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### Aldous Huxley and W. H. Sheldon's Psychology of Constitutional Differences<sup>1</sup>

The shortest way perhaps of saying something about Huxley's use of Sheldon's theory is to give a highly generalized account of Sheldon's typology and then immediately to proceed by showing to what degree Huxley has made use of it.

The account I am going to give presently is mostly based on the third chapter of Sheldon's work *The Varieties of Temperament*. My reasons for this choice are twofold. First, this chapter is a lengthy description of the scale by which various temperaments can be measured, and comprises what may be called Sheldon's views in a nutshell. Second, it seems to me to be beyond doubt that Huxley's compendium of Sheldon's views, appearing in the chapter "Religion and Temperament" of *The Perennial Philosophy* (1946), is for the most part a précis of this very chapter of Sheldon's work *The Varieties of Temperament* (1942) or, more precisely, an account of those paragraphs of Sheldon's book which deal with the description of traits defining the three primary components of temperament. Since Huxley's account of Sheldon's views

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<sup>1</sup> This is a sequel which I promised to write to my article, «Reverberations of Jung's *Psychological Types* in the Novels of Aldous Huxley», published in this periodical in volume No 33—36/1972—1973 (see note 7 in that article).

An account of the long history of Huxley's preoccupation with more or less scientific theories attempting to classify psycho-physical types, and an account of his shifting interest and approval first of Jung's classification of innate human psychological differences, then of W. H. Sheldon's psychosomatic classification insisting on the correlation between physique and temperament, together with an account of most of the reasons why Huxley was so much preoccupied with characterology, and of the instances of Huxley's direct mention of various characterologies, is given in the first seven and a half pages of the article I mention above, so it seems unnecessary to repeat all of it here.

is based on the work published for the first time in 1942, any possible use of Sheldon's typology can be looked for only in the novels published after that date. The first novel, then, to be searched for such evidence is *Time Must Have a Stop* (1945) as I have already asserted in my article mentioned in note 1.

According to Sheldon, every human being is a mixture of three primary constitutional components — endomorphy, mesomorphy, and ectomorphy — to which three psychological components — viscerotonia, somatotonia and cerebrotonia respectively — are closely related. These three components of the grown-up human being are a development of the three embryonic layers — the endoderm, mesoderm and ectoderm. The three physical and psychological components are mixed in every human being in differing proportions, which accounts for the innumerable individual differences in men, but there are, nevertheless, extreme cases of people in whom one of the components predominates over the other two.

These comparatively "pure" cases are rare but it is just these cases that are embodied in the characters of Huxley's later novels, and this creates the impression that they fall into three main distinct categories.

Each of Sheldon's elementary psychological components has got exactly twenty traits which constitute "The Scale for Temperament". This scale, accordingly, consists of sixty major traits by which, we are told, the temperament, that is, the exact proportion of the mixture of primary components in each individual, can be measured.

Persons characterized by a predominance of endomorphy and viscerotonia tend to be soft and rounded and very often grossly fat. An endomorph has a huge gut, sometimes almost twice as long as that of an ectomorph. He seems to be built round his digestive tract. The major traits of the viscerotonic temperament closely related to the endomorphic physique are, infantilism in appearance and behaviour, love of eating, particularly of ceremonious eating with friends interspersed with polite conversation, love of comfort and luxury, love of alcohol and smoking, tolerance, relaxation of posture and general ease of manner, need of people when in trouble, fear of solitude and death.<sup>2</sup>

Even this incomplete mention of the most important viscerotonic traits seems to suffice as evidence that Huxley used

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<sup>2</sup> See W. H. Sheldon, *The Varieties of Temperament*, Harper and Brothers, New York and London, 1942, Ch. III, "The Scale for Temperament", pp. 24—95.

Sheldon's scale for temperament very extensively in constructing the character of Eustace Barnack in *Time Must Have a Stop* as an embodiment of extremely predominant viscerotonia. First of all, the infantilism of Eustace's appearance is often emphasized, as for example here.

And the face was like a loose rubber mask sagging from the bones, flabby and soft... The damp, mobile looseness of hat mouth, its combination of senility and babyishness, of the infantile with the epicurean!<sup>3</sup>

This description of Eustace Barnack as he appears to his sister's mind seems to be only a paraphrase of a part of Sheldon's description of the trait number sixteen of viscerotonia.

There is the strong suggestion of a certain flabbiness or lack of intensity in the mental and moral outlook... The personality suggests lack of purpose beyond the elementary biological purposes. The relaxed protrusion of the lips (V—1) often brings to mind the picture of infantilism.<sup>4</sup>

Eustace, like all the predominantly viscerotonic persons, is a hedonist. He wants to enjoy everything that life offers, and in the self-indulgent act of enjoying food, drinking or smoking the general viscerotonic outlook of infantilism is sharply pointed out by Huxley. In the description of Eustace Barnack smoking a cigar this viscerotonic infantilism is even very aptly caricatured.

Damply, lovingly the unweaned lips closed on the object of their desire. He sucked at the flame of the little silver lamp, and a moment later the teat was yielding its aromatic milk— his mouth was full of smoke. Eustace breathed a sigh of contentment.<sup>5</sup>

Eustace Barnack does not want to think of death. When assaulted by the thought of death he consoles himself with Epicure's attitude to it.

