NOTES AND DISCUSSION

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THE VIOLENCE OF MAN

REMARKS ON KONRAD LORENZ: *ON AGGRESSION*[1]

I

Violence pervades the mainstreams of human culture; indeed one could try to write the whole history of mankind as a history of violence. Traditional political histories, chronicles thick with wars, civil wars, conquests, struggles for nation and empire, seizures of state power, assassinations, insurrections, only begin to tell the story. Consider, for example: The plunder of India, the enslavement and exportation of Africans, the extortion of monopolies in the world's minerals, the exploitation and degradation of starving populations menaced by police and armies—all perfectly legal by the Thrasymachean laws of Europe and America—translates itself (congeals) finally into wealth, which bargains against poverty from positions of financial and technological power; which proclaims then a morality of peace, proposes to wipe the moral slate clean,

[1] Begun as a review of Lorenz' book, this paper was developed for presentation to the *Rensselaer Seminar in Philosophy and Science*, January 11, 1967.

but wishes to perpetuate a balance of power progressively more unfavorable to the powerless; and which is prepared for new violence (executes new violence) in order to preserve its disproportionate wealth, its privileged status, its authority. Now we have before us fuller principles for writing the history of mankind as the history of violence; for none of this is new under the sun, and a similar pattern has been repeated, former victims of colonialism not excepted, in the internal history of nation after nation.

A fact thus common in the time and space of man must lead one to consider whether something instinctual is at its base. In Konrad Lorenz *On Aggression*[2] we find a new argument for the instinctuality of human "aggression." We know a great deal more about animals than we did only a few years ago; we know something more, although very little really, about our early human or protohuman ancestors; we possess an improved theory of evolution. We should be able to handle questions of "man's nature" better than pre-Darwinian or early-Darwinian times knew how. In his book Lorenz develops a picture, supported by ethological observations and reasonably well confirmed hypotheses, of aggressive behaviors in our fellow animals; from this he reasons to the case of man and seeks to draw inferences bearing on man's ethical problems and ideals. As a study of man *On Aggression* has serious limitations. Of animals Lorenz speaks authoritatively, of humans he speaks neither as scientist nor as philosopher but as a worried man who would like to derive from his knowledge of animals something of guidance to men in our troubles. What can we learn for mankind from the study of our fellow animals?—Lorenz' book forces one to try to re-think this certainly philosophical question. It is a problem of great depth and I am not sure that we know how to handle it.

The response to Lorenz by the public is in good part I think a measure of concern about the colossal violence of twentieth century Western and Westernized man. After the death camps and death cities of the nineteenforties, after Europe's near suicide and after the failures of disarmament conferences and the failures of "international cooperation," faith or hope that civilization is

[2] New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966; pp. xiv + 299.

progressing toward an end of violence is difficult to retain and it becomes tempting to wonder whether the soul of man is corrupted by ineradicable evil genetically given, an empirical counterpart to original sin. Lorenz does not write in the language of evil, he is not first of all a moralist; but man concerns him, this species whose nations behave like great families of rats (Lorenz' characterization). At stake therefore, one stake, is the humanistic life view which is adhered to, now vaguely, now ceremonially, now earnestly, now despairingly, by modern men and women who are very far from being idolaters of man. In Western tradition the rationalistic humanism to which the classical Renaissance gave expression was overlaid first by a de-idealizing, objective, empirical view of man, fortified by Darwin, Freud, and Marx. More recently our sense that man is a plaything (victim, might be a better term) of State and History rather than the creator of nations and of historical progress has served to diminish man in our image toward the point of vanishing. What faith survives, however, what idealism there is, in Western lands, although not always completely disconnected from older Christian tradition, owes much of its energy to a humanistic view in which (to define it now) Man is an ideal for men.

If religious views, life views, ideal views are at stake, so also are ethical views in a somewhat narrower sense. What are "the facts," and how do we go about interpreting them? If we are "by nature" fighters, destroyers, even, by our own standards, murderers, how shall we (if we can) contend with our nature so that it shall not rule us absolutely and so that we may act with less injustice? How shall we meet our problems and responsibilities, by the minimal criterion that future historians shall not accuse us? How shall we attempt to take hold of our problems? Expressing "the ethical problem" in this way, I use an uncriticized language. But these questions exist for us in such (or even cruder) forms, not in the refined form which they might assume at the end of a philosophical analysis.

Lorenz' own views of man and ethics are in some ways (but not in all ways) naive. But there is enough substance here to allow use of Lorenz' book as a springboard for considering questions of man's nature, human society, and ethical theory.

