

## SOCIAL INTEREST AND AGGRESSION AS POTENTIALITIES<sup>1</sup>

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The celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Alfred Adler (1870-1937), some 33 years after his death, affords us an opportunity of doing honor to a great and distinguished man. May I say how gratified I am to have been asked to deliver this centennial address in commemoration of Alfred Adler. I can only hope it will be worthy of his memory.

I never met Adler, though I did enjoy the good fortune of once hearing him lecture. It was either early in 1928 or perhaps 1930, at International House in New York, where I was at the time living as a student. I no longer have the slightest recollection of what Adler spoke on, but I do have the clearest recollection of him and of the manner in which he spoke. I had not, I think, read anything by Adler up to that time, and was, indeed, a thoroughgoing Freudian. I had, of course, heard much of Adler and "the inferiority complex," but except for one or two expositions of his ideas I had not read him for myself.

Adler's lecture, which was given to a full auditorium of students, was a revelation to me. It was extraordinarily impressive. I found myself most excited by the ideas which seemed to flow so effortlessly from the speaker. I don't think I had ever been quite as stirred by anyone before. Though English was not his native tongue Adler spoke with verve and fluency. It was a virtuoso performance in every way. I had heard many good speakers in my time, and of them all perhaps Bernard Shaw was the best, but Adler was much weightier. I would now say that Adler was among the two or three best speakers I have ever heard.

It was not until 1947 that I had my attention drawn to a book by Adler which somehow had completely escaped my notice. I had been giving a course of lectures on the Veterans Administration Postgraduate Training Program in Psychiatry in New York. At

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the end of one of my lectures a young psychiatrist asked me whether I knew Adler's book *Social Interest: A Challenge to Mankind*. I had to confess that I hadn't even heard of it. He then suggested that I might find it interesting since some of the ideas I had expressed during my lectures were very similar to those expressed by Adler in this book. I soon found that a copy of the book was not purchasable in America, and I had to send to the English publishers for a copy. Though the book was published in English translation in 1938 (3) and in the German original in 1933 (2), and I had been a sedulously devoted reader of the psychoanalytic literature ever since 1922, I had neither heard nor seen a reference to Adler's book. This was most curious. It was not as if the book had been published by an obscure publisher. It was in fact published by one of the best in England, Faber and Faber, and by the time I received my copy had gone into no less than five impressions.

Upon its arrival I plunged immediately into the book, and it took no more than a few pages to convince me that I had struck pure gold. As I proceeded it became increasingly clear to me that I was reading one of the great books of the 20th century. The book was the more acceptable to me because Adler had arrived at his conclusions long before I had even thought of mine. I was delighted to find that in this summary of his life's work Adler had so brilliantly confirmed my own conclusions, arrived at by a somewhat different series of routes. Those who know that we tend to accept a thinker's views not so much because we agree with him, but rather because he agrees with us, will understand with what enthusiasm I greeted this last testament of Alfred Adler.

#### SOCIAL INTEREST AND HUMAN EVOLUTION

As an anthropologist I had become convinced that love and co-operation had been important factors in the evolution of man. I had further become convinced that the overemphasis on a rugged competition as a principal factor in the evolution of man was wrong, that the tough muscular Darwinists, especially the social Darwinists, had out-Darwined Darwin, and that Freud stood the chief of these offenders.

Freud was a confirmed Darwinist who accepted the idea of the inborn aggressiveness of man. This conception affected virtually every aspect of his view of human nature (22). His concept of the "Death Instinct" represents but one unfortunate expression of

Freud's muscular Darwinism. It should in all fairness be said that most Darwinians while remaining thoroughly convinced of the soundness of Darwin's main contributions, nevertheless no longer subscribe to the "Nature red in tooth and claw" conception of natural selection, and that most psychoanalysts today no longer subscribe to the idea of a death instinct.

What impressed me about Adler's work was the fact that he got so much closer to the realities of man's actual evolutionary history than Freud.<sup>2</sup>

Adler had a very much more open mind than Freud. I do not wish for a moment to be understood as diminishing Freud's very great contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of human behavior. That achievement will long endure, no matter how many modifications it will undergo. We must remember that the value of a theory lies not so much in whether it is true or false, but whether it is fruitful. However that may be, when we come to evaluate the overall view of human nature and of man's future, there can, in my opinion, be no doubt of the far greater soundness and hopefulness of Adler's view than of Freud's.

Adler's fundamental statement is set out immediately in his preface, when he writes, "There remains for us only one single standard by which we can form an estimate of a human being—*his movement when confronted with the unavoidable problems of humanity*" (3, p. 13). Adler underscores these words, and at once proceeds to add, "Three problems are irrevocably set before every individual. These are—the attitude taken up towards our fellow men, vocation, and love" (3, pp. 13-14). I would not myself separate our attitude towards our fellow man from love, but that is of no moment here.

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<sup>2</sup>To be sure, Adler presented a paper on "The Aggression Drive" (1) in 1908 in which he stated, "From early childhood . . . we find a stand of the child toward the environment which cannot be called anything but hostile. . . . This . . . indicates a drive toward fighting for satisfaction which I shall call 'aggression drive' " (4, p. 34). At that time Freud rejected this idea; but 15 years later introduced his own destructive or death instinct. Adler, on the other hand came to consider his early paper as "imprudent" (4, pp. 37-39). In *Social Interest* he refers to it as an attempt to describe the individual's "readiness for attack" in the face of "the countless tasks which each day brings," a readiness arising "under the compulsion of the evolutionary urge" (3, p. 102), which will find expression in accordance with the individual's life style. This approaches the understanding of the late George Kelly who distinguished between "hostility" and "aggression," describing the latter as behavior "well up toward the initiative end" of a dimension "running from initiative to inertia" (18, p. 329). In the present paper "aggression" is used in the customary way including hostility. —Ed. note.

What I am concerned with is that fundamental statement, that is, what the person does about the problems of humanity.

When Adler uses the word "humanity" it is not as some abstraction. He uses it as Goethe did when he remarked, "Do not talk to me of humanity. I know only persons." Since it is persons who make up humanity, it is with the growth and development of the person that Adler is concerned. "Man is a part of the whole." It is, says Adler, man's social feeling, his style of life—his successes and failures in it, that determine his being a person, and hence his health or unhealth. "Individual Psychology," writes Adler, "stands firmly on the ground of evolution and in the light of evolution regards all human striving as a struggle for perfection" (3, pp. 36-37). "Surely," Adler goes on to say, "the commands, 'Thou shalt not kill' and 'Love thy neighbour,' can hardly ever disappear from knowledge and feeling as the supreme court of appeal. These and other norms of human social life . . . are undoubtedly the products of evolution and are as native to humanity as breathing and the upright gait . . ." (pp. 37-38). These norms, says Adler, supply us with "the plumb-line . . . by which alone the right and wrong of all the other goals and modes of movement opposed to evolution are to be valued," the point at which we develop a psychology or science of values (3, p. 38).

Adler was not an anthropologist. It is all the more remarkable therefore that he should so early have perceived what is only now becoming apparent to some anthropologists, namely, the existence of "the inseparable bond that of necessity links men together for association, for the provision of livelihood, and for the care of offspring. . . . In their evolution men have been physically and mentally equipped for this" (3, p. 43). And in a splendid phrase Adler adds, "There can be no arrest of the stream of evolution. The goal of perfection draws us on" (3, p. 44).

The three major problems about which all the questions of life revolve, namely those of community, work, and love, Adler rightly says, are within the capacity of every individual to solve, but unfortunately, he adds, "The evolution of humanity has not advanced far enough yet for men to assimilate it so completely that this social feeling works as automatically as breathing or the upright gait. I do not doubt that one day—perhaps far distant—this stage will be reached, unless humanity is frustrated in this development, and in our time some slight reason exists for suspecting that this may hap-

pen" (3, p. 44). These words were written before the ascent of Hitler, nuclear weapons, and the development of the American government's policy of making the world safe for democracy by destroying it.

The fact is that in a very real sense the social development of the person in the Western World has been so massively frustrated that we are in imminent danger of complete annihilation as a species. We are confronted by the most powerful of all enemies, namely, ourselves.

It is urgently necessary for us to understand the nature of this creature who is ourselves if humanity is to be saved from the disorganization and destructiveness it has so catastrophically already achieved. In a period in which there are so many "authorities" who, in their varying ways, attempt to explain man's destructiveness, it is necessary to consider all the possibilities, to correct the errors, misunderstandings, and misinterpretations, and to set out the facts as science has come to know them concerning the nature of man. It is to these tasks that I shall address myself in what follows.

#### CURRENT ZOOLOGICAL VIEWS OF MAN

Since all human beings are so much involved in human nature, for that is what being human renders inescapably necessary, virtually everyone is an "authority" on human nature. Hence, the world of man has never wanted for theories concerning man's nature. If we could go back to early prehistoric times we would, no doubt, find that such theories flourished even then. Anthropologists are aware of no people who are without such theories. As we survey these theories we discover that there exists a direct correlation between their character and the ethos of the people, especially their view of life as either tragic, joyful, hopeful or apocalyptic. It is not surprising that we who live in an apocalyptic age should have produced contemporary prophets who speak in the voices of man's essential ornariness.

Writers like Robert Ardrey (5, 6), Konrad Lorenz (20), Niko Tinbergen (33), and Desmond Morris (27, 28), as well as others, agree with Freud that man is driven by an innate, instinctive, aggressiveness which they hold as principally responsible for man's disordered behavior and destructiveness. Adler's view that "The growing, irresistible evolutionary advance of social feeling warrants us in assuming that the existence of humanity is inseparably bound

up with 'goodness' " (3, p. 48), is thoroughly discounted by these writers none of whom have, in fact, considered Adler's views, or even seem to have heard of them.

The evidence, however, is wholly in favor of Adler's views and wholly opposed to the view that man is innately aggressive. As Adler clearly saw, love must have played a dominant role in the evolution of man. That idea has not even received so much as a passing glance from most students of the evolution of man. It is, indeed, a subject which very few scientists have understood, and from which almost all have shied away. The study of the behavior of organisms and of man in particular has been left to the last of the sciences, and for the most part has been largely conducted from the standpoint of a stimulus-response kind of physicalism, which has today settled down into an extreme zoologism. It is, in fact, the contemporary form of behaviorism, almost all its active practitioners being zoologists. Even Ardrey, who is not by training a zoologist, embraces the zoological view of man.

And that is the besetting sin of these writers on man. They see him as an animal primarily, and his social activities as principally originating in his alleged animal nature. Desmond Morris, for example, sees man as *The Naked Ape* (27) who is a product of *The Human Zoo* (28)—the titles of his two bestselling books. In the first title Morris, of course, begs the whole question. Man is not an ape at all, and it is absurd to speak of him as such. Man is, indeed, so different a creature from the ape, and has had so totally different an evolutionary history, that he represents a creature *sui generis*, of his own unique kind. It is something the zoologizers of man completely fail to understand, and hence fall into the most abysmal of reductionist errors. Let us deal with some of these errors.

It is characteristic of all these writers that while they attribute aggressive behavior in man to instinct, they nowhere attempt to define that term. Most students of instincts regard them as stereotyped species-specific behavioral sequences culminating in fixed action patterns. Essentially, we find that most definitions of instinct embody the same assumptions. The most common of these appear to be: (a) innate determiners of some kind which, (b) when affected by particular stimuli, (c) call into function certain neural, glandular, and muscular mechanisms, (d) that underlie particular patterns of behavior or even "psychological states."

Now, it has to be stressed that such definitions of instinct are based upon the study of what we choose to call "lower" animals, and not upon the study of the behavior of man. But in spite of the repeated cautions against extrapolating from the behavior of "lower" animals to the behavior of man, most zoologizers of man have thrown such caution to the wind. Instead of studying the phylogenetic, the genetic, and the cultural evolution of man, they have remained content to study greylag goslings, birds, fish, and similar animals, and then by analogy to project their findings on animals to man. Seeing the superficial resemblances between these animals they attribute their behavior to the same mechanisms and even to the same evolutionary processes. Thus, Lorenz tells us that the similarities of behavior in the greylag goose and in man, "such as falling in love, strife for ranking order, jealousy, grieving, etc., are not only similar but down to the most absurd details the same" and have arisen by "so-called convergent adaptation" (20, p. 218). And, of course, everyone of these behaviors is, according to Lorenz a "function of a corresponding special physical organization of the nervous system" (20, p. 218), that is, an instinct or innate drive.

In view of what we today know about the unique evolutionary history of man, this kind of loose analogizing is quite indefensible. Another member of the Lorenz school, Niko Tinbergen, long ago warned against the danger of assuming that because an instinct appears to exist in one species it must also exist in others (32). More recently he seems to have disregarded his own advice and aligned himself with Lorenz (33).

#### MAN'S EDUCABILITY VERSUS GENETIC DETERMINATION

With the possible exception of the reaction to a sudden withdrawal of support and the reaction to a sudden loud noise, no one has ever shown that man possesses anything like an instinct, and certainly not an instinct of aggression. I have asserted, and I repeat, that

The notable thing about *human* behavior is that it is learned. Everything a human being does as such he has had to learn from other human beings. From any dominance of biologically or inherited predetermined reactions that may prevail in the behavior of other animals man has been freed by having moved into a zone of adaptation in which his behavior is dominated by learned responses.

It is within the dimension of culture, the learned, the man-made part of the environment that man grows, develops, and has his being as a behaving organism. Whatever other recondite elements may be involved in his behavior, and whatever the limits that his genetic constitution may set upon his learning capacities, this is the conclusion of the behavioral sciences—the sciences concerned with the study of the origins and causes of man's behavior. If anyone has any evidence to the contrary, let him bring it forth (23, pp. xii-xiii).

Thus far no one has done so, although this statement has been criticized on the ground that it revives the old instinct *versus* environment, or heredity *versus* environment controversy. It does nothing of the sort. Nor does it seek to offer a polar view in contrast to the view offered by the zoologizers of man. Let me therefore make it as unequivocally clear here as I can that I think there may well be certain recondite biological elements, having a genetic or neurophysiological basis *which under certain conditions may well enter into the structure of aggressive behavior.*

But this is a very different thing from saying that there exist certain arrangements in the nervous system of man which *determine*, by calling into function, aggressive behavior. If we would say that there are genetic or inherited elements in the human nervous system which *influence* the functioning of aggressive behavior we would perhaps be nearer the truth. Just as genes are often mistakenly said to determine traits, so it is often mistakenly claimed that instincts determine behavior. Genes never determine traits.

What genes do is in interaction with other genes and the environment to influence the physiological or functional expression of a trait. And as Klopfer remarks,

*Behavior* is not a noun, defined and determined by a discrete locus on a DNA molecule. It is a process that derives from a series of interactions, some stochastic, some perhaps deterministic, which at certain times can achieve a certain level of predictability and stereotype. At some point this degree of inevitability and sameness becomes so great that we speak of "an instinct." But let us not neglect that acts, or behavior, are sequences of movements and perceptions and are best described in terms of latencies, frequencies, durations, and intensities. They must be analyzed with a view to unravelling a skein of interactions which tie together particular stimuli and particular responses. . . . It is nonsense to talk of the inheritance of behavior (19).

Hailman, in an article recently published entitled "How an Instinct is Learned" (16), has shown how the hitherto assumed instinctive feeding behavior of sea gull chicks is largely made up of learned elements and strongly affected by their experience.

In the evolution of vertebrates there has clearly been an adaptive radiation in the degrees of fixity and plasticity developed by various lines. Organisms living in environments which remain more or less uniform and static are likely to be characterized by a limited range of stereotypic behavior. Conversely, organisms that inhabit changeable environments are benefited by a certain plasticity of behavior. In a species like man, which happens to be exposed to a wide range of changeable environments, it becomes desirable to vary structures



and functions, in accordance with the circumstances that confront an individual at a given time and place. A genetic constitution, therefore, which permits adaptive plasticity under such conditions is obviously advantageous for survival and so is fostered by natural selection.

The social environments which human beings have created everywhere are notable not only for their complexity but also for the rapid changes to which immediate adjustment is demanded. In view of the fact that from the very beginning of human evolution the changes in the human environment have been not only rapid but diverse and manifold, genetic fixation of behavioral traits in man would have been decidedly unfavorable for survival of individuals as well as of the species as a whole.

Success of the individual in most human societies has depended and continues to depend upon his ability rapidly to evolve behavior patterns which fit him to the kaleidoscope of the conditions he encounters. Individuals who display a greater fixity of response than their fellows suffer under most forms of human society and tend to fall by the way. Suppleness, plasticity, and most important of all, the ability to profit by experience and education are required.

No other species is comparable to man in its capacity to acquire new behavior patterns and discard old ones in consequence of training. Considered socially as well as biologically, man's outstanding capacity is his educability. The survival value of this capacity is manifest, and therefore the possibility of its development through natural selection is evident. Natural selection on the human level favors gene complexes which enable their possessors to adjust their behavior to any condition in the light of previous experience. In short, it favors educability.

#### "THE MYTH OF THE BEAST"

Lorenz speaks of "the aggression drive inherited from his anthropoid ancestors" in man (20, p. 49). But the truth is that all studies of the anthropoid apes under natural conditions agree that these creatures are the most amiably unaggressive of all the primates. The work of Schaller on the mountain gorilla (30, 31), of Jane Goodall on the chimpanzee (34), and of the Harrissons on the orang-utan (17), abundantly testify to that fact. Of course, all apes are, upon occasion, capable of aggressive behavior, but they do not in any way conform to the mythological picture that we have built up about them in our

culture, and which, undoubtedly, Lorenz had in mind when he referred to the aggression drive inherited from our anthropoid ancestors.

Of course, all animals are capable of aggressive behavior, but the character and the frequency of their aggressive behavior has been greatly exaggerated. Fighting plays a certain adaptive role in the dominance and other relationships among animals, but as Cloudsley-Thompson has shown in a book specifically devoted to the subject, "fighting in species other than our own is usually harmless and takes the form of visible displays or audible performances as bird song, roaring, or the howling of some apes" (13, p. 89).

The talk of man inheriting his aggressiveness from his animal ancestors is, on the evidence, quite unsound. And as for an "instinct of aggression" there is no evidence for that either, especially in a species such as man in which plasticity of response rather than biologically predetermined reactions has been at a premium during the course of his evolution. Certainly, as I have already said, in common with all other animals, man possesses the biological elements which under the requisite organizing conditions may influence the development of aggressive behavior, but I repeat, this is a very different thing from asserting that he possesses an instinct of aggression which causes him to be aggressive. When I deny the existence of such an instinct in man, and assert instead that his aggressive behavior is largely learned, I do not deny that some biological elements may be involved in that behavior. What I do deny is that such biological elements constitute a major determinant, as the zoologists maintain, of man's aggressiveness.

Let me draw a parallel. There undoubtedly exist certain biological bases for the capacity to speak, but no human being would ever develop the ability to speak unless he was taught to. Just as speech has to be learned, so does aggressive behavior. If the conditions for acquiring speech are wanting no speech will develop, similarly, if the conditions for developing aggressive behavior are unfavorable, aggressive behavior will not be acquired. This constitutes a complete denial of what Lorenz calls "the spontaneity of aggression" which can "explode" suddenly, especially after it has been dammed up for some time. "It is the spontaneity of the aggressive instinct that," according to Lorenz, "makes it so dangerous" (20, p. 50). But there no more exists a specific energy which man contains as "the aggressive instinct" than there exists a specific energy which he contains for making war or making music.

The Hopi Indians of our own Southwest, indeed, the Pueblo Indians in general, the Eskimo, the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, the Ifaluk of the Caroline Islands, north of New Guinea, the Arapesh of New Guinea, the Lepchas of Nepal, the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, and the Tarahumara Indians of Mexico, are some of the peoples who have learned to make music but never learned to make war. Whatever could have happened to the spontaneous aggressiveness of these peoples? Could they have been trained to repress or displace it? The answer is in the negative. Aggressive behavior is disliked and discouraged, and it seldom occurs among most of these peoples simply because it has not been learned. When among some of these peoples, aggressive behavior does occur, it is generally regarded as abnormal.

The truth is, there exists no evidence whatever for anything even remotely resembling a spontaneous energy-system, drive or instinct of aggression. On the contrary, the evidence indicates that whatever biological elements may enter into the structure of aggressive behavior, that behavior in man, is mainly learned.

The evolutionary history of man over the last two million years or more tells us that under the conditions of life with which he was faced, in the tiny and precarious populations in which he lived, the highest premium was placed upon love and cooperation, and that if any bias has been built into the genetic behavioral system of man it has been in favor of these traits (23, 24, 26).

The human infant is born with all its drives oriented in the direction of growth and development as a cooperative, loving creature. The relationship existing between a loving mother and her child constitutes the basic pattern and model upon which all human development is designed to proceed. If that development does not proceed in love and cooperation the individual falls ill, and produces illness in his society. For health is the learned ability to love, to be, as Adler put it, socially interested, to work, and to serve.

And these are the very traits which were at so high a premium during the whole of man's evolutionary history up to the discovery of agriculture and the development of urbanism some 12,000 years ago. It is at that time, as a result of his increasing control of the reproduction of plant and animal life for the purposes of his own consumption, and with the enormous enlargement in his own numbers that this made possible, that man began to depart from those essential forms of behavior which had kept him healthy up to that time (11, 12).

These forms of behavior can be resumed in such terms as, involvement, love, cooperation, social interest or community.

A man is the sum of the things in which he is involved. And man throughout the greater part of his evolutionary history had been involved not only in his fellow man, but in the whole of animate and inanimate nature around him. Man was an operative member of a community. With the development of urbanism this rapidly ceased to be. Now, for the first time in the history of man there could be thousands of others whom one did not know and in whom one was not in the least involved. Men became alienated, disengaged, uninvolved, and instead of social interest became concerned only with their own narrow selfish interest.

We have observed this trend proceed to its ultimate development in the modern urbanized world; and with the alienation, the disengagement, and the frustration, we have seen the progressive rise in the quantum of aggressiveness at the individual, group, community, national, and international levels. It is quite understandable that the simple explanation for this, namely, man's alleged innate aggressiveness, should be so appealing. If man is not innately aggressive, it is asked, how then can one account for that aggressiveness? And the answer is: Not by an appeal to analogies, anecdotes, extrapolations, and prejudice, but by the dispassionate examination of the facts.

And those facts indicate unequivocally clearly that in spite of claims to the existence of a center of aggression in man's brain Plotnik and Delgado could find no evidence for the existence of such a center, but on the other hand, they found evidence, in the caudate nucleus of the brain of monkeys and in man, for the existence of a center which inhibited aggressive behavior (9, 10, 14, 29). Nor has anyone been able to find any evidence for the existence of an "instinct of aggression" in man (8; 13; 32, p. 177). Nor has the appeal to inheritance of aggressive behavior from other animals or apes any more merit, for the fact is that there are no animals, and least of all the great apes, who are aggressive in the sense in which so many men are.

Tinbergen states the fact very well when he writes:

It is a very striking and important fact that "fighting" in animals usually consists of threatening or bluff. Considering the fact that sexual fighting takes such an enormous amount of the time of so many species, it is certainly astonishing that real fighting, in the sense of a physical struggle, is so seldom observed. This is due to the fact that fighting has its disadvantages as well as its advantages as a

means of maintenance. It is, as we have seen, of advantage to keep individuals well spaced out; however, it is a distinct disadvantage when individuals are actually damaged or killed and thus excluded from reproduction (32, p. 177).

In what I have called "the myth of the beast" (24, pp. 107 ff), we have saddled animals with our own unfaceable behavior, and having saddled them with our own aggressiveness we trace our aggressiveness to our inheritance from them. It is an easy and a very discreditable way out. But man's limits for projection, displacement, and self-deception are endless.

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, what, then, are the causes of aggression in man? First and foremost, as I interpret the evidence, I see as the principal cause of aggression the learned reaction to the frustration of the need for love. As a second and as a related major cause of aggression I see the frustration of the individual's need for success, recognition, fulfillment, and achievement, the *anomie* from which so many people in the Western urbanized world suffer. Frustration and thwarted aspiration invite the development of anxiety, neurosis, antisocial behavior, and aggression (21). Then there is the training in aggression which human beings living in urbanized societies regularly receive from, in only too many cases, their parents, their playmates, their teachers, their government, the mass media, in short, from the very air they breathe (7, 15, 35, 36). Then, and not by any means finally—for there are doubtless many other causes of aggression—aggressive behavior breeds aggressive behavior.

In short, the evidence indicates quite clearly that no matter what genetic elements may enter into its development, aggressive behavior in human beings is entirely due to the cultural experiences which they have undergone in the genesis of aggression. I mean this in the same sense that I mean it when I say that the ability to speak is entirely due to the training in speaking which human beings receive. This, of course, presupposes a biological capacity for speech. But this capacity is not represented by some concrete entity in the brain, but rather is to be thought of as a complex of genetic potentialities which under the organization of repetitive training is capable of development as the ability to speak.

In exactly the same way did Adler conceive of social interest, when he stated: "Social interest is not inborn, but it is an innate potentiality which has to be consciously developed" (4, p. 134).

Man, is, indeed, polypotential in his capacity to learn virtually anything. And he can learn to be aggressive just as he can learn to be unaggressive. In that knowledge lies the hope, so well expressed by Adler in *Social Interest: A Challenge to Mankind*, that man, by taking the proper measures, may yet save himself from his own self-generated aggressiveness.

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