No less silly was thinking about death. So long as one was alive, death didn't exist, except for other people. And when one was dead, nothing existed, not even death. So why bother?<sup>6</sup>

This, if not in words then in substance, resembles very much what Sheldon says about viscerotonic unwillingness to think of death.

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<sup>3</sup> A. Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1945, p. 38.

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 43. (V—1) means trait number one of viscerotonia in Sheldon's description of the traits, which is, "Relaxation in Posture and Movement".

<sup>5</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 122.

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.*, p. 126.

People in whom this trait is predominant usually do not like to contemplate the idea of death. They have a strong aversion to death, and are nearly always found not to have made peace with it.<sup>7</sup>

Eustace Barnack cannot be reconciled even with the fact of his own death, as it were, and wants to go on living after he has really died, which seems to be in complete accord with what Sheldon says of the viscerotonic unwillingness to die.

Viscerotonics hate to die. They typically have a devil of a time of it, dying with great protest, as if they were being torn from life untimely by the roots.<sup>8</sup>

The approach of the disturbing thoughts of death is followed in Eustace Barnack by the need of other people's company, and since there is no one handy he is satisfied with the company of his seventeen-year-old nephew Sebastian, which is in reality only an expression of the nineteenth trait of viscerotonia, "Need of People When Troubled".<sup>9</sup> The clock strikes the hours and half-hours. Being educated and drunk, to the surface of Eustace's consciousness aptly rises the line Marlowe's Faustus quotes in his last monologue, between eleven and midnight of his last day, — "*O lente, lente currite, noctis equi*" — in an attempt to stop time so that he may repent and save his soul. But Eustace does not want salvation. He wants to live this life for ever. Not feeling well, he goes to the lavatory to take some bicarbonate of soda and sensing the coming of death he mentally calls first for Sebastian's company — "'Sebastian!' The shout produced no more than a whisper. 'Don't let me die. Don't let me ...'" — and then, like Faustus, he calls out to Christ. The counterpoint to Eustace's dying, the tragical death of Dr. Faustus, calls up the theme of salvation and leaves an ironical aftertaste in the reader's mind, but the whole passage, which is beautifully written,<sup>10</sup> seems undoubtedly to be an expression, in the language of art and literary allusion, of the viscerotonic unwillingness to die.

Even the less important traits of viscerotonia are used in the description of both the physical and psychological characteristics of Eustace Barnack. On first shaking Eustace's hand Sebastian's mental comment was:

It was soft, rather damp and surprisingly cold.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 48.

<sup>8</sup> *Ib.*, p. 94.

<sup>9</sup> *Ib.*, p. 26.

<sup>10</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, Cf. pp. 129—133.

<sup>11</sup> *Ib.*, p. 40.

Sheldon, in describing the sixteenth trait of viscerotonia, says:

There is relatively poor circulation in the hands and feet, which tend to be cold, weak, flabby and atonic.<sup>12</sup>

In order to do justice to the second trait of viscerotonia, "Love of Physical Comfort", Eustace always occupies low, deeply upholstered sofas and armchairs.

But Eustace merely let himself sink more deeply into the upholstery of the sofa. Closing his eyes, he tenderly kissed the end of his cigar and sucked.<sup>13</sup>

The model for this description seems to be this.

There is usually a strong preference for soft beds, and for low, deeply upholstered furniture. To be luxuriantly comfortable is a primary goal.<sup>14</sup>

Not even "The Deep Sleep Characteristic" of viscerotonia is forgotten in the description of Eustace Barnack. Sheldon describes this trait as follows.

V-15. *The Deep Sleep Characteristic.* Sleep is deep, easy, and undisturbed... There is a great love of sleep, and the individual frequently becomes a sleep glutton, indulging in more of it than he needs.<sup>15</sup>

Although this is not the whole of his description it may be quickly noticed to what minute detail Huxley follows it in describing Eustace's sleep.

Eustace woke up, that Saturday morning, at a few minutes before nine, after a night of dreamless sleep, induced by nothing stronger in the way of narcotics than a pint of stout taken at midnight...

Waking was painful, of course;<sup>16</sup>

To continue to give examples of descriptions of the physical and psychological characteristics of Eustace Barnack which derive from Sheldon's description of major viscerotonic traits would become somewhat tedious. The traits so far mentioned determine only the surface of an individual, his gestures and posture. That Huxley took pains to embody them in the characters of his novels only reveals the extent to which he believed in this theory and wanted to be true to it. About Huxley's use of the socially more important traits of viscerotonia I shall speak later, in connection with their opposites.

<sup>12</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 43.

<sup>13</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, pp. 52—53.

<sup>14</sup> W. H. Sheldon, c. c., see note 2, p. 32.

<sup>15</sup> *Ib.*, p. 43.

<sup>16</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 62.

It seems to be a curiosity of a sort that there are characters in the earlier novels, in which Huxley used Jung's psychology of types, who closely resemble Eustace Barnack in a number of traits. Mr. Cardan in *Those Barren Leaves* and John Bidlake in *Point Counter Point* share Eustace Barnack's love of food and drink, love of comfort, particularly of comfortable armchairs, fear of death and need of people when in trouble, and yet, it is beyond doubt that their description is based on Jung's description of his extraverted sensation type.<sup>17</sup> One may find a reason for this resemblance in the fact that although these typologies differ in their criteria for determining elementary traits and extreme types, and in the terminology they use, they agree in very many observations of inborn human differences and in the basic assumptions from which they start. Differences of opinion and theory seem to be bridged by similarity of observation and experience. This is, at least, how Huxley explains the sound basis of many of the old systems of classification.

Meanwhile, let us not forget that many of the old systems of classification, though employing strange terms and an erroneous explanatory hypothesis, were based firmly upon the facts of observation and personal experience.<sup>18</sup>

Let me now turn to mesomorphy and somatotonia. In the mesomorphic physique, bones, muscles, and connective tissue in general are the most developed parts of the organism. It is an athletic person. Closely connected with mesomorphic physique is somatotonic temperament. Its major traits are love of physical exercise and effort, aggressiveness, lust for power, competitive spirit, loud, explosive laughter, speech and shouting, etc . . .

Huxley does not describe each of his somatotonic characters with all the twenty traits of somatotonia, but one of them is really universally used, viz., the short explosive laughter. It rings as an accompaniment to the appearance of all of his predominantly somatotonic personages, of which John Barnack, Eustace's brother, is one.

And on that there was the startling explosion of John Barnack's loud, metallic laughter.<sup>19</sup>

Part of the description Sheldon gives of somatotonic noisiness in his somatotonic trait number fifteen does not differ very much from Huxley's description of John Barnack's laughter.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. M. Mužina, o. c., see note 1, pp. 316—318.

<sup>18</sup> A. Huxley, *Ends and Means*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1937, p. 165.

<sup>19</sup> A. Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop*, see note 3, p. 32.

The shout, the explosive laugh, and the sharp, "pistol-shot" cough are hallmarks of somatonia.<sup>20</sup>

The description of John Barnack talking to his brother Eustace discloses two more of the somatonic traits.

Standing there by the fireplace, his arms hanging by his sides, his feet apart, his body very straight and tense, in the posture of an athlete poised on the brink of action, John Barnack looked down at his brother with the calm unwavering regard which, in the law courts, he reserved for hostile witnesses and prevaricating defendants.<sup>21</sup>

The first one is Sheldon's trait number one of somatonia.

S-1. *Assertiveness of Posture and Movement.* The hallmark is bodily readiness for action. Marked assertiveness and muscular readiness of the body as a whole.<sup>22</sup>

The second one is his trait number seven of somatonia.

S-7. *Bold Directness of Manner.* ... This trait is reflected especially in the characteristic manner of social address. The individual tends to fix a direct, unchanging stare upon the person addressed. There is no hesitancy of approach, no beating about the bush, no dependence upon overpoliteness...<sup>23</sup>

There are many more traits of somatonia used by Huxley in describing John Barnack. For example, the very low requirement of sleep and food.

A constant characteristic of predominant somatonia is physical endurance, accompanied by a low sleep requirement and a relatively infrequent food requirement. ... It is not uncommon to find a somatonic... with the established habit of sleeping only five or six hours nightly, while retaining seemingly boundless energy and evidencing no signs of fatigue.<sup>24</sup>

This is exactly how John Barnack behaves. Without a proper dinner, after having conversed with his relatives late in the evening, he goes to work, then to sleep for a few hours, and then he gets up early in the morning.

He looked at his watch. 'Well, I've got some work to do', he announced. 'And tomorrow I must be up at cock-crow. So I'll say good-night, Alice.'<sup>25</sup>

But it would really be superfluous to go on in this manner and check every single instance of Huxley's use of Sheldon's somatonic traits in the description of John Barnack. What

<sup>20</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 62.

<sup>21</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 52.

<sup>22</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 49.

<sup>23</sup> *Ib.*, p. 54.

<sup>24</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 257-258.

<sup>25</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 56.

has been said of Huxley's use of viscerotonic traits in the description of Eustace Barnack applies here very well. The traits so far mentioned determine only the surface of a personality although their persistent use in characterization shows to what extent Huxley wanted to be true to Sheldon's typology. It is characteristic of him that these descriptions either of laughter, posture, or table manners, which rigidly follow Sheldon's "Scale for Temperament", accompany, like a leitmotif, every single appearance in the novel of a particular character. More will be said soon, however, about Huxley's use of the socially more important traits of somatotonia.

There is hardly any need to point out that Everard Webley in *Point Counter Point* fits the type of John Barnack, and I have already tried to account for that similarity between Huxley's characters constructed on Jung's psychology of types and those modelled on Sheldon's psychology of constitutional differences.

Sheldon's ectomorphic physiques are slender people with small bones and weak muscles but with an over-sensitive and relatively unprotected nervous system. The temperament correlated with this physique is called cerebrotonia. Its most characteristic traits are over-sensitivity, introversion, love of privacy, preoccupation with the inner life of imagination, interest in death (opposite to viscerotonia), aversion to alcohol and tobacco, etc. All the characters in Huxley's novels modelled on Jung's introverted thinking or intuitive type are similar to those modelled on Sheldon's predominantly cerebrotonic temperament.

Sebastian Barnack, in *Time Must Have a Stop*, is a highly cerebrotonic personality. He is constitutionally predestined to become the victim of his environment, that is, due to his unprotected nervous system. Sheldon gives this description of high cerebrotonia with respect to over-sensitivity.

In a psychological sense he is naked to his environment, overexposed, oversensitized. He is therefore singularly vulnerable to overstimulation. He lacks insulation.<sup>26</sup>

It could not have been without some purpose that Huxley gave the name of St. Sebastian to this character. Even the actual association with St. Sebastian is not left unmentioned in the book.