II

To judge by Lorenz' manner of presentation, there exists in his mind some confusion as to what exactly he knows. "As I read through these chapters... I realize how little I have succeeded in doing justice to the greatness and importance of the phylogenetic phenomena whose workings I think I really understand myself, but which are so difficult to explain, and I am overcome by the discouraging feeling of helplessness" (p. 216). Lorenz seems to mean by this that he intuits a formfulness, an order in the results of Natural Selection which presently confirmed hypotheses are insufficient to display. Nevertheless his main propositions about the behavior of animals, the ground for his more general discussions, seem clear enough.

Aggression and above all aggression between members of the same species (intraspecific) is the object of his study. Lorenz does not give his term sharp definition. The dictionary senses "unprovoked attack," "unwarranted inroad," with their legalistic adjectives, are of course irrelevant; we should call to mind fighting behavior which is typical of a species (or say of the males of the species) and which has no aspect of a carnivorous hunt.[3] Among aggressive behaviors Lorenz distinguishes several interesting kinds. There are for example fish which defend their territory vigorously against casual intruders of their own species (but not against noncompeting fish) provided that the species is flamboyantly colored. There are rats which methodically and savagely exterminate conspecifics who do not have the family smell. There are geese which enact "rituals" that "symbolically" create interpersonal bonds and sustain "marital" relationships, a pattern which Lorenz attributes to inhibition of aggression, inhibition of intersexual aggression in particular. As the result of independent appearance of aggressive behaviors in various evolutionary lines, many dissimilar forms are observable. In some forms at least, intraspecific aggression clearly favors survival of the species (therefore it is favored by Natural Selection), for example by effecting dispersion of population or

[3] Lorenz looks for the "ideal" pattern, which for various reasons many (or even most) individuals will not fulfill. Natural behavior in an Aristotelian sense is a legitimate object for scientific intuition when (by hypothesis) we have to do with instincts in presumable non-selfconscious animals.

beneficial reproductive selection. By comparing several kinds of animal society Lorenz concludes that the presence of intraspecific aggression, not a universal trait of animals, is needed for the appearance (as among geese) of relations analogous to love; this is of course suggestive for the case of man. Some aggressive behavior is however species-unfavorable. Lorenz notes that animals which are potentially very dangerous to their own kind, such as wolves and lions, possess strong inhibitory controls upon intraspecific fighting, which they normally break off before irreparable damage is inflicted. Lesser fighters lack such controls, another observation with implications for the case of man.

Intraspecific aggression, then, directly and indirectly a powerful survival-factor, has had major effects upon the forms of animal socialization. What is more, habits of aggression can be shown, by techniques sketched out by Lorenz, to be genetic, instinctual, autonomous, spontaneous, the programmed result of mutations and natural selection. In complex cases like that of geese, where one is led to try out a language of ritual and symbol, one must be perceptive and imaginative to catch on to displacement and redirection but the reconstructions which the ethologist produces are credible enough.

So far we have merely natural science, a report to the general public rather than to scientists, valuable for insights into the life of our fellow animals. I shall assume that as natural scientist Lorenz asserts that instinctual aggression, autonomous and spontaneous, is characteristic of our species. (I shall not worry about the *term* "instinct," which has had, shall we say, a checkered history.) It would be better, though not yet quite right and not quite fair, to say that Lorenz *assumes* the instinctuality of human aggression, for hardly and direct evidence is, or I judge could be, cited, which is something of which Lorenz may not be fully aware.

The fact that men have fought each other a great deal, in wars and elsewhere, might seem to furnish the evidence required. Lorenz believes that a Martian ethologist "would unavoidably draw the conclusion that man's social organization is very similar to that of rats, which, like humans, are social and peaceful beings within their clans, but veritable devils toward all fellow members of their species not belonging to their own community" (p. 237); and we

do have reason to regard the rodent's behavior as instinctual. Even if the inexactitude of Lorenz' description of life within the human communities is overlooked, however, the analogy is not reliable. In a creature of evolving culture the instinctuality of a given behavior is open to doubt and the warfare-behavior which Lorenz would like to reinterpret (against, say, economistic treatment) cannot without circularity be taken as evidence for the thesis of instinctuality. Formalized, repetitive aggressive behaviors, cross-cultural cases above all, appear to be lacking among men. Some humans seem willing to fight merely when provoked, others seem persistently to search out opportunities to fight, but one hardly knows whether to regard the difference as significant; as the difficulty of identifying "the aggressor" in a war attests (perhaps the very concept is useless and noxious), there are aggressors who craftily provoke provocation, and from a strictly behavioral standpoint we have the near-total confusion which results when one does not know what to count as what. The fact alleged by Lorenz that the Utes, an Indian tribe of formerly fierce warriors, have turned self-destructive by reason of inhibition of their warrior-habits—said to be true as well of children not exposed to the traditional culture—tells something about Utes, although Lorenz might even so be more critical toward psychoanalytic characterizations of an entire culture, but what it may tell about aggressiveness in other humans I am not sure. (We must watch out moreover lest we take our own violent Western culture as a norm corroborated by these warriors and those cannibals—while we pass over the peaceable communities as exceptions and even exaggerate the uniformity of Western culture and personality.) Lorenz tries to make something of reports that American children, reared permissively, display rude and "aggressive" behavior but this uncontrolled experiment hardly demonstrates the spontaneity, the non-reactive character of aggression, and I doubt that it can be made to show anything general at all (supposing that the data were agreed upon and supposing that what is "permissive" and what is "aggressive" in adolescents were not thoroughly subjective).

