhere. The psychological form of the norm aligned these requirements with the normativity of statistical variation and the laws of large numbers, aligning norms of socio-political and institutional desirability with the demands of statistical theory. George Canguilhem, perhaps the leading practitioner of historical epistemology, remarks in his study of *The Normal and the Pathological*, "It is life itself, and not medical judgment, which makes the biological normal a concept of value and not a concept of statistical reality" Hence Canguilhem likes to quote Leriche: "Health is life in the silence of the organs". But for psychology, we could be forgiven for thinking that health was, as it were, merely life in the silence of the authorities: it is bound up with a project of normalisation without reference to the normativity of its object, it is has a theory of pathology without a theory of normality.

Of course, this would be too simple. Psychology formed as a hybrid between these administrative projects and older philosophical projects. This was the theme of Canguilhem's own reflections in his lecture "What is Psychology", a lecture he gave in the Sorbonne in Paris in 1956. He suggested that psychology, like the Sorbonne itself, stands between two possible routes. When one leaves the Sorbonne, one can go in one of two directions. If one takes the route up the hill, one arrives at the Pantheon where

the wisest French philosophers are buried. The route down the hill, however, leads to the police station.

Burt's work was originally bound up in a socio-political concern about degeneracy and in particular about the consequences for society of the existence and reproduction of those termed 'feeble-minded': a group of individuals who were almost indistinguishable from normal folk to the untrained eye, but were, in fact, part of the wider family of those of low civic worth – the tubercular, the syphilitic, the alcoholic, the mentally ill, the prostitutes and the unemployables - whose excessive breeding would, in the course of a few generations, pose a threat to the overall quality of the race. This is not the place to talk of the eugenic allegiances of all the early psychologists of intelligence and psychological testing: that story is well known (Rose 1985).

Psychological tests were initially both required by, and used by, those wishing to 'ascertain' – the mental defective. What is significant here is not just the aspiration to differentiate persons according to their mental abilities, but invention of the technologies to do so, notably 'the test'. As Phillip Ballard so eloquently put it in 1920, speaking of Alfred Binet, the original inventor of a device to identify those whose feeble-mindedness rendered them incapable of learning the lessons of the normal school (Ballard 1920:

> Binet's crowning glory, is not that he got together a medley of heterogeneous tests for the detection of the feebleminded, but that he invented a scale. In this he resembles Saul, the son of Kish, who set out to look for assess and found a kingdom

What was central, here, was that psychology moved, at the end of the nineteenth century, from the investigative technology of the experiment to the adjudicative technology of the test. The test is a novel kind of examination, neither clinical (as in a

case history) nor pedagogic, as in qualifying exams for universities or the civil service, but designed to attach a score to an individual. The test is a way of materializing the mind, it is part of a more general shift in individualization from a gaze focussed on the body to a gaze focussed on an interior space. Early attempts by doctors to 'ascertain' mental defectives focussed on the body – the children, stripped to their underwear, were required to parade before the doctor whose trained gaze would identify the stigmata of defect in the shape of the face, the posture and gait, the proportion of the limbs and the like. The problem posed by the feeble-minded, it seemed, was that their bodies were not easily legible. Thus, the logic of the test. Difference is no longer written on the surface of the body but recedes into an interior realm, and the psychological test as a way of rendering the invisible visible, calculable and manageable.

It renders difference visible in a particular form – in the form of numbers, and in particular in the form of the single number – the overall score. Such numbers have great power, and embody the authority of objectivity within themselves. The black box of the score turns questions of value and evaluation into technical questions about the construction, reliability and validity of the test. Children move, change, are difficult to accumulate and calculate about. But the test functions as an inscription device for capturing these ephemeral behaviours, the evanescent qualities and variable capacities of human beings, rendering them into thought as 'docile' objects. Test scores – tables, graphs – as immutable mobiles – enable the stabilization, accumulation of information about the subjects of testing. They enable them to be normalised, tabulated, and deliberated about in the calm situation of the psychologists office, which can thus become what Bruno Latour terms a "centres of calculation". Decisions may be made in such a centre, and instructions issued from it, enabling the subjects to be administered in

this light – distributed around the variety of available roles, classes, tasks in the army or factory, or to the right school or hospital in an archipelago of institutions.
Projects for individualisation, assessment, management, administration of individuals in the light of their psychological capacities spread beyond the intellect to the personality, and to all practices where individuals were to be managed in the light of their differences. Psychology thus formed as an expertise of individual differences, of individual differentiation.