'So this is Sebastian', said Bruno slowly. Ominously significant, it was the name of fate's predestined target.

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<sup>26</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 74.



'Somehow, I can't help thinking of all those arrows', he went on. 'The arrows of the lusts which this beauty would evoke and would permit its owner to satisfy; the arrows of vanity and self-satisfaction and...'<sup>27</sup>

A little further on in the same chapter a small fourteenth-century painting of young men shooting arrows at St. Sebastian attached to a flowering apple tree is described.<sup>28</sup>

Sebastian Barnack has got the name of a Christian saint. He is given an ectomorphic physique and a cerebrotonic temperament. He was not associated with his martyr namesake without implicit justification. Sheldon believes that Christianity is a cerebrotonic religion,<sup>29</sup> a "rationalization of cerebrotonic imagination".<sup>30</sup> So Huxley was completely consistent with Sheldon's typology in associating cerebrotonic temperament with the name of a Christian saint and martyr.

But in describing Sebastian he is true even to far less important details of Sheldon's typology. Sebastian belongs to the group of people who look much younger than they really are their whole life through, the fact being a source of constant anguish to some of them.

To be seventeen, to have a mind which one felt to be agelessly adult, and to look like a Della Robbia angel of thirteen — it was an absurd and humiliating fate.<sup>31</sup>

This is not simply an observation but rather a construction of a trait of personality by means of Sheldon's "Scale for Temperament". It is the trait number sixteen that has been utilized now.

C-16. *Youthful Intentness of Manner and Appearance.* The trait of seeming younger than the chronological age indicates. If a child, the individual tends to lack the assurance and the appearance of manliness or womanliness of the average child of the same age. If an adult, he appears to have bathed in the springs of youth. There is a strong suggestion about him that he will never grow old.<sup>32</sup>

Just because of this humiliatingly childlike appearance Sebastian would like to adopt the prerogatives of grown-up

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<sup>27</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 108.

<sup>28</sup> This is not the only case in which Huxley tries to suggest the character of his personages by giving them appropriate names, a procedure not unfamiliar in the development of the English novel, and not uncommon in characterologically minded writers who want to make articulate a pattern of human types, no matter on what different principles. Cf. Rudolf Schmerl, "The Two Worlds of Aldous Huxley", in *PMLA*, Vol. LXXVII, No. 3, June, 1962.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 49.

<sup>30</sup> *Ib.*, p. 81.

<sup>31</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 87.

behaviour, drinking and smoking, with even more humiliating results. Smoking is, for him, sickening to the point of actually making him vomit, and the taste of spirits is repulsive.

Acting the part of a relishing connoisseur, Sebastian took an appreciative sip or two, then gulped down half a glassful. It had the taste, he thought, of an apple peeled with a steel knife.<sup>33</sup>

This is a typically cerebrotonic reaction to these drugs, opposite to the viscerotonic reaction according to Sheldon, and is considered by him to be of a high diagnostic value in deciding the temperament of a person.<sup>34</sup>

The most frequent cerebrotonic trait seems to be:

C-9. *Inhibited Social Address*. Poor composure when under scrutiny. ... Lack of self-possession. Extreme self-consciousness. The unhappy faculty of failing to be at ease when aware of being observed critically or evaluatively.<sup>35</sup>

This is the characteristic ascribed by Huxley to Sebastian and exaggerated to the point of caricature whenever Sebastian has to address either his father, Mrs. Gamble, or Mrs. Thwale, especially in the moments in which he wants to make an impression on them. This trait, which makes caricatures out of people, is very liberally used by Huxley in the portraiture of his learned characters, either scientist or arts scholars — Edvard Tantamount in *Point Counter Point* for example, or Jeremy Pordage in *After Many a Summer* and Alfred Poole in *Ape and Essence*. It is not always possible to discriminate in all of these cases whether it is Jung's or Sheldon's description of these extreme types that has been used by Huxley in making up these characters. In the case of Alfred Poole in *Ape and Essence*, which was first published in 1949, one can see traces of both Jung's and Sheldon's observations and descriptions. But to find out the exact proportion of Huxley's use of either Sheldon's, or Jung's or, in earlier novels, most likely Kretschmer's theory of types and their descriptions, is not my concern here and there does not seem to be any point in it. The question I would like to answer is not whether and to what extent Huxley used various typologies, but for what reason he used them so constantly and consistently in his work.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> A. Huxley, o. c., see note 3, p. 119.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, pp. 91, 272, 274 and 278—279.

<sup>35</sup> *Ib.*, p. 79.

<sup>36</sup> Of course, I confess that, to some extent, I am to blame for the purely disinterested and useless joy in finding out the sources and origins of certain ideas in Huxley, and to this very extent, perhaps, I stand well rebuked by Huxley's own words, "There is always money

This, then brings me back to the question of social traits and of their interaction which I have already mentioned twice. Certain recurring patterns of behaviour and attitude in the characters of Huxley's novels, a limited stock of descriptive terms Huxley uses for both the physique and temperament of his characters seem to be evidence enough of his use of typological descriptions of human differences. Huxley's central interest was, it seems to me, in the traits that determine relations between human beings, in social traits.