In the absence of controlled experiments on ourselves—which one trusts are ethically unthinkable as well as, on a number of grounds, dubiously practical—and in the absence of any knowl-

edge of our immediate evolutionary ancestry, there seem to be no methods for testing directly the hypothesis of instinctual aggressive dispositions in man. What may in the future be turned up by laboratory genetics is another question, about which I shall not speculate.

The best support that Lorenz offers for his hypothesis is in fact his own suppositions or conjectures about the endowment which early man would have required for survival. Although we know painfully little about the environment with which early man coped, Lorenz' guesses about the instincts we would have needed, before a significant culture existed to sustain our survival, before we were fully human, are quite reasonable. Because man requires community-life, he could not have been ferociously disposed toward his fellows; perhaps he possessed something on the order of our cousin chimpanzee's combination of amiability and irascibility. Living by necessity in intimate groups, often under less than optimal conditions, man would have had to be rather peaceable and friendly with his immediate fellows, would probably have been aggressive but not very determinedly so toward strangers. (This aggressiveness would be favorable to the species, one supposes, by protecting the children, during their prolonged helplessness, from casual harm by intruders and by protecting limited food-supplies.) Our type of sociality and our capacities for personal attachments would also seem, from the evidence of other animals, to indicate the presence of aggression at their base. Except for a natural selection of the efficiently bellicose through intraspecific conflict, this pattern, presumed to be genetic, will not have changed.[4]

At first, and this Lorenz construes as the real source of trouble, man would not have needed an instinctual inhibition upon intraspecific aggression; his teeth and nails and fists are not much (it takes two to make a fight, as popular wisdom still says.) When

[4] Actually, the effects of natural-social selection may be much more complex, if one assumes as Lorenz apparently does that aggressive disposition is a variable quantity within a species. A stable society tends to shelter individuals who would have been unfit for the strenuous life of early man; it tends to protect pacifists and life-incompetent geniuses, as well as the subnormal individuals about whom eugenicists worry. There is also, I would think, a tendency for warriors to have small families, for other reasons besides short life-expectancy. One would seem to confront an unmanageable tangle of possible selection-tendencies.

intelligent man built stocks of weapons, however, as the first known animal to go beyond the baboon's hurling of available stones, his modicum of aggressiveness, unchecked by instinctual abhorrence of fellow murder, would suffice to make him more dangerous by far to fellow man than wolf to fellow wolf (and wolves, who do fight, do not often kill their fellows). Not "by nature" a killer, let us note, man becomes a killer feebly restrained by fellow feelings or by rational moralities derived from the imperatives of in-group existence when the enemy is a distant target who does not exist for one's emotions (or is invisible and anonymous in the houses or fields below).

I do not see how one can easily avoid Lorenz' premise that man established himself as a species only by virtue of a more or less correct balance of instincts. That Nature suddenly produced an essentially non-instinctual animal left to survive by his wits until he created a durable culture is highly implausible. Not only would it be a radical evolutionary leap but it would mean that either Adam or Eve really would have had to be up to naming the animals (and so forth) right away; more naturally one supposes that when a certain animal's instinctual curiosity, aptitude for learning, aptitude for language, etc... had achieved sufficient results the animal then became man, by his own efforts, without a boundary of genetic distinction between this man and his ancestors.[5] It is a strength of Lorenz' position that he does not draw from archaeologists' finds of skulls split in most ancient times by hand-axes the rash conclusion (in fact drawn by some) that man was genetically determined to homicide. Thinking no evil of chimpanzees, one would still not like to see a sharp axe in the hands of a very angry individual, above all if that individual were angry with oneself; man would, on Lorenz' view, be something like that. Or we compare with the dove which is capable (as Lorenz tells us) of fellow murder if confined with a weaker individual who cannot escape—capable because there is no acknowledgement of defeat which the victor accepts as limit.[6] Imagine now that the

[5] In other words, "man" is not a purely biological concept, although I have followed Lorenz in using it as such loosely. "Then became man" is of course metaphorical; I should imagine that several stages separate man-animal from recognizable cultural-man.

[6] We recognize immediately that we should not infer from what doves will

dove possesses weapons and has learned to make his fellow a prisoner, to appropriate his goods, and to exploit him as a slave. One might say that the outlines of familiar man begin to take form.

We have been given a plausible hypothesis, more than which we could not reasonably have expected. What follows? Man's present violent behaviors, which demonstrably threaten the very existence of the species (and of all others of which we know), Lorenz construes as the issue of mild instinctual aggressiveness, of weapon-technologies elaborated by an intelligent animal with no instinctual limits on his fighting tendencies, and (what of course is very important) of cultural patterns shaped by the preceding and selected for survival largely by their military efficacy. (On the simplest level a culture which did not afford avenues for aggressive behavior would destroy itself by blocking a spontaneous instinct; normally the institutions of culture will add their weight to that of instinct. On a more complex level the instinct will support "civilized" struggles for status as well as overtly violent behavior.) Lacking the ethologist's understanding of the instinctual sources of our problems, men of good will persist in relying upon moral codes which, although they draw strength from our instincts to sociality, have repeatedly failed to restrain men from violence. Or if we are psychologistic we attribute violence and aggression to frustration, which is superficial. Or we take seriously the rationalizations at which the species is clever. (To which I would add: or we think to eliminate aggression by vanquishing all other aggressors.) One could reasonably paraphrase Lorenz: We misunderstand men because, in part from mistaken concern for human dignity, we deny the iron laws of instincts. One might see implicit an instinctualistic monism according to which history would consist of the vicissitudes of the instincts. But it would not be right to take this as more than a tendency. The main implication is clear: that we should correct our basic conception of man to include an instinctual aggressiveness whose consequences, in this technologically intelligent species, can be disastrous without limit; and that instinct, of which culture is

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do sometimes when caged to what they always "want" to do normally but are powerless to do. Yet we make such inferences incautiously about men. Carry this a step further: Suppose it is the case that most men live, in effect, in cages?—Freud's vision of civilization.

derivative, is *the* problem of aggression, which is in turn *the* problem for ethics.

The bearing of scientific data upon ethics and especially upon ethical theory is a difficult and confused problem—although no one, other than philosophers, doubts that there is such a bearing. There is at least one level of ethical theory in respect to which Lorenz' data are relevant. This is brought out in his criticism of Kantian morality.

What I believe Lorenz is trying to say, in complaining of Kant's theory, but what he does not say clearly because he does not understand Kant very well, is that like other reason-directed moralities Kant's is founded on and buttresses a finally self-defeating dichotomy of biological and rational. There are many subtle neo-Kantianisms but of Kant himself we can say that after having identified a principle of responsibility and of personality he did not re-integrate the rational agent, uniquely capable of moral dignity, with the biological man, uniquely capable of sympathy and love; rather than the empirical foundations for justice, sympathy and love are morally speaking inclinations without worth, and the battle of the Good life, fought out on the plane of Reasons, finds us with no energies to call upon except the energy of respect for Reason. An excellent morality, one might say, for rational beings other than man: or is it for man, when man has lost his bearings in Nature? (But if the loss of bearings is definitive, can man survive?) The scientist who suspects that there is something wrong, pragmatically and theoretically if the distinction is valid, with such a value-theory has an intuition worth heeding, although the correction is not likely to read itself off the biological evidence. Lorenz' data and theories do not refute Kant, of course; but they constitute evidence that Kant miscast our problems, if we take him as having done more than merely to have analyzed the good will, if we take him as having offered the good will as a model for conduct and for thought about conduct, because his ethics directs us away from the problem of maximizing the effectiveness of social instincts and fellow feelings as grounds for harmonious co-operation and sets an intolerable burden upon the individual.[7]

[7] More generally one would say that Kant's morality individualizes what are better understood as social problems. (*Perpetual Peace* is another matter; but its

It is instructive that Kant still remains for many the type of moral philosopher. What we lack, what we seem to require, is some more unitary philosophical conception of man, taking into account all his powers and weaknesses and all his selves, which would have the persuasive force of the great philosophical metaphors (Plato, Hegel, for instance) and furnish thought-space in which scientists like Lorenz might control and order their speculations. (It would not be Kant alone who would be found wanting.) Clearly, a correct understanding of human instincts, based on a careful interpretation of the relation of instincts and culture as well as on a careful reading of the biological data, would be a necessary component of such a more unitary philosophical conception. Granted that we lack such a conception, and that it may not be possible or only achievable in metaphorical terms, a means of satisfying the theoretical lack will be persistent criticism of the theories we possess and patient definition of their limitations.

But it is time now to turn to important criticisms which must be made of Lorenz' thesis of instinctual human aggression.

III

Although granting Lorenz' assumption that man must have arrived biologically with a certain collection of "imprints" fitted for an environment now long gone and a level of culture now far surpassed—perhaps indeed for no culture at all in the sense we take the term—I do not think that he has handled the problems of instinct adequately or compellingly.

