

A ‘Critical Psy’ Perspective on Covid, Part II:

Dr Bruce Scott is interviewed by Richard House

Editor’s Note: The first part of this interview appeared in *Self & Society*, 49 (2), 2021, pp. 63–70.

RH: It’s interesting how this ‘mental healthism’ question that you’ve been discussing came into a conversation I had with a friend just last night (as I write), Bruce – that in the technocratic dystopia to which some think we might be headed, a new article by historian Richard Ramsbotham (2021), that picks up on themes in *Brave New World*, writes of how there will be an obligation, even an *imperative* to be happy – and they’ll very likely have a job ready for you if you aren’t! Such a worldview fundamentally misunderstands and misspecifies what it is to be human, vulnerable and mortal in an intrinsically uncontrollable world – though the latter existential reality doesn’t seem to bother the technocrats.

I really like your phrase, ‘solutions to the problems of life through cheap miracles or solutions (man-centred, technical) which ultimately deceive and delude’; and your adjective ‘man-centred’ I think alludes to the fact that there’s a story about *patriarchy* to be told here, too (e.g. Kashtan, 2020). And re ‘people can be shipwrecked by psychotherapeutic cultish dogma’ – I think I’m referring to something similar in my notion of the ‘Professionalised Therapy Form’ (House, 2003). I love your statement that ‘what is occurring in the here and now, existentially... transcends theory’. This is exactly what my first counselling trainer, Tony Storey, used to say – with delicious paradox, he called it ‘disciplines of ignorance’. And Freeman

(2000) has a lot to say on this, too (see also Craib, 1987). Oh, how therapy as a praxis desperately needs this kind of thinking!

I’m really interested in what you say about the political left predominantly ‘blindingly adopt[ing] the cultural hegemony of mental health; the psychopathologising of everyday life and a reverence for therapeutic culture’. Self-identifying as being very much on the political left myself, I’ve been increasingly shocked and dismayed by the left’s abject response to the Covid crisis, uncritically lauding a National ‘Health’ Service which in my perception is now predominantly a National *Vaccination* Service and a National *Disease* Service that has been comprehensively captured by Big Pharma and its narrow disease model (House, 2022a, b) – a theme that not long ago would have been a theme ripe for incisive critique from the political left! This leaves me wondering whether the old traditional tectonic plates defining the political ‘left’ and ‘right’ are moving in ways that leave our old left/right ways of thinking about these issues moribund, and in urgent need of some fundamental re-thinking. Are you aware of anyone else on the left of the political spectrum who is raising these questions, Bruce?

Also, re ‘People are very willing to allow themselves to be deceived by trickery and illusion’ – again, until the Covid crisis, I hadn’t allowed myself to see this; but I’ve been shocked

and alarmed by the extent of this phenomenon; and ‘intelligence’ (conventionally understood) doesn’t seem to be an antidote to such deceivability. I used to assume that the relevant vector was *intelligent–unintelligent*; but I’m now beginning to think that it’s more like *free-thinking–directed-thinking*. And from many conversations I’ve had and from my own experience, I’m wondering whether *living a screen-free life* (by which I mean no TV and no smartphone) might be much more conducive to the capacity for free thinking. A great research topic there for a creative psychology student!

And perhaps the biggest elephant of all in the room... – ‘our culture is being cultured out of a religious/spiritual worldview’. I realise that the invoking of military metaphors risks embracing a patriarchal narrative – but for many years I’ve been using the term ‘paradigm war’. And in my campaigning work, I’m increasingly finding people saying bluntly, ‘we’re in the middle of all-out war now’. Do you find this metaphor (if metaphor it is!!) at all helpful?

Pick up on whatever you’d like to, Bruce!