Huxley was a pacifist and a man keenly interested in the reform of mankind. To prevent wars one has to know the causes of wars. Constitutional psychology reduced the multiplicity of religious, economic, ideological and various other causes to nearly one — constitutional differences in people, and by doing so gave a promising starting point to an eager pacifist. Whatever there is of a reductive approach to the problems of mankind in Jung and Sheldon seems to me to be a result of the disgust they felt for war and for the destructive element in human nature that causes it, and of the desire to prevent destructive behaviour, at least on a large scale, as quickly and effectively as possible.

One of the socially most dangerous traits of somatonia Huxley was constantly preoccupied with is lust for power.

S-5. *Love of Dominating, Lust for Power.* There is a deep and constant desire to be important in the world, to wield power over other creatures and over the environment. This trait under various circumstances assumes the garments of ambition, of love of power, of craving for prestige, and of desire to be conspicuous. There is a consummate willingness to assume responsibility. The trait is very closely associated with natural leadership. When present to an exaggerated degree it may lead to what is referred to popularly as the *Napoleonic complex*, or the ambition to conquer on a large scale. Napoleon serves well to illustrate the trait in this exaggerated form. There is strong desire to conquer and subdue, and to be in a position of such power over others that whatever one does is important and may have life or death significance to others. One must then be taken seriously. This trait represents one of the most dangerous manifestations of somatonia, for it is the war-making characteristic.<sup>37</sup>

John Barnack, undoubtedly, embodies this trait. It is implied in this Passage that the causes of war are to be sought in constitution and temperament, not historical or economical

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for, there are always doctorates in, the learned foolery of research into what, for scholars, is the all-important problem: Who influenced whom to say what when?" (Cf. "The Doors of Perception", in *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1961, p. 62.).

<sup>37</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, pp. 52—53.

events, and that the prevention of war should begin in the same field. Sheldon did not hesitate to make these conclusions explicit.

Undisciplined somatonia is the war-making characteristic. When in some manner a somatorotic impulse becomes dominant, whole nations of people lose both compassion and restraint.<sup>38</sup> They are then ready to make aggressive war and to kill. Probably such a phenomenon can occur only in soil already well prepared, through the predominance for some time past of essentially somatotonic temperaments among the group, and such a probability leads straight back to the question of how to deal in the first place with rampant somatonia.<sup>39</sup>

Is it possible that the problem of war need not carry the fatal germ of inevitability? Only a little while ago men thought that the black death was inevitable. The development of a single diagnostic idea led to its abolishment. Today the general pessimism is abroad that war and the cyclic rise and fall of peoples are inevitable. There may be an alternative to such a pessimism. Possibly these costly tidal waves of somatorosis among geographic groups can be predicted (and therefore controlled), once their symptoms are diagnosed in terms of a psychology rooted in an understanding of human constitutions and freed from irrational sentiment.

Men knew that the second World War was brewing almost before the echoes of the first had quieted. But they did not know *why*. What might have been the story had they sought causes in the differential constitutional endowments of groups of men? No diagnosis ordinarily was made except in terms of economics. Hence no treatment followed except a kind of half-hearted gesture toward the economic and political appeasement of an essentially impenitent, historically somatorotic group of people. The policy seems to have been sound only in the sense

<sup>38</sup> So far as terminology used is concerned, Sheldon explains, "When we study the dynamic components of temperament as exhibited by the different individuals we find some persons showing overmanifestations and some showing undermanifestations of various traits. Two suffixes, common in medical terminology, suggest themselves as convenient labels: *-osis* for the exaggerated condition and *-penia* for the deficient manifestation of a component. Thus we shall speak of *viscerosis* and *cerebrosis*, and, for the sake of euphony, *somatorosis* (rather than *somatosis*). Behavior that is somatorotic is usually maladaptive because of being overly somatotonic, or ineptly somatotonic, according to circumstances. . . . By this usage we are able, in general, to substitute for the vague term *neurotic* the much more specific and descriptive terms, *viscerotic*, *somatorotic*, and *cerebrotic*. A viscerotic person is ordinarily one who is overly relaxed, gluttonous, overly socialized and too dependent on people, overly complacent or the like. A somatorotic person may be overly aggressive and assertive, too energetic, too dominating, too fond of risk, too combative, ruthless, loud, manic or hypomanic, overly active, and so on. A cerebrotic person may be overly tense and restrained, too sensitive and over-responsive physiologically, overly secretive, sociophobic and overly inhibited, pathologically intent, emotionally "tied up in a hard knot", and so on (Cf. W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, pp. 22—23).

<sup>39</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 144.

that one way to stop a fire is to encourage it quickly to burn up everything combustible. We of the English-speaking world are repeatedly scolded because we faced a grave responsibility in 1919, and flunked the test. Had we been able to define somatonia, is it possible that we might have saved Germany from herself and ourselves from Germany?<sup>40</sup>

I have quoted so extensively here to show that Huxley did not only make use of Sheldon's typology but that he adopted Sheldon's typological method of explaining social phenomena. It is Eustace Barnack in *Time Must Have a Stop* who, in a learnedly-jocular manner, commenting on the actions of other characters in the novel and on the political, cultural and religious history of mankind, paraphrases Sheldon's ideas. Eustace makes a humorous imitation of Sheldon's classification of temperaments in terms of viscerotonia, somatonia and cerebrotonia in his own corresponding classification in terms of an Old Man of Moldavia, an Old Man of Corsica and an Old Man of Port Royal, the historical paradigms being Confucius, Napoleon and Pascal. It seems to me, by the way, that Huxley has frequently used those characters in his novels who are either made fun of or even caricatured to express the views he himself holds true in all seriousness.

According to Sheldon viscerotonic temperaments are tolerant; they accept people and institutions as they are, and they do not want either to convert people to their own opinions or to change the world. They have no revolutionary or prophetic abilities, but for this very reason do no harm in the world.

V-13 *Tolerance*. The trait of easygoing toleration of people and of things as they are found. Comfortable acceptance of people, customs, situations, institutions. ... Such an individual is well disposed toward life in a most fundamental sense, and he wishes well toward the entire scene. ... His philosophy is "live and let live".<sup>41</sup>

Eustace Barnack, a representative and a propagator, as it were, of the viscerotonic temperament, is speaking to Sebastian about the advantages of this temperament over the other two, who either with their lust for power or their predisposition to change the world in accordance with a certain ideal bring about all the evils of wars and revolutions. On the contrary, for a viscerotonic, he says, life is a fine art.

'But an unrecognized fine art', he complained. 'Its masters aren't admired; they're regarded as idlers and wasters. The moral codes have always been framed by people like your father [somatonic] — or, at the very best, people like Bruno [cerebrotonic]. People like me have hardly been able to get a word

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<sup>40</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 432—433.

<sup>41</sup> *Ib.*, p. 41.

in edgeways. And when we do get our word in — as we did once or twice during the eighteenth century — nobody listens to us seriously. And yet we demonstrably do much less mischief than the other fellows. We don't start any wars, or Albigenian crusades, or communist revolutions. "Live and let live" — that's our motto. Whereas *their* idea of goodness is "die and make to die" — get yourself killed for your idiotic cause, and kill everybody who doesn't happen to agree with you.<sup>42</sup>

Not only does Eustace speak in the spirit of Sheldon but he literally repeats Sheldon's statement of viscerotonic philosophy, "live and let live". Sheldon's thesis that the motive power of history is to be sought in the conflicts of different types of temperament is also adopted by Eustace.

'If I had the knowledge', he went on, 'or the energy, I'd write an outline of world history. Not in terms of geography, or climate, or economics, or politics. None of these is fundamental. In terms of temperament. In terms of the eternal three-cornered struggle between the Old Man of Moldavia, the Old Man of Corsica, and the Old Man of Port Royal'.<sup>43</sup>

Sheldon seems to believe that different religions are the rationalizations of either viscerotonia, or somatotonia, or cerebrotonia diluted sometimes by viscerotonia and somatotonia. This opinion is accepted and further developed and slightly modified by Huxley in *The Perennial Philosophy*, in the chapter "Religion and Temperament". Sheldon says of Buddhism:

As another alternative, it is possible to rationalize a general orientational schema for life on essentially viscerotonic grounds. Buddhism has done so. . . . In Buddhist doctrines we find a fairly consistent exposition of viscerotonia. We find relaxation, deliberateness, love of comfort, pleasure in digestion, ceremoniousness, tolerance, complacency, love of sleep, orientation towards family, in short, viscerotonia. And for an honest *rationalization* of viscerotonia, read Lin Yutang's book, *The Importance of Living*.<sup>44</sup>

Buddha is always represented morphologically as an endomorph and psychologically as a viscerotonic temperament<sup>45</sup> whereas Christ was traditionally represented as an ectomorph,<sup>46</sup> says Sheldon. Huxley modifies Sheldon's views by saying that both primitive Buddhism and primitive Christianity are predomi-

<sup>42</sup> A. Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop*, see note 3, p. 120.

<sup>43</sup> *Ib.*, p. 121.

<sup>44</sup> W. H. Sheldon, *o. c.*, see note 2, pp. 255—256.

<sup>45</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 255 and 268. Sheldon says of Christ: "Our Christ has been portrayed, historically, as an ectomorph (see p. 268), and much of the teaching attributed to him has centered around cerebrotonic self-effacement and inhibition of the somatotonic impulse" (*o. c.*, p. 255). Huxley follows Sheldon closely: "In Christian art the Saviour has almost invariably been represented as slender, small-boned, unemphatically muscled. . . . In a word, the traditional Jesus is thought

nantly cerebrotonic and that only Confucianism is an expression of viscerotonic tolerance. But, whenever a somatotonic component comes to the fore in a group of people they become aggressive and start wars. In this Huxley does not diverge from Sheldon.

Primitive Buddhism is no less predominantly cerebrotonic than primitive Christianity, and so is Vedanta, the metaphysical discipline which lies at the heart of Hinduism. Confucianism, on the contrary, is a mainly viscerotonic system — familial, ceremonious and thoroughly this-worldly. And in Mohamedanism we find a system which incorporates strongly somatotonic elements. Hence Islam's black record of holy wars and persecutions — a record comparable to that of later Christianity, after that religion had so far compromised with unregenerate somatonia as to call its ecclesiastical organization 'the Church Militant'.<sup>47</sup>

Our Christian European values, Sheldon believes, are based on the predominance of the cerebrotonic temperament in Europe up to the first World War. Present aggressiveness and the succession of two World Wars are to be accounted for by what he calls the "somatotonic revolution", or the rise to numerical predominance of somatotonic types in the population of Europe.

In our own Christian history cerebrotonic virtues of restraint and the viscerotonic virtue of brotherly love have defined the cornerstone for religious thought and for a theological rationalization of life. (We have, however, for the most part practiced an aggressively somatotonic way of life, and perhaps in this incompatibility lies some of the reason for present-day orientational confusion.) Our Christ has been portrayed historically as an ectomorph... Up to the time of the "somatotonic revolution", which became so readily apparent at about the period of the first World War, we were attempting, so far as the common conscious rationalization was concerned, to live out a religious ideal based essentially on cerebrotonia, although complicated by an undercurrent of sublimated viscerotonia (love of man). But for some time now, as is especially obvious in Germany, a vigorous religious movement has been afoot which is based squarely on unsublimated somatonia.<sup>48</sup>

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of as a man of predominantly ectomorphic physique and therefore, by implication, of predominantly cerebrotonic temperament" (Cf. *The Perennial Philosophy*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1957, p. 180).

<sup>47</sup> A. Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1957, p. 181.

<sup>48</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 255. Sheldon traces this somatotonic revolution in the fact that Christ in the four pictures out of seven painted since 1915 tends to turn more and more into a mesomorph, whereas in a study of one hundred twenty-four different historical paintings of Christ, made prior to 1900, the ectomorph component was found to be predominant. In other words, instead of being traditionally otherworldly and Messianic he seems to be growing into an athletic person in order to satisfy the ideals of the somatotonic temperament which has come to predominance in Europe.

Viscerotonic virtues of tolerance and hedonism were never very respectable in Europe. The subjective, other-worldly and inhibitive values of cerebrotonia, although respectable throughout European history are superseded now by the fact-worshipping, objective religion of action and success — somatotonic virtues. Again, it is Eustace Barnack who reformulates these views about somatotonic revolution in his half serious, half mock-Sheldonian characterology, which is only another characteristic of viscerotonia complicated a little with cerebrotonia — its sense of humour.<sup>49</sup> What Huxley has said in *The Perennial Philosophy* using Sheldon's terminology, Eustace says using his own, in his attempt to adumbrate an outline of world history in terms of temperament.

Christ, of course, had been an Old Man of Port Royal. So were Buddha and most of the other Hindus. So was Lao Tsu. But Mahomet had had a lot of the Old Man of Corsica in him. And the same, of course, was true of any number of the Christian saints and doctors. So you got violence and rapine, practised by proselytizing bullies and justified in terms of a theology devised by introverts. And meanwhile the poor Old Men of Moldavia got kicked and abused by everybody. Except perhaps among the Pueblo Indians, there had never been a predominantly Moldavian society — a society where it was bad form to nourish ambitions, heretical to have a personal religion, criminal to be a leader of men, and virtuous to have a good time in peace and quietness. Outside of Zuffi and Taos, the Old Men of Moldavia had had to be content with registering a protest, with applying the brakes, with sitting down on their broad bottoms and refusing to move unless dragged. Confucius had had the best success in moderating the furies of the Corsicans and Port Royalists; whereas, in the West, Epicurus had become a by-word; Boccaccio and Rabelais and Fielding were disregarded as mere men of letters; ... And recently the Old Men of Port Royal had begun to be treated as badly as those of Moldavia. ... Traditional Christianity was in process of becoming almost as discreditable as Epicureanism. The philosophy of action for action, power for the sake of power, had become an established orthodoxy. "Thou hast conquered, O go-getting Babbitt!"<sup>50</sup>

Different constitutional types. different values. When one constitutional type gains numerical predominance over the

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<sup>49</sup> Sheldon says that the sense of humour is antithetic to somatotonic lust for power: "Whatever else may be true of humor, it represents a singular inclination to take life lightly, or whimsically, and a readiness to tolerate (indeed to enjoy) incompatible conceptions. The person with a sense of humor does not put himself in too serious a light, and does not desire to be taken too seriously. He avoids the responsibility of exercising power. People with humor are not directly leaders in the world's affairs. But humor is in no sense a polar trait. It involves both the relaxation of viscerotonia and the restraint of cerebrotonia (W. H. Sheldon, *o. c.*, see note 2, p. 53).

<sup>50</sup> A. Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop*, see note 3, pp. 121—122.



other two its values are accepted as normal and ruling ones, hence somatotonic fact-worship and aggressiveness seem to be taken for granted nowadays.

Closely connected with this is the problem of personal relations, of communication and understanding, a theme that never fails to appear in any of Huxley's novels. The impossibility of communication and understanding is rooted in the assumptions of both Jung's psychology of types<sup>51</sup> and Sheldon's psychology of constitutional differences. Only people having more or less similar temperaments can understand and tolerate each other without conscious effort. A man at the ultimate limit of cerebrotonia lives in a completely different universe than a man at the ultimate limit of somatotonia, or viscerotonia. Whereas a predominantly endomorphic person finds no difficulties in associating himself with other people and in accepting the world as it is, an ectomorph cannot adapt himself to the world and seeks isolation. Eustace is clear on that point in what he says to Sebastian about the inevitability of his always being disappointed with experience in general.

'Of course, you realize', he added, 'that you'll always be disappointed?'

'With what?'