It is important, however, to be clear about one thing. The human technologies in which psychology was bound up were not inhuman technologies. Psychology gained its power in the factory, the schoolroom, the army, the prison precisely because of its claim to manage human beings in the light of a knowledge of their nature, and in so doing it helped give authority a new legitimacy: authority was no longer arbitrary. The work of F. W. Taylor and the mode of organization that became known as Taylorism is one example of this – though often criticised as a project to control the worker as a machine, Taylor's resort to rationality in was actually an explicit response to a crisis of legitimacy of management in the US organization..

This process was self-reinforcing. Each of these institutions where such psychological distribution was practiced becomes a little psychological laboratory, where individuals can be observed, measured, experimented upon in the name of organizational efficiency. And what we can observe, in this process, is the actual production of new potential identities. By this I mean, we can observe a shifting of the terms in which individuals are not only judged by others, but the terms in which they understand, judge and act upon themselves. For me, what is at stake here is not itself a psychological question, a question of the production of subjectivities, a matter of changing the ways in which

individuals 'relate to themselves'. This seems to me to be a question open to historical investigation – a history of the relations that individuals have with themselves . Psychology, then, was born as a discipline within a variety of political projects for managing individuals: it had a social vocation from the very start. Here is Burt again, in 1927 (Burt 1927: 5).

> Like so many advances in theoretical science, the annexation of this new field [of individual psychology] may be traced to the pressure of practical needs. The psychology of education, of industry, and of war, the study of the criminal, the defective and the insane, all depend for their development upon a sound analysis of individual differences; and the investigation of the more practical problems has already begun to pay back its debt, by furnishing fresh data of the utmost value to the mother science. And so at last we have seen the birth of the youngest member in the list of sciences – the psychology of the individual… It aims at almost mathematical precision, and proposes nothing less than the measurement of mental powers.

4. PSYCHOLOGY AS A SOCIAL SCIENCE

The link between modern political culture and psychology is often supposed to lie in their shared 'individualism', and many have suggested that this accounts for the pervasive individualism of much psychology in the individualist cultures of the west. It was certainly as a 'science of the individual' that psychology first found a place within the techniques of rule. In liberal democratic rationalities of government, abstract notions of the freedom of the individual are accompanied by the proliferation of rationalized practices that seek to shape, transform and reform individuals. Thus it was not only the ethics of individualism but also the practices of individualization in the prison, the

factory, the school and the asylum that provided key conditions for the disciplinization of psychology. Psychology would find its place in all those systems where individuals were to be administered not in the light of arbitrary or willful power, but on the basis of judgments claiming objectivity, neutrality and hence effectivity. It would provide one technology for rendering individualism operable as a set of specific programs for the regulation of existence.

Yet even in its individualizing moment, then, psychology was a 'social' science, a science with a social vocation, organized around social objectives: as we have seen in its links with the ideas of degeneracy and eugenics, and its aspiration to detect the feeble minded. But there is another sense in which psychology was a 'social' science – for in the period before and during the second world war, and then in the aftermath of war, psychology would address itself to the processes inherent in human collectivities, large and small. It would seek to render these into thought, to conceptualise them, and to administer individuals and organizations in the light of them. In this enlarged sense, then, psychology would become a truly social science.

Let me say a little about two examples: democracy and 'the group'

Democracy

Social psychology that was written in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s makes frequent references to democracy. Gordon Allport's classic article on the historical background of modern social psychology in the first edition of the *Handbook of Social Psychology* in 1954 asserts that "the roots of modern social psychology lie in the distinctive soil of western thought and civilization", suggesting that social psychology requires the rich blend of

natural and biological sciences, the tradition of free inquiry and "a philosophy and ethics of democracy" (Allport, 1954). Lewin, Lippitt and White's famous studies of styles of leadership carried out from 1938 to 1942 at the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station sought to demonstrate the differences between experimentally created groups with a democratic atmosphere and those that were autocratic or laissez faire - the differences they found were always to the advantage of democracy (Lewin, Lippitt and White, 1939; Lippitt, 1939; Lippitt, 1940). George Gallup and S. F. Rae entitled their first book on public opinion polling published in 1940 *The Pulse of Democracy* and argued that "In a democratic society the views of the majority must be regarded as the ultimate tribunal for social and political issues" (Gallup and Rae, 1940, p. 15). J. A. C. Brown, in his much reprinted textbook *The Social Psychology of Industry*, first published in 1954, has much to say about democracy, concluding that "A genuine industrial democracy can only be based on the intelligent co-operation of primary work groups with responsibly- minded managements" (Brown, 1954, p.301).

What should we make of these references to democracy – are they just so much rhetoric. My answer is no. Ruling citizens democratically means ruling through their relations with one another, knowing and shaping those relations in line with a conception of how they function – aligning government with the social dynamics of that which is to be governed. As Gordon Allport put it (Allport 1954: 2):

> the First World War ... followed by the spread of Communism, by the great depression of the 1930's, by the rise of Hitler, the genocide of the Jews, race riots, the Second World War and the atomic threat, stimulated all branches of social science. A special challenge fell to social psychology. The question was asked: How is it possible to preserve the values of freedom and individual rights under conditions of mounting strain and regimentation? Can science help provide an answer? This challenging

> question led to a burst of creative effort that added much to our understanding of the phenomena of leadership, public opinion, rumor, propaganda, prejudice, attitude change, morale, communication, decision-making, race relations and conflicts of value.

Social psychology was to provide a vocabulary for understanding these problems that trouble a democracy. It was to evaluate the prospects of resolving them in democratic ways. It was to provide the means for the formulation of proposals to resolve these problems that were, on the one had, in accordance with rational scientific knowledge and, on the other hand, accorded with the democratic values of western, liberal, pluralist and individualist societies. And it was to contribute to the technologies which would seek to give effect to these new ways of governing. Allport quotes Giambattista Vico at the opening of his historical review of social psychology: "government must conform to the nature of the men governed" (Vico, 1725, quoted from the translation of 1848 in Allport 1954: 1). For social psychology as for political philosophy, man's social nature must be known if he is to be properly governed. Social psychology provided both intellectual and human technologies to enable democratic government to operate.

Attitudes were the first key. Development of the 'science of attitudes' exemplifies the way problems of governing are reframed in terms of the nascent language of social psychology, in order to make them amenable to the provision of expert solutions. First posed in Thomas and Znanieki's *The Polish Peasant* (1918): they argued that social science needed to respond to the disorganization generated by social change through helping develop techniques of rational control, based on a knowledge that would provide the basis of what the authors termed a "social technology" that would apply the knowledge accumulated by social scientists to practical situations (1918: 66-67):

> it is theoretically possible to find what social influences should be applied to certain already existing attitudes in order to produce certain new attitudes, and what attitudes should be developed with regard to certain already existing social values in order to make the individual or the group produce certain new social values, there is not a single phenomenon within the whole sphere of human life that conscious control cannot reach sooner or later.

By 1918, then, attitudes had become a key zone, a transactional space for thinking about, and acting upon problems of the relations of individuals and groups, part of the attempt to develop technologies for the conscious control of human social conduct based on scientific knowledge. But it was not until 1928 that Thurstone was to proclaim, proudly, that "attitudes can be measured" and to inaugurate a whole series of invention to make the subjective objective, to make the intersubjective calculable, allowing each individual to be placed on an attitude scale, such that they could be compared with others. Attitudes, for Floyd Allport, were not anemic: they were imbued with vitality, longing, hatred, love and passion: as he was to put it in 1935: "For the explanation of prejudice, loyalty, patriotism, crowd behaviour, control by propaganda, no anemic conception of attitudes will suffice".

This conception of attitudes was to resonate with the politics of American society in the early decades of this century, which placed great faith in the management of all areas of social life by competent, dispassionate scientific engineers, administrators and managers (Miller and O'Leary, 1989). Progressive reform addressed threats posed to democratic ideals by corrupt municipal administration, and the concentration of unaccountable power in large corporations and in the financial sector. Social scientific knowledge was one contributor to rendering these threats to democracy manageable, with its claims to

objectivity, rationality, professionalism and neutrality. It would reconcile the goals of administrative efficiency with those of democracy - authority would be exercised not through arbitrary whim or partisan interest, but on the basis of scientific exactitude. A multitude of locales in the intersubjective world were to be mapped through the notion of attitudes: attitudes of hotel and restaurant proprietors to Chinese, attitudes of college students to Negroes, Jews, and cheating, attitudes of employees to jobs, bosses and much else. By the outbreak of the Second World War, the technology of attitudes was poised to fulfill the promise of a rational social technique and one in accordance with the values of democracy for which the war was fought.

The idea of attitudes was also key to the invention of 'public opinion' – 'feeling the pulse of democracy' as George Gallup put it. The public was not always thought to have an opinion, and certainly not one to listen too – early twentieth century debates on democracy in the USA were full of worries about the crowd, the mass, and the dangers of such agglomerations of subjects for democracy itself. However, gradually a different argument prevailed: that public opinion was vital for a democracy, but it must not be uniformed assumptions of politicians or the unrepresentative claims of pressure groups. How, then, was the real opinion of the public to be known? It was in the 1930s that the value of large and systematic sampling of opinions was demonstrated, and the science of opinion polling validated: as Floyd Allport put it, in the opening article of the first issue of *Public Opinion Quarterly,* public opinion had nothing to do with the old fallacies of collective minds, but was the sum of specific individual opinions about particular issues or persons. And, for Gallup, the public opinion poll provided the crucial two way connection between citizens and their representatives for a democracy.

There is not the time, here, to explore in detail the ways in which the measurement and management of 'morale' and opinion became crucial in the Second World War – the morale of the enemy, the moral on the home front, the means of attack on the former by all manner of psychological warfare techniques, the means of sustaining the latter by propaganda and the like. A whole host of studies, papers and books were to follow, developing theories of propaganda, rumour and attitude change – the public mind had become a domain accessible to knowledge, calculation and government in a way that was to be crucial to the government of democracies in the postwar years.

Perhaps, you might argue, this is just the use of novel techniques to discover what has always already been there – attitudes, opinions. I would disagree. The social sciences, including psychology and social psychology, actually create phenomena. They bring into existence new domains to be known, charted and managed. And they change the ways in which individual relate to themselves. Citizens, now, have 'attitudes' to all manner of things, take decisions about their lives in terms of such attitudes, discuss them with others, justify them, have them measured and changed. And citizens have opinions, we have learned to 'become opinionated'.

The group.

I have time for one more brief example – the invention of the group. Of course, you will say, human beings have always co-operated with one another in groups large and small. But it was in the 1930s that the group was discovered as a field to be known, charted, calibrated and administered. As I put it, almost twenty years ago:

> The group would exist as an intermediary between the individual and the population, it would inhabit the soulless world of the organization and give it subjective meaning

> for the employee, it would satisfy the social needs of the atomic and fragmented self isolated with the rise of the division of labor and the decline of community, it would explain ills and could be mobilized for good, it could bring about damage in its totalitarian form and contentment and efficiency in its democratic form. In the medium of the group a new relay was found where administration in the light of psychological expertise could come into alignment with the values of democracy.

The group was first discovered in the factory –the factory and the workplace have long been key sites for the construction of individual and collective subjectivities. In the 1930s, one can observe a shift from a focus on the individual worker and his or her adjustment or maladjustment – that is to say, mental hygiene, efficient allocation of manpower, selection, vocational guidance and the treatment of individual psychoneuroses – to the collective relations of the working group. Most famous were Elton Mayo's studies of the Hawthorne Works of the Western Electric Company between 1923 and 1932. For Mayo, what was significant was neither the objective exigencies and characteristics of the labor process - levels of light, hours of work and so forth - nor even the maladjustments and psychoneuroses of individual workers, but the human relations of the enterprise: the informal group life which made it up, and the subjective inter-relations which comprised it. Productivity, efficiency and contentment were now to be understood in terms of the *attitudes* of the workers to their work, their *feelings* of control over their pace of work and environment, their *sense of cohesion* within their small working group, their *beliefs* about the concern and understanding that the bosses had for their individual worth and their personal problems.

A range of new tasks emerged to be grasped by knowledge and managed in the factory. The subjective features of collective life were to be known by means of the interview –

the Hawthorne researchers carried out some 20,000 of these which turned out, not to provide objective information, but to be ways into the emotional life of the factory, enabling the researchers to interpret the psychological form of complaints, and to see them as symptoms of social situations that needed to be understood and managed to create organizational harmony. Communication, counseling and much else were techniques through which management could create the internal harmony which was the condition of a happy and productive factory. Human interactions, feelings and thoughts, the psychological relations of the individual to the group emerged as a new domain for management (Roethlisberger and Dickson 1939).

There were many other pathways to the discovery of the group. Muzafer Sherif found group norms in his studies of group relations in the Robbers Cave Experiment conducted in the Boy Scouts of America camp in Oklahoma, and discovered how they could be artificially manipulated to create hostility – the group appeared as a site of potential danger. Kurt Lewin discovered a more virtuous group in his experimental applications of field theory, and sought to show that the values of democracy could be given a scientific basis, and the superiority of democracy over other modes of exercising social authority could be demonstrated in an experimental setting and generalized to organizational life and to cultures as a whole. Democracy could not only be proved to be advantageous, it could also be taught. Lewin and Bavelas describe "a rapid retraining of mediocre leaders into efficient democratic leaders". Not only did this make group leaders more sensitive to the possibilities of leadership, they also "felt keenly their own greater calm and poise, after they discovered that group discipline no longer depended on their constant vigilance" (Bavelas and Lewin, 1942). In the post war period this discovery of the group as a mechanism of training was to be institutionalized in the National Training Laboratories in Group Development that Lewin would inaugurate in

1947. It appeared that training individuals as better leaders also made them feel better persons, that one could fulfill oneself as a person as one made oneself a more efficient manager and a more democratic leader.

This work was linked to the British discovery of a different kind of group – the work of the Tavistock Clinic and Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Groups had been discovered in the methods of treatment in military hospitals by Tom Main and Maxwell Jones, but perhaps most notably by Wilfred Bion, whose "experiences in groups" became the founding text for a new way of forcing dynamics of group interaction into the awareness of participants: in experiencing the dynamics of the 'leaderless group' for themselves, and participating in the interpretive process, they themselves would become at one and the same time better at their jobs, whatever they were, and better at understanding themselves. The 'leaderless group' became a powerful method of training, in large and small groups, of therapy, of conceptualising problems at work, of reforming the authority structure of the workplace, and indeed, in the work of Eric Trist, Elliot Jacques and many others, of addressing the issues of productivity in industry from the Tennessee valley Authority in the US to Unilever in the UK. Groups, in short, were everywhere.

5. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ENTERPRISE

In 1967, Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander could still preface the 3rd edition of their comprehensive account of *Group Dynamics: Research and* Theory with an explicit reference to democracy (Cartwright and Zander 1967: vii).:

> A democratic society derives its strength from the effective functioning of the multitude of groups it contains. Its most valuable resources are the groups of people

> found in its homes, communities, schools, churches, business concerns, union halls, and various branches of government. Now, more than ever before, it is recognized that these units must perform their functions well if the larger systems are to work successfully

But perhaps the heyday of the group was already over. For a new relation was taking shape between the apparent problems of so many practices, the aspirations of government, the subjectivity of individuals and the expertise of psychology. This novel relation is best summed up in one word – enterprise.

Across the 1980s, the presupposition of the autonomous, choosing, free self as the value, ideal and objective underpinning and legitimating political activity imbued the political mentalities of the UK, the USA and even some of 'old Europe', as well as those now sweeping what used to be termed 'Eastern Europe'. Almost all the ills of the past were put down to a lack of enterprise. The idea of enterprise links up a seductive ethics of the self, a powerful critique of contemporary institutional and political reality, and an apparently coherent design for the radical transformation of contemporary social arrangements. In the writings of 'neo-liberals' like Hayek and Friedman, the well-being of both political and social existence is to be ensured not by centralised planning and bureaucracy, but through the 'enterprising' activities and choices of autonomous entities - businesses, organizations, persons - each striving to maximise its own advantage by inventing and promoting new projects by means of individual and local calculations of strategies and tactics, costs and benefits (Hayek, 1976; Friedman, 1982).

The forms of political reason that yearned for an enterprise culture accord a vital political value to a certain image of the self. The image of an 'enterprising self' was potent because it

was not a possession of 'the right', but resonated with widely distributed presuppositions concerning the self, embodied in the very language that we use to make persons thinkable, and in our ideals as to what people should be. Enterprise not only designated a kind of organizational form appropriate for industrial and business organizations - individual units competing with one another on the market - but more provided a novel image for a mode of activity to be encouraged in locales which had previously operated according to very different logics: the school, the university, the hospital, the GP's surgery, the various arms of the social welfare apparatus, even the family itself. The problems in each domain were problematized in terms of the lack of enterprise of those entities that inhabited them: it was this which epitomized their weaknesses and their failings. They were to be reconstructed by promoting and utilising the enterprising capacities of each and all, encouraging them to conduct themselves with boldness and vigour, to calculate for their own advantage, to drive themselves hard and to accept risks in the pursuit of goals.

Enterprise was given a 'technological' form by experts of organizational life, engineering human relations through architecture, timetabling, supervisory systems, payment schemes, curricula and the like to achieve economy, efficiency, excellence and competitiveness. Regulatory practices were transformed to embody the presupposition of the enterprising self, striving for fulfilment, excellence and achievement. Hence the vocabulary of enterprise links political rhetoric and regulatory programmes to the 'self-steering' capacities of subjects themselves. Enterprise forged a new link between the ways we are governed by others and the ways we should govern ourselves. Enterprise designated an array of rules for the conduct of ones everyday existence: energy, initiative, ambition, calculation and personal responsibility. The enterprising self would make a venture of its life, project itself a future and seek to shape itself in order to become that which it wishes to be. Enterprise, that is to say, designates a form of rule that is intrinsically 'ethical': good

government is to be grounded in the ways in which persons govern themselves. The self is to aspire to autonomy, it is to strive for personal fulfilment in its earthly life, it is to interpret its reality and destiny as a matter of individual responsibility, it is to find meaning in existence by shaping its life through acts of choice.

These ways of *thinking* about selves, and these ways of *judging* them, were linked to certain ways of *acting* upon selves. The guidance of selves was no longer dependent upon the authority of religion or traditional morality; it was allocated to 'experts of subjectivity' who transfigured existential questions about the purpose of life and the meaning of suffering into technical questions of the most effective ways of managing malfunction and improving 'quality of life'. In the governing of the enterprising self across the last two decades of the twentieth century, at home and at work, in universities and in shopping malls, in the job seekers office and in the medical complex, psychology – its languages, its explanations, its judgements, its expertise, once again proved its worth.

6. CONCLUSION: STILL THE CENTURY OF PSY?

The kind of analysis I have suggested is not a 'critique' of psychology – it is not my intention to claim it is corrupt, a servant of power or a part of strategies of domination and exploitation. Nor would I want to replace one psychology with another, a truer, more humane or more scientific psychology. I have merely pointed to the reciprocal relations between these ways of understanding ourselves conceptually, managing ourselves practically, and working on ourselves ethically. As we enter the C21, then, it is relevant to ask whether our new century will still be the century of psychology – the century of psy.

I have suggested elsewhere that the 'deep' psychological self invented across the C20 – the deep interior that inhabits each of us, the repository of our life history, the seat of our desires, the locus of our pleasures and frustrations, the target of knowledge, intervention, management and therapy, the basis of our ethics – that this deep space is flattening out. New and direct relations are being established between our thought, feelings and desires, our normality and our pathology – and our 'brains' – brain now as fleshly organ to be anatomised and understood at the molecular level. The biological body is now increasingly taken as the seat of our ills and the target of ethical work of self-improvement. In the eyes of some, at least, we have overcome the Cartesian dualism upon which psychology itself was premised – mind is just what brain does.

From new technologies of visualization – brain scanning studies of neurons in vitro and in vivo - through advances in biological psychiatry, neurochemistry and genomics, the brain has been reborn as the repository of all that was once allocated to the psyche. Can we anticipate, then, the waning of psychology – or at least its transformation? Perhaps the shallow psychology of cognitive behavioural therapies provides a model to think of the new flattened self that will emerge, alongside what some are referring to as brainhood, or cerebral subjectivity, and what I have myself termed 'somatic individuality' and the birth of the neurochemical self. Or will psychological selfhood prove more durable, somehow necessary in an age of intensification of desire and the management of affects. It is too early to tell. But, if psychology is replaced by neurobiology as the principal way of understanding human conduct, and the factors that affect it, one thing is also certain – to take the place that has been opened up in our systems of government, our practice regulation and our regimes of ethics, neurobiology too will have to become a 'social' science'.