BS: First, I think Aldous Huxley’s thoughts on these issues are very helpful. I recently read his *Brave New World Revisited*, which are several essays on different topics. Forgive me for the following long quotes/extract; I think it is helpful to our conversation. He made the interesting point in this book (Huxley, 2005, quoting Eric Fromm **in bold**):

But ‘let us beware’ says Dr Fromm, ‘of defining mental hygiene as the prevention of symptoms. Symptoms as such are not our enemy, but our friend; where there are symptoms there is conflict, and conflict always indicates that the forces of life which strive for integration and happiness are still fighting.’ The really hopeless victims of mental illness are to be found among those who appear to be the most normal. ‘**Many of them are normal because they are so well adjusted to our mode of existence, because their human voice has been silenced so early in their lives, that they do not even struggle or suffer or develop symptoms as the neurotic does.**’ They are normal not in what may be called the absolute sense of the word; they are normal only in relation to a

profoundly abnormal society.... Science may be defined as the reduction of multiplicity to unity. It seeks to explain the endlessly diverse phenomena of nature by ignoring the uniqueness of particular events, concentrating on what they have in common and finally abstracting some kind of ‘law’ in terms of which they make sense and be effectively dealt with.... In politics the equivalent of a fully developed scientific theory or philosophical system is a totalitarian dictatorship. In economics, the equivalent of a beautifully composed work of art is the smoothly running factory in which the workers are perfectly adjusted to the machines. The Will to Order can make tyrants out of those who merely aspire to clear up a mess. The beauty of tidiness is used as a justification for despotism. (pp. 253–5)

Therefore, the rise of a therapeutic/mental-hygienist totalitarianism or despotism is, as Huxley alerts us to, alive and well in our times. One just has to think of the failed ‘Named Person Scheme’ in Scotland, which has morphed into the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) movement. Essentially this is an ideology of the going in at birth/infancy of the child, targeting ‘at risk’ mothers and families, where state knowledge/state intervention is deemed necessary to guide a child into and towards a standardised unity, where diversity is extinguished; targeting a ‘pre-crime’, ideologically speaking. I have written about these issues in the *Scottish Review* (Scott, 2019). But essentially, if we ignore the warnings from the likes of Huxley and don’t heed the lessons from totalitarian pasts and current totalitarian states (e.g. China), we are heading into a dark place. This is especially so in light of the drive of the ACE ideology (with its whiff of eugenics), transhumanism and the desire to link artificial intelligence with biological systems.

I think personally that human civilisation in on a precipice mirroring some dark dystopian science-fiction movie, except it is not a movie any more. A few years ago, I attended the famous (within pre/post-communist Eastern Europe) April seminar of the Lithuanian existentialist psychiatrist and psychotherapist Dr Alexander Alexeychick in Vilnius. There I discussed with colleagues some of the Scottish

government's policies regarding the Named Person Scheme and the Adverse Childhood Experience movement's ideology. One has to remember, these people with whom I discussed these issues had lived under totalitarian communism. My Eastern European colleagues responded to my descriptions of state involvement and ACE ideology immediately as being just like totalitarian communism. It seems some may be ignoring (perhaps deliberately) the lessons of history at our peril. Very worrying.

Regarding my reference to cheap miracles which deceive and delude re 'man-centred', my apologies for not making it clear. I'm not aligning myself with a kind of anti-feminist anti-Derridean pro-phallogocentric enterprise. By 'man-centred' I am referring to man or humankind in the biblical sense. I am not a fan of the feminist idea of an evil patriarchy controlling the world; there are plenty of female leaders at the moment in the world who are adopting and using science and technology and political power for nefarious totalitarian ends (e.g. Nicola Sturgeon, Jacinda Ardern, Angela Merkel etc.). Personally, I think there is good and evil, and the possibility of good or evil can be present irrespective of the sex of the person.

Nicola Sturgeon, for example, supposedly the great feminist, anti-patriarchy champion of Scotland, mandates masks for 4 year-olds in Scotland, despite the evidence that mask wearing is harmful due to children breathing in their own CO₂ exhaled air. She is also responsible for masses of care-home deaths during early 2020. It is monstrous. She is also keen to get all children vaccinated against Covid-19 despite the fact that the vaccine is still in its experimental trial, where the long-term effects are not known, and knowing that the risks of vaccination outweigh the benefits.

Jacinda Ardern is basically giving women in New Zealand an ultimatum; take an experimental vaccine for Covid-19, where the effects on pregnancy and fertility are unknown, or lose your job/be redeployed. Similar support for the Covid-19 vaccines by supposedly feminist female politician in the UK (including Nicola Sturgeon) beggars belief. As I write (in

2021), the yellow card/VAERS/European Medicines Agency data show (according to some scientists) that spontaneous abortion is around 80 per cent in women who have been vaccinated against Covid-19, which is far higher than the normal miscarriage rate.