Not that Lorenz' conjectures about man's original instinctual endowment are implausible. They fit with what we know, that men (and women) fight apparently gratuitously, with weapons, fists, words, and everything else, and that they enjoy being spectators of fighting, human, animal, and interspecific. The Roman Circus is symbol enough. Intelligent people of many nations have justified slavery and have refused to recognize large portions of the human race as human. Of the tortures which men have inflicted

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philosophical weakness probably reflects the weakness of the rational ethics as foundation.) This criticism is akin in type to the criticism of Kantian aesthetics that it is a remarkable analysis of artistic excellence, especially in the Classical tradition, but misleadingly incomplete if taken as an account of aesthetic values.

upon men—by which I mean literal and deliberate torture of individual by individual, in which men of the "civilized" nations have matched if not overmatched the so-called "savages"— one cannot possibly say anything adequate. But even our images of problem-solving are militant: there is "war" on poverty, "fight" against cancer and juvenile delinquency, we like to "wipe out," whatever it is that endangers or annoys us. The greater man's command of his environment, the greater apparently becomes his wish to sterilize it, to purge it of whatever is not of his own production; ecology, the science of environmental balance, draws very little response. One would, if one were listing all relevant "instincts," surely have to mention something like "greed," which violence so often ends by satisfying, but there are too many date for which it does not account.

Yet (finally) Lorenz does not seem to be clear, and I do not know quite how he could be, about *just what* constitutes the general disposition he labels "aggression," *just what* one should attribute to genetic character and therefore (necessarily) respect and work from. This creates serious problems.

Is it, for example, that man has a "programmed" intolerance of even moderate frustration and pain such that he will react by flailing about at his environment, focusing then upon an imputed source, real, scapegoat, or other? Is this what constitutes "aggression"? Would it be that there is some more specific "imprint," say for a hostile response to "the stranger"? Would it be that there is instead an imperative to experience a feeling of mastery, of domination over one's environment, including the persons in it? Or would it be perhaps that we have a need to feel adequate, a need for security of space and food and Love, a need which then readily, but not inevitably, translates itself into aggressive striving for mastery as means and as end? There is no need to multiply possibilities because the point is that if we allow ourselves to talk in terms of innate dispositions shared by the species, and if by "instincts" we mean this, we do not know whether, in speaking of aggression, one should say "instinct" or "instincts," or whether all or none or one or another of the tendencies just mentioned are instinctually constitutive of aggression. It could be that we are dealing with a genetic disposition which under favorable circumstances runs its course (appearing early and disappearing early) as

the individual builds a life of self-directed interests; then its persistence would represent a psychological failure and in Freudian terms one would speak of fixation and regression. It could be however that we are dealing with an insatiable appetite. Lorenz apparently knows the answer to none of these questions; it might be that he has not thought about them but I doubt that it would have mattered if he did because I do not see how they could be answered. There may be a clear aggression syndrome specific to a particular kind of fish but if there is such a pattern in man we plainly do not know about it.

Since in a literal sense we do not know *what* we are talking about, we are in great danger of confusing a concept of aggression that is itself essentially ethical—what we happen to count as anti-social behavior, which is highly variable—with a concept which is supposed to be biological—a genetically coherent group of behaviors. Since the totality of human historical culture lies so to speak between phylogeny and modern man, the genetic concept becomes difficult to control. I think this explains why Lorenz' discussion of the relation between aggressive disposition and the institutions of culture is, as we shall see now, quite unsatisfactory.

When Lorenz discusses ways of dealing with human aggression and its consequences, he ignores the possibility, very significant indeed, that *socially problematic* aggression, that which genuinely and directly constitutes a problem for social control, may be reactive, springing from frustrations, fears, guilt, desperation, or from other contingent historical sources including the entire structure of a culture. There may already be abundant social channels to take care of (to defuse, so to speak) *instinctual* aggressive tendencies in their spontaneous form. Let us accept for example the hypothesis that adolescents exempt from a severe discipline will be rude and disrespectful (to use now teacher-language) and that this aggression should be counted as instinctual; but is it in its spontaneous form seriously problematical? One might just find some more desirable basis for respect than age, a criterion we have shared with the baboon; we might be wiser to put up with far more minor disorder and far more sublethal conflict than middle class Western culture has been agreeable to.

If we examine the ongoing system of wars, moreover, we might doubt that the aggressiveness of individuals, either instinctual or

reactive, plays a primary role in it. In certain countries which for various reasons have withdrawn from the world power struggle—for example the Scandinavian countries, once very warlike—no one seems to report a general manifestation of anxiety such as the inhibition of an instinct would be expected to bring with it. We had better understand such cases before we assert a relation between modern war and instinct. (To put it another way, the kind of assertions which Lorenz wants to make require sociology and cannot be grounded in ethology alone.) More crucial is the general point that the institutions of power, rulership, wealth, war, where they flourish, seem to have their own trajectories, seem able to find the types of people appropriate for performing the necessary functions, *and that those functions are commonly simply rational from the standpoint of the one who performs them.*

Once it has been decided in one office that there shall be an "escalation," then it is simply a practical problem, subject even to automated calculation, for another office to determine and to levy the taxes required, for still another to levy the soldiers required, for still another to arrange for their training and transport them to the war-zone, etc...; while the system as a whole gains support from ideals of patriotism, the intimidation or sequestration of dissenters, a sense of the inevitability of the war which has been escalated, quite general ignorance, boredom, and of course a public satisfaction in the glories of national power (perhaps this last is what remains of the primary influence of instinctual aggressiveness upon war-making).[8] The concept of escalation, not incidentally, is a beautiful concept because in principle it eliminates as unreal the old artificial distinction between "war" and "peace": the state is *always* at war, only the "how much" is in the balance, to be

[8] Army organizations aim of course at eliciting ferocity in the ranks, at turning to account any dispositions to find gratification in violence. Yet the results are very complex. "I shot up Charlie in the paddies today," said the pilot, quoted in *I.F. Stone's Weekly*, 11/28/66. "I ran that little mother all over the place hosing him with guns but somehow or other we just didn't hit him. Finally, he turned on us and stood there facing us with the rifle. We really busted his ass then. Blew him up like a toy balloon." I do not quote this for the horror of it. I quote it to suggest that this man has chosen to be as he is, and to boast of it, because he could not otherwise have executed the orders he has been given, which he does not exceed. I do not think that he had anything to do with starting the war. (Secondarily, perhaps, he wants to leave no doubt in the mind of the civilian reporter of the nature of the airman's work.)

decided on grounds of strategy; involvement with a new country is an "expansion" of the war rather than a decision to make war. The pragmatism or instrumentalism by which each man justifies himself is of course a vulgar one which neither James nor Dewey intended.

Lorenz recognizes that modern war is an "institution," not positively *required* by our instincts. But he is afraid of disturbing institutions directly because he feels that they represent a not very secure and insufficiently understood adjustment of man's instincts. He seems to regard the individual's disposition to aggression as the key to war; certainly he thinks that the disposition of the individuals is what we can devise means to handle and that this is the practical therapy for war. (Freud's influence here is of course marked.) Lorenz' therapies, therefore, consist in a greater emphasis on sports, especially international sports, or international freedom of travel, on the spread of international communities after the pattern of the scientific, on art and humor and other creators of bonds between men: more generally, the sublimation of aggression and support of the countering tendency of sociality? I agree emphatically that these are good things but they are obviously designed to solve a *psychological* problem. It does not follow from the hypothesis of genetic and hence psychological disposition to aggression *that our current human problem of aggression (war) is an individual psychological problem or is manageable by social psychotherapy directed at relieving instinctual aggressive tendencies*. Nor does it follow that, to the extent that there is a current psychological problem of aggression—and racial hatred is a pretty clear case of this—*instinctual* aggression is what is problematic. At this point in Lorenz' thought I believe we see the consequences of confusing ethical with phylogenetic concepts.

In suggesting plausible grounds for interpreting current human behavior differently than Lorenz does, I am saying what I think to be the case, but the theoretical point is that Lorenz misses a crucial characteristic of man. This point returns us to the problem of characterizing our ethical situation.

Unlike animals, at any rate most animals, man deliberates about means, and violence is for him a means believed to be effective toward ends (as toward certain ends it surely is). One cannot assume that an act is done necessarily for its own sake, for the

psychological satisfaction or relief which it will bring. At high levels of state one does not often encounter aggressive, savage, or murderous dispositions; one encounters men who have merely not learned that it is not permitted to kill or enslave other men for ends of state (or for private ends through ends of state). (Lorenz' surest point is perhaps the negative one that man's troubles stem from *lack of instinctual inhibition* of aggression. But I doubt that anyone ever thought seriously otherwise. Unfortunately, however, the persons in question do not see themselves as aggressors; a lot of good inhibition of aggression would do then. Lorenz thinks that what prevents philosophers from understanding men, and leads them to befuddle other people's efforts, is a prejudice against causal explanation, against perceiving instinctual determinism. What the biologist is inclined to overlook, however, is that men have the capacity to choose between psychologically indifferent means; or to accept it as a condition of their livelihood (an instinctual ground indeed) that they will do whatever the orders call for; or to do whatever they perceive as needed in order to improve their public image, save their face, and so on; or to perform the act of war in order to avoid the violence of state authority which is directed at him who disobeys; etc.

The most modern form of the non-ethical community (let us draw the grim picture grimly) is the society of institutionalized irresponsibility, where one *fait accompli* mechanically produces another, and decisions are technical decisions as in an *army and no one makes an ethical choice.* (Lacking a basis in an ethical community, and appended to an ethically-blind technology, science and scientist have no conception of responsibility). To undo the psychological aggressions which may have been prominent in the genesis of the present institutions will not undo the power which they have acquired. One had might as well recognize, furthermore, that it is hard to introduce ethical decision and individual responsibility into such a going order: "If I don't do it, they will get somebody who will" happens to be true; "I am just doing my job" happens to be true. Would one call it an accident, then, that the people with the clearest idea of what they are doing in "ethics" are those who are studying the logic of commands?

From Hegel we learn that the owl of Minerva is never in time, from which the heuristic principle follows that one should always

anticipate that a given ethical proposal (though it may contain prophetic elements also) is retrograde; we seem to catch on to what is the case, always a little too late. Not so very long ago, if we can trust historians, war was the affair of a certain small proportion of mankind; the rest were passive victims. It would make sense to speak of "moral equivalents of war" in the language of James and in the manner of Freud, it would make sense to speak of sublimation of aggression as the key to abolition of war, when certain adventurous, predatory, and martial hunter-types made wars and enslaved and enserfed and the mass of the people had their work cut out for them to stay clear and to save their skins. When the inferior classes gained power, beginning with the bourgeoisie, it was found out that power corrupts; not necessarily that every hare is a would-be hound but at least that the hare who finds himself in possession of hound's privileges and has a taste of the life will do anything rather than give it up; exceptions have been extraordinarily few. Men with no evident appetite for a battle which would endanger them, hire mercenaries, draft civilians, and authorize atrocities which they do not wish to hear about. (I do not deny that squeamish enjoyment of a game of power may be a particularly vicious form of aggression also.) In the history of mankind the martial types appear to have performed an enduring work but they appear also to have become now superfluous, to have become abstracted into a lunatic version of Hegelian freedom where man finds himself subjugated not to nature but to the institutions his history has created. Perhaps then contemporary philosophy reflects the case wisely in discarding ethics in the traditional sense as project. The word is "alienation," which when all its various senses are brought together annihilates ethics. The question is then, however: Is there a way to turn this "freedom" to creative account?

A program to pacify the aggressive trends by satisfying them harmlessly can, I think, be said to misconstrue the fact of instinct in the course of man's evolution. What we have to recognize, I am suggesting, is that to a very large degree the problematic aggression is not internal to individuals but has become externalized in institutions. Fortunately, or else our life would be far less interesting than it sometimes is, man does not simply act out his instincts. Also, institutions made historically possible by instincts

no longer depend upon their origins. Therefore an ethical theory which centralized instincts as the problem of aggression would not serve the ends of achieving that reasonable and cooperative human existence which Lorenz clearly values. One reason why the mistake is plausible is that if we try to picture for ourselves a "pacified society"—if one dare speak of "pacification" in view of the history of the term throughout the colonial world—we suddenly grow alarmed that instinctual aggression will burst out anew and the history of mutual destruction will begin all over again. A genuine problem but not a very actual one; the actual problem is to cope with the fruits of civilization, not with the instincts which have disposed man to follow the road he has.

IV

They are two other relevant matters which Lorenz fails to discuss, and because the failure is also Freud's and is widely shared I shall, without trying to deal with them at the length they require, make some remarks upon them.

I mentioned Lorenz' belief that the results of "permissive" child-rearing are suggestive of the spontaneity of aggression, and I questioned whether one could conclude anything. But there is a more important point involved. The argument for permissiveness has sometimes been made on no-frustration-no-aggression lines. But there is a much more interesting argument based upon a very fundamental distinction. There is a significant difference between anger, as a phenomenon essentially of the moment, and hatred, as a fixation of hostility the aim of which is to destroy the object. An angry person who vents his anger may hurt or even kill; but he does not organize a manhunt or a war. (I leave aside psychological complications, such as a disposition of chronic anger seeking an object, as not affecting the main point.) In speaking previously of psychologically problematic aggression, I had in mind situations which are commonly spoken of as situations of hatred—racial, national, and so on. I imagine that all lawgivers have made a distinction between injury done in passion and injury done from what we are used to calling premeditation; and not only, I think, because the former seems less blameworthy because it is also less dangerous to the community.

Lorenz cites nothing from the animal kingdom which has the character of instinctual intraspecific *hatred*. Perhaps certain *interspecific* situations could be so construed—say between cats and dogs—and I have observed terrible enmities between individual animals of the same species; but these cases, regardless of what one might say about them, are not relevant. Nor could we plausibly say that anger plus memory, in which man excels, yields hatred. What is pointed to, I believe, is that "aggression" as a cover term for violence, aggressiveness, fighting-disposition, destructiveness, murderousness, and even self-destructiveness, is unsuitable either for ethical or for biological purposes.

To seek to deprive people of all aggressiveness, to block all outlets for it, might well as Lorenz suggests result undesirably in elimination of that "aggressiveness" which consists in a vigorous pursuit of aims, inevitably coercive in effect but harmful neither in aim nor necessarily in effect (as when a man "goes after" a woman, or after a job, etc.). But hatred is not a precondition for affirmation of the self, and despite Freud's effort to bind love and hate, Eros and Thanatos, it is not the case that the loving people I have known are people with disposition to hatred. We are in an area here where knowledge of animals can be of no assistance. A psychological theory specifically of men is what we should obviously need.

The other relevant matter is that there is within the human psyche, and on the whole one would have to say that it is specifically human, an antithesis to the entire tendency or set of tendencies to destroy, to smash, to dominate, to wipe out, to enslave, to hunt down. This antithesis is the power and tendency *to make, to create*. It is a curious feature of Freudian psychology that this power and tendency has no prominent place; one would think that mention of it would have some place in discussion of therapies of violence and aggression, but Lorenz stays close to Freud's hints. A noteworthy feature of contemporary society is that it deprives its members of natural opportunities for *responsible making*. The matter is worthy of closer examination.

Freud's treatment of creativity in his discussion of poets and artists never passed beyond representing them as giving publicly acceptable form (aesthetically pleasing *form*) to repressed desires. The artist's succes is due to his achievement of a community of

feeling with an audience which shares similar or identical repressions. The confusion of the psychoanalytically detectable starting point of the artist's creative act with the work created is transparent enough. (There is of course much bad popular art for which Freud's diagnosis is complete; I suppose it could be a definition of at least one kind of bad popular art.) In the case of serious art (as I construe the case) an artist has through imagination entered into a realm of possibility, identical neither with his "disturbance" nor with his actual sensory experiences, and for which the world of existing art is often more fertile with hints than is either his unconscious or the non-art perceptual world; the object into whose creation the artist puts himself proposes reciprocally its own aesthetic meanings and interests arising from the formal possibilities of art; and the self which is gratified in the creative act is a self which has been modified in the act of making (even, if one wants to put it radically, has come to be in the act of making). I do not wish here to press a particular aesthetic theory; in any case art is but one kind of creation and the relentlessly hypercreative art of the last centuries is still more particular. The point that I do want to make is that a delight *in making* is common enough in children to warrant its interpretation as behavior natural to man, whether or not one whishes to speak of instincts; and if I were explicating *creativity* I would proceed along the lines of the sketch above.

We are, I believe, entitled furthermore to regard the existence and growth of human culture as significant of a drive to create, to make; not merely to *use* tools but to *make* tools; not merely to use language but to create it, enrich it, play with it, create song with it; not merely to adapt to environment but to re-make environment; and so on. To create is to seek order; to create is to perform an *aggressive* act, to destroy an unsatisfactory or uninteresting order. A community is creative when its members perceive the spontaneity of each other as opportunity (for themselves) for lively existence and for excellence.

It is also the case, the difficulty which everyone senses with Nietzsche, that the empire-builder and all those like him are kinds of creators. I think I can describe his pathology as the same as the pathology of Freud's poet, as wish-fulfillment without openness to the possibilities the world proposes. But at most (I admit) this

means that creativity is dangerous when it is arrested, as love is dangerous when it is arrested at the level of imposition of unconsciously determined demands (in Freudian terms: Oedipal) and the subjectivity of the loved one is obliterated; and as any aggressive pursuit of one's goals becomes dangerous if one cannot respond to the subjectivity of the world. One can try to play it safe by setting limits through rational rules, but a judgment of creativity is of course never a judgment by rules.

Creativity is obviously not a therapy one perscribes. Not only does one not usefully prescribe a motion of spirit, but the realization of human societies which are creative communities presupposes, as there should be no need to say, the abolition of extremes of wealth and poverty, either within nations or between nations, preconditions which are not easily met. I neglect the economic issues only because the problem to which I am addressing myself here is different; to try to understand man's nature (that is to say, his potentialities) and to see if there is in him a force, and what it would be, that is adequate to overcoming his dispositions to destruction. (This should not be irrelevant to consideration of means.) If we are to try to talk through to the end the question of resolution of aggression, the pacification of man, the defeat of violence, then we shall have to think about another kind of man than destroyer-man. This new man, I wish to suggest, would be creator-man, of whom we have perhaps reasons to be a little afraid, for there is no security here, and certain risks. Yet one should not expect the principle of destruction to be overcome except by a more powerful principle, and it is no longer believable that Reason is that principle.