

ADLER'S PSYCHOLOGY: SCIENCE OF LIVING¹

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My views completely agree with those of Adler. I followed Adler's work from the beginning with great interest and have read all his books. Once a Spanish translation was discussed; but I had to travel and then nothing came of the matter and it was forgotten.²

You will probably know, if you have read my works, that I demanded from the start a dynamic and integral [holistic] conception of psychology, a self-consistent observation of the human psychic life, as I found it in Adler's psychology.

There is no doubt that the limitation of psychology to "elementaristic psychology," which considers only the *elements* of psychic life, was based on an error. Psychologists soon became aware of this and extended their studies to the *functions* of psychic life. For Külpe and his school psychic function was a reality. He did not realize that if one considers only the separate functions, one actually commits the same sacrilege as the elementarists.

The goal of a real psychology can only be to investigate the ultimate guiding lines of each individual life. The first basic condition is to start neither from elements nor from functions. What we need to know before anything else are *each man's vital goals*. How has he posited his goal, his life destinations? Only this can be our first question and our starting point. Only after we have solved this question may we go on and ask further questions. And only in this way are we capable of understanding also the partial phenomena of a psychic life and the meaning of all psychic contents.

Thus the three first and basic criteria psychology must meet are: it must be dynamic, it must be integral (aiming at consideration of the whole), and, what follows automatically from the first two pre-conditions, it must be concrete.

This attitude leads to a decisive step, which Adler has correctly recognized, namely, the discovery that psychology is not only the science of the psyche, but the science of living itself. The psyche is only one side of life, the apparatus through which one lives. Psychology must, however, beyond this, consider still something else, namely, the world toward which one lives (*el mundo hacia que se vive*). To live is to be occupied with the world, to turn towards the world.

¹Interview by Oliver Brachfeld, in Spanish, translated from the German version in *Int. Z. Indiv. Psychol.*, 1931, 9, 139-140.

²Since then, beginning with 1931, eight of Adler's books have been published in Spanish.—Ed. note.