Moreover, female leaders like Nicola Sturgeon push the extremely medico-scientific mental-hygienist ideology (with the strong smell of eugenics) as exemplified by the Adverse Childhood Movement. But this is only a reflection of the Globalist Agenda 2030 ideology, the new religion; one could argue that this is as patriarchal as they come, but it seems to be embraced by female leaders who claim to be 'feminist', but at the same time put forward the tired 'toxic masculinity' narrative – that it is toxic masculinity that causes the world's problems.

I am not a fan of this confused narrative as it seems to me convoluted, and deliberately so. The anti-man/boy narrative that is present today is something that concerns me greatly. I have written about this a few years ago (Scott, 2018): it is a most divisive narrative that does nothing but drive a wedge between men and women, and the relationships between them. It does not attempt to heal any rifts or difficulties that men and women have; the narrative is fuelled by postmodernist queer theory which, with its aim of interrogating masculinity, gender and sexuality, is a purely deconstructive ideology. It is a very dark ideology, which ultimately is against reproductive futurism, which is the root of queer theory. Many people are unaware that this is so. It is very dark.

Ultimately, there are men and women who are struggling with their meaning and place in this postmodern world. Ultimately, totalitarianism wants to obliterate all difference, to bring in a genderless mono-globalist-culture which, ironically, is blatantly contra the Derridean idea of embracing of difference and diversity – and which of course flies in the face of the very essence of Levinasian warnings of the totalisation of the other. Divisive identitarian politics which critiques of patriarchy put forward, knowingly or unwittingly, are

destroying difference and moving towards violent totalitarian totalisations. The frightening thing is that people fall for it, and cannot see the destruction it wreaks upon civilisation.

We see the anti-man/boy narrative pushed by some attempts to make out that sin is a gendered issue; on the side of men/boys. From a Biblical/Christian perspective, drawing on the works of D.M. Lloyd-Jones (1976), the problem of evil is a genderless issue. Both men and women have to deal with the issue of evil. To portray women as being less troubled by the issue of evil is disingenuous. It is clearly not the case; I have worked with many male victims of domestic abuse (psychological, sexual and physical) where the abuser was a woman. These issues are, contrary to the 'woke' narrative, very real things which often get dismissed or downplayed. They are certainly under-reported and not talked about. I know my opinions on these issues are unfashionable, unpopular and are likely to attract criticism, but I am sure in the fact that the feminist anti-man/boy narrative is not successful in creating a loving mutual respect for difference and co-creativity within our culture and society between men and women. At the very least, it creates the problems it supposedly aims to cure. Yes, I do think that there is work to do between men and women, to heal certain rifts (amongst some people) in this time in history, but positioning men/boys as the 'new witch' is hardly going to heal that rift; I think that is more than clear.

Regarding your point about the political left – yes, I think the left has wittingly, or unwittingly, strayed into the territory whereby they have embraced the cultural hegemony of mental health. The situation is very confused. The cultural hegemony of mental health, or mental healthism, is both promoted by the left to create dependency on the State, and encouraged by those of the right, capitalists, neo-liberals, to create demand/wealth and re-create people as commodities. Highly ironic. I wrote about this several years ago in Spiked online (Scott, 2017). In this latter article I explained how happiness being demanded by the so-called radicals of 'mental health' campaigns buys into the capitalist and neoliberal imperative of the

adapted individual, alienated by the modern metaphysics of the self. Our modern state of being, of becoming increasingly unhappy and distressed (not 'mentally ill', I must stipulate), is no doubt created by economic conditions, but is also a result of the pathological inability to enjoy the myriad of satisfactions offered to purchase, or life statuses we are encouraged and tempted to acquire under neo-liberalism.

Jacques Lacan was very cognisant of the fact that the modern demand for happiness, and the existence of the 'happiness' / 'mental health' industry, implies both the ultimately unsatisfying nature of customer / service user satisfaction, and the symbolic underpinnings (i.e. language) of demand itself, which implies a surplus of excess. Happiness is created and articulated through language, happiness is promised everywhere, but the demand for it overshoots itself, precisely because it is not something that can be 'got' under the terms of neoliberal capitalism; but capitalism and its myriad of marketing and ideological ploys would have you think otherwise.