'With girls, with parties, with experience in general. Nobody who has any kind of creative imagination can possibly be anything but disappointed with real life. When I was young, I used to be miserable because I hadn't any talents — nothing but a little taste and cleverness. But now I'm not sure one isn't happier that way. People like you aren't really commensurable with the world they live in. Whereas people like me are completely adapted to it'. He removed the teat from between his large damp lips to take another sip of brandy.<sup>52</sup>

Sebastian is a gifted ectomorph and he owes his lively imagination to this fact. So far as an ectomorph's attitude to society is concerned Sheldon is explicit.

The ectomorphs do not appear to fit into society as readily or as comfortably as do endomorphs and mesomorphs.<sup>53</sup>

Sebastian seems to be constitutionally incommensurable with the world he lives in.

The moral of all this seems to be that dissatisfaction, conflict and destruction are inevitable and that they spring from human nature in general and from the constitutional

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<sup>51</sup> See my analysis of the lack of communication in Huxley's introverted characters in "Reverberations of Jung's *Psychological Types* in the Novels of Aldous Huxley", see note 17, pp. 321—328.

<sup>52</sup> A. Huxley, *Time Must Have a Stop*, see note 3, pp. 127—128.

<sup>53</sup> W. H. Sheldon, o. c., see note 2, p. 386.

differences in particular. There seems to be a note of fatalism in the typological account of the history of mankind as a history of wars and persecutions. But this is only the way it *seems* to be. Sheldon himself tries to defend his psychology of constitutional types from being thought of as a fatalistic doctrine. First, in the very preface to his book he expresses a hope that a description of human beings "in terms of their *most deep-seated* similarities and differences"<sup>54</sup> might be achieved. Then he goes on to say that, "This differentiation, if achieved, would provide the needed leverage for an attack on many social problems".<sup>55</sup> Later on in the book he speaks about the prevention of wars by means of a deeper understanding of the basic components of temperament and physique. Then, in the final chapter of his book, under the subtitle "Is the Constitutional Approach Fatalistic?", he argues that it is not. Somatotonics are apt to hold the constitutional approach to be fatalistic and, as Sheldon says, "the somatotonic component has for the time being taken the upper hand".<sup>56</sup> That is why at present it is often said to be fatalistic. Sheldon himself says, on the contrary, that the aim of constitutional psychology is to teach the individuals to live in harmony with the best potentialities of their own nature.

The aim of constitutional psychology, so far as individuals are concerned, is actually a direct antithesis to what should fairly be called fatalism. The aim is to develop every individual *according to the best potentialities of his own nature*, while protecting him from the fatal frustration of a false *persona* and false ambitions. This is not fatalism, but naturalism. Its end result is to increase, not decrease the individual's opportunities for accomplished living.<sup>57</sup>

I firmly believe that it is this humanistic aim of Sheldon's investigations that has attracted Huxley so much and so lastingly. Huxley has been looking for a philosophy of life which would change the cyclical pattern of destruction and "rebirth" so characteristic of Western history and history in general. He came to think of history and historicalness as of an evil force very early in his development. One of his by no means earliest expressions of distrust of history is the following one.

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<sup>54</sup> *Ib.*, p. IX.

<sup>55</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ib.*, p. 437. Jung, too, thinks, in *Psychological Types*, that our civilization has grown more and more extraverted and therefore unsuitable for introverted people.

<sup>57</sup> *Ib.*, p. 438.

At the present moment of time, the 'historical' is almost unmitigatedly evil. To accept the 'historical' and to work for it is to co-operate with the powers of darkness against light.<sup>58</sup>

At the same time he felt certain that the direction which Western civilization has taken — of large scale reforms and attempts to solve all the problems of humankind by the eternal progress of industry — was one-sided and therefore wrong, and that this development should be tempered by the inner self-development of individuals, by a certain negation of history and a devotion to the timeless ground of all existence, a life philosophy which he has found in some of the Eastern religions. One of Huxley's characters in *After Many a Summer* is made to say that the world we live in cannot become better if men continue to be like what they are now. But the change in every single person that must take place should be harmonized with the type he belongs to. Otherwise no change for the better should be expected. Sheldon's typology was so attractive for Huxley because it seemed to be in harmony with the three ways leading to the delivering union with God mentioned in Bhagavad Gita.

The ways leading to the delivering union with God are not two, but three — the way of works, the way of knowledge and the way of devotion. In the Bhagavad-Gita Sri Krishna instructs Arjuna in all three paths — liberation through action without attachment; liberation through knowledge of the Self and the Absolute Ground of all being with which it is identical; and liberation through intense devotion to the personal God or the divine incarnation.<sup>59</sup>

The appropriate quotations from Gita follow, after which Huxley says:

The three ways of deliverance are precisely correlated with the three categories, in terms of which Sheldon has worked out what is, without question, the best and most adequate classification of human differences.<sup>60</sup>

In *Time Must Have a Stop* none of the characters except two, Bruno, and towards the end of the book Sebastian, as his disciple, ever embark on the way of deliverance, and that is why the world has begun a new cycle of destruction, a new war. But the book does not end on a fatalistic note, because this possibility of deliverance from selfhood and egotism, as shown in the examples of Bruno and Sebastian, is not destroyed, but is there everpresent in the fact that time as opposed to timeless transcendence, the Absolute Ground,

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<sup>58</sup> A. Huxley, *Ends and Means*, see note 18, p. 69.

<sup>59</sup> A. Huxley, *The Perennial Philosophy*, see note 47, p. 170—171.

<sup>60</sup> *Ib.*, p. 171.