Even though the left's critique of capitalism re mental health has merit and some validity, they do not get off the hook. It is poorly understood by people who have grown up within the freedom of Western democracies that the leftist/socialist/communistic pushing of a cultural hegemony of mental health or mental healthism has always been a tactic; to subsume people under a monoculture, of creating a culture where only one way of defining experience when it comes to the psyche, so to speak, is allowed. People who have grown up under totalitarian communism in Eastern Europe can understand this more easily. I touched upon this issue in an article I wrote for UK Column earlier this year (2021a) and a YouTube video I recorded (Scott, 2021b). I referred to an article supposedly written by Lavrentia Beria (Chief of the NKVD under Joseph Stalin) titled 'Brain-washing: a synthesis of the communist textbook of politics' (Butler, 1978), an address he gave to students at Lenin University, and which explicates a great deal of the origins and methods of the SPI-B/Behavioural Insights Team/UK government's

psychological tactics, and what is occurring in the UK at present, as I write.

There is controversy about the validity of Beria's authorship of this address, and how the text may have been fabricated by anti-communist Americans to disseminate anti-communist propaganda. Nevertheless, much of the material within the introduction and actual text corroborates other writings; e.g. *New Lies for Old* by Anatoliy Golitsyn, an ex-KGB officer; Christopher Story's *European Union Collective: Enemy of its Member States*, a study in Russian and German strategy to complete Lenin's world revolution; the talks of ex-KGB operative Yuri Bezmenov; Russian dissidents/authors against totalitarian communism like Vladimir Bukovsky and Alexander Solzhenitsyn; the writings of dissidents against communism in Czechoslovakia, like Václav Havel (e.g. *The Power of the Powerless*) and Václav Benda (e.g. *The Long Night of the Watchman*); as well as the personal testimonies of people who described what it was like living under the psycho-political conditions of totalitarian communism – for example, *Stasiland: Stories from behind the Berlin Wall* by Anne Funder, and *Live Not by Lies: A Manual for Christian Dissidents* by Rod Dreher.

Anyway, returning to the aforementioned document (Butler, 1978), Beria states:

Psychopolitical operatives should at all times be alert to the opportunity to organise, 'for the betterment of the community' mental health clubs or groups. By thus inviting the co-operation of the population as a whole in mental health programmes, the terrors of mental aberration can be disseminated throughout the populace. Furthermore, each one of these mental health groups, properly guided, can bring, at last, legislative pressure against the government to secure adequately the position of the psychopolitical operative, and to obtain for him government grants and facilities, thus bringing a government to finance its own downfall.

The standardisation of human behaviour, from a Soviet communist perspective, leading to a mental healthism (or the mental health of the

population dependent upon the State) is backed up from the testimony of Dr Boris Sokoloff in his *The White Nights: Pages from a Russian Doctor's Notebook* (2018). Here it shows why the neoliberal goal of a cultural hegemony of mental health and a leftist/communist mental healthism achieves the same outcome; servitude or slavery to a mono-system:

Russian communism is generally considered to be fighting capitalism – whose defeat is its prime goal. Actually, of course the Soviet regime, being an extreme form of state capitalism, is fighting not capitalism as such but private industry and commerce. But much more important is the fact that neocommunist is a movement directed against individualization and toward the standardizing of all Man's activities. It is the farthest-reaching attempt ever made in this direction. Steadily and persistently, the Soviet regime is driving toward its ultimate goal: control of human behaviour. It states officially that man can transcend his heredity and transform his environment and so achieve full uniformity of behaviour. In this gigantic social and biological experiment, carried out largely through the [mis-]education of children and youth, the Soviets are using the [Pavlovian] conditioned-reflex mechanism on a large scale. They openly declare that this is essential to their purpose, that through such standardization a complete hold over their subjugated peoples can be attained. (p. 293)

Whether one thinks one is coming from the right or the left politically, regarding 'mental health' campaigners we would be prudent to really think about their blind spots and what exactly they are demanding, and what the outcome will be. We should all recall and heed these sensible words from the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan:

The aspiration of happiness will always imply a place where miracles happen, a promise, a mirage of original genius or an opening up of freedom, or if we caricature it, the possession of all women for a man, and of an ideal man for a woman. To make oneself the guarantor of the possibility that a subject will in some way be able to find happiness, even in psychoanalysis, is a form of fraud. (Lacan, 2008, p. 373)

And further, ‘...I would tell that, the revolutionary aspiration has only a single outcome – of ending up as the master’s discourse. This is what experience has proved. What you aspire to as revolutionaries is a master. You will get one.’ (Lacan, 2007, p. 239)

Lastly in response to your question, is there anybody on the left raising these issues? Not that I know of; indeed, I get the impression that much of the mental health world is ensconced in the fiction of a left–right political dichotomy. It is telling that many on the left, who were very vocal at calling out totalitarianism and fascism pre-Covid-19, are muted when governments around the world are now bringing in the most draconian and totalitarian laws. It is very short-sighted and ultimately, the outcome is fascist/totalitarian, however you look at it. Very concerning.

Just one philosopher on the left I can think of is Giorgio Agamben in Italy. He has called out the Covid-19 fascist totalitarianism, but sadly he has been condemned by his own ‘tribe’, so to speak, and/or has been ‘cancelled’ by cancel culture. Very sad. Others on the left like Slavoj Žižek seem to have taken gardening leave when *actual* totalitarianism has reared its head. It is perplexing. The statistics are not too difficult to understand. All-cause deaths in 2020 do not point to anything significant occurring, and the research shows that lockdowns were not a preventative factor; it just seems to have shifted the location/context of deaths to different areas (e.g. death at home rather than in a hospital). Can one assume that the left’s silence regarding the totalitarian Covid-19 policies indicates that they welcome them, as it heralds a kind of digital communism akin to the social credit system in China? It seems so. Pre-March 2020, Boris Johnson was routinely called a fascist by many on the left. Post-March 2020, Johnson’s draconian lockdown policies attract little attention from the left other than that the lockdown policies are not draconian enough! Strange times.

Concerning your point about the culturing out of a religious/spiritual worldview, well, this is a huge topic. All I can point to is the nature of

fallen humankind, from a Biblical perspective. The hubris of the medico-scientific method when it comes to human suffering/mental distress is, from a – let’s say – Biblical perspective, fraught with the dangers of passions, greed, egoistic concerns, narcissism. Within the Covid-19 situation the reduction of life as a bio-hazard, and within the mental-health sphere psychic life as a pathology that science can fix with cheap miracles and even cheaper philosophy, is going nowhere. As James Hillman said, ‘we have had 100 years of psychotherapy and the world is not getting any better’. Perhaps we are going ‘down’, in the Jungian sense, as a civilisation, for an incubation, so to speak, where we can rise from the ashes in time, better, renewed spiritually and psychologically. I hope so. One just has to remember, biblically speaking, and echoed by Gurdjieff, that many people cannot be woken. Many people will be/are lost, and will never awaken. It is tragic, but perhaps in the grand scheme of things this is the geography of our present phase.

To be succinct, yes I think we are in a war. Not the conventional war of previous times, but an information war; a globalist’s war (against ordinary people) who want to create a medico-technocratic totalitarian digital social credit system/society. This is a vision where people will only be allowed to think in one way, live in one way, where everything of the old world, old culture, nations, customs, religion, are being targeted to be deliberately cultured out. It is a war, as it has only a small number of people behind it; big tech, banks, big pharma. It is a war on the people. But because it is global, there is no outside force that can come to the rescue, as in the past (wars). In some respects, this may be the making of humanity, of rising up, of realising its destiny, its worth.

It is a most spiritually enlivening time to be alive; we are presented with the choice of standing by our principles of justice and on being on the side of good, or selling out and siding with evil. Dramatic as that may sound, this scenario has been echoed by eminent scientists, theologians and politicians, so I feel quite comfortable entertaining this; in other words, I don’t feel alone in my concerns and

hopes, but neither do I feel like a conspiracy theorist. The Covid-19 ‘thing’ has, I think, pulled back the veil quite clearly for all to see, or for those who want to see that it is! Again, echoing Lloyd-Jones, I think we are in a battle of good versus evil. I will end here with a quotation from Lloyd-Jones:

Our age is one that has largely ceased to believe in the supernatural at all. This is partly due to the advance of science in its various branches. Man is regarded as the master of his own fate and the determiner of everything.... It is my belief, as I have tried to show in my exposition of the Apostles warnings, that the modern world, and especially the history of the present century, can only be understood in terms of the unusual activity of the devil and the ‘principalities and powers’ of darkness. (Lloyd-Jones, 1976, pp. 5–6)

RH: I love synchronicities, Bruce! The daughter (age 20) of a dear friend of mine recently read Huxley’s *Brave New World* and *Brave New World Revisited*, and was blown away by the searching light those books shine on what’s happening in the world today. And another matching anecdote. In campaigning on the street here in Stroud against lockdown excesses, we have locals come up to our stall who moved to England from pre-1989 Eastern Europe in order to escape from totalitarianism. What they say is equally as chilling as your colleagues in Vilnius: they say, ‘... We moved here to *get away from state-controlled propaganda!* But here, it’s even worse than it was in Communist Poland/East Germany! [or where-ever]: at least in Poland/East Germany, we all *knew* that it was all lies from the State; here, most of you actually *believe* it!’ And in that erstwhile bastion of Western liberal progressivism, New Zealand: many of us were in shock when we recently heard the Health Minister say on live TV that, come the winter, they would ‘hunt down’ (his chosen term) anyone who hasn’t come forward voluntarily for the Covid jab (Anon, nd). No wonder some are even saying that what we are witnessing and currently living through is effectively ‘a global coup’. As you say, Bruce, all very concerning.

You interestingly write of ‘subsum[ing] people under a *monoculture*, of creating a culture where only one way of defining experience when it comes to the psyche, so to speak, is allowed’ (my italics). In another context, I recently spoke of Vandana Shiva’s work on what she terms ‘monocultures of the mind’ (which Denis Postle introduced me to back in the 1990s). Shiva writes:

Monocultures first inhabit the mind. Then as a monoculture takes root, they have a characteristic relation to the world around them.... Monocultures of the mind generate models of production which *destroy diversity and legitimise that destruction as progress, growth and improvement. ... [This leads to] impoverished systems* both qualitatively and quantitatively. They are also highly unstable and non-sustainable systems not because they produce more, but because they control more. *The expansion of monocultures has more to do with politics and power than with enriching and enhancing systems.* (Shiva, 1993, p. 7, my italics)

Interesting to note that Vandana Shiva has been a strong critical voice in the current Covid crisis, not least in her scathing criticisms of Bill Gates and the Gates Foundation.

Two final questions for you, Bruce. First, in your experience, have therapists, counsellors, analysts etc., as a body of professionals, been less or more likely to buy into the mainstream narrative about Covid-19, lockdown, mass vaccination etc.? – or are they about average? I think perhaps the majority of therapists would describe themselves as being on the progressive centre-left and left; yet given what you said earlier about the left’s abject response to Covid-19, I guess we can’t necessarily assume that therapists have, on average, been more questioning of the mainstream Covid narrative than the average person on the street. And if they haven’t, whatever happened to open, critical mindedness, that I assume all good therapists worth their salt need to possess?

And finally, to end on a positive note in these desperate times: you said that ‘there is no outside force than can come to the rescue like in the past

(wars). In some respects, *this may be the making of humanity*, of rising up, of realising its destiny, its worth.’ (my italics) Can you say more about this, and perhaps even locate the Covid phenomenon in the wider evolution of human consciousness? (I thought I’d end with a simple question for you!).

What an undiluted pleasure for me to dive so deeply with such a passionate critical thinker as yourself, Bruce; a heart-felt thank you to you from me and our readers. The final words are yours – pick up on whatever you’d like to.

BS: Interestingly, I was in touch with two friends/colleagues from Lithuania this week, two psychologists. I asked them both about the draconian measures re Covid-19 that have been introduced in their wonderful country. The unvaccinated have been excluded from much of life there; restaurants, museums, inter-city travel (e.g. public transport), and it may extend to access to healthcare. My two friends have polarised views; one felt it was totalitarianism returning to Lithuania (e.g. echoes of Lithuania’s Nazi occupation and the Soviet regime) and extremely sinister; while another felt that whilst he felt like he should feel alarm at what was happening, he did not, and was annoyed at ‘anti-vaxxers’ for preventing normal life from returning. It just shows you how, even with totalitarianism right under your nose (i.e. medical fascism), and having a history of totalitarianism in your home land (the Nazis, totalitarian communism), one can still be seduced into ‘othering’ the other in a very negative way.

What would Lithuania’s famous son, philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, make of his land of birth now, after all that has happened, and is happening, across the world? How can a world leader like New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern, even have the nerve to say that she and her government are the only source of truth, if it does not come from her or the government it is not to be trusted, and for nobody of an anti-fascist persuasion to perk up and get worried? It just shows you how far menticide and schizogenesis (driving people quite mad) re Covid-19 propaganda has gone and

worked on people, even intelligent and educated people. I have written an article about this (Scott, 2021c) discussing the work of Giorgio Agamben, Joost Meerloo and the topic of fascism, totalitarianism, menticide and the schizogenic nature of the propaganda.

With regards to this topic of menticide and schizogenesis, a lot of therapists, of the so-called left, of anti-fascist persuasion, will be of the idea, like Klaus Schwab, that the C-19 situation is a great opportunity to ‘smash capitalism’ and herald in the great utopia they dreamed of. I do think that the Covid-19 phenomenon has had the unintended effect (unintended by the elites) of helping people ‘re-engage’ with themselves and appreciate what is important, and what are the wasteful activities/preoccupations in their lives. However, the Schwabs of this world don’t want the independence or liberties of ordinary people to flourish; they want to make it more difficult for ordinary people to be self-sufficient, to truly be eco-friendly, to live and work locally, to destroy communities and traditions. The only liberty and community will be of the elites; they will own everything and they think they will be happy. I do not see Bill Gates, Boris Johnson or Nicola Sturgeon giving up their homes, land or fancy cars soon – do you? But they will get folk out of rural areas by hook and by crook (e.g. by banning cars, oil boilers, making electric heating unaffordable, making regulations which make small holding difficult etc.), and into smart cities, living off processed laboratory meat shipped from the other side of the world, chipped and pinned like cattle. It is as you said, a method of creating a monoculture, and it is very schizogenic in its ethos.

Hannah Arendt described totalitarianism as the attempted transformation of human nature itself. I think this is what we are seeing. The elites want to transform human nature, human life and how we live it, into a monoculture, as you describe above. However, this attempted transformation only results in turning sound minds into sick minds. This idea was discussed in great detail by the Dutch psychiatrist and psychoanalyst Joost Meerloo, who studied the mental effects of living under totalitarianism. He wrote in his book, *The Rape of the Mind: The Psychology of*

Thought Control, Menticide, and Brainwashing, published in 1956: ‘... there is in fact much that is comparable between the strange reactions of the citizens of [totalitarianism] and their culture as a whole on the one hand and the reactions of the... sick schizophrenic on the other’ (Meerloo, 1956/2015, p. 117).

One can see menticide being played out in our time. There is the blatant cognitive dissonance of many with regard to the medical fascism, ‘othering’, the destruction of civil liberties and freedoms and bodily autonomy. How such a totalitarian monoculture operated was described by Czeslaw Milosz in ‘The captive mind’, describing how totalitarian communism seduced intellectuals and elites in Poland. Many ‘elites’ in Poland bought into the totalitarianism and operated in a kind of schizoid state, whereby they would come to actually believe the lie. This is the effect of totalitarian propaganda, menticide, brainwashing leading to the schizoid sick mind. What we see with so called anti-fascist/totalitarianism therapists buying into the Covid-19 propaganda is akin to what occurred in Milosz’s time.

Just think of another real example; the much-celebrated Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone De Beauvoir, who both romanticised socialism/communism and praised the Russian idyll of communism. Later in life, they requested a meeting with Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who had written the ground breaking *Gulag Archipelago*, which showed the reality of totalitarianism in Russia; it was a far cry from a utopia. Solzhenitsyn refused to meet Sartre and De Beauvoir as he felt their delusions about the Russian ideology were ethically and morally bankrupt.

Towards the end of their lives, Sartre and De Beauvoir realised that they had taken the wrong path in their thinking, and were devastated with their misguidedness. I think a lot of so-called anti-fascist types, therapists supposedly against totalitarianism, those of the left and from the intelligentsia who have embraced the ‘new normal’ of Covid 1984, will eventually come to have experiences similar to that of Sartre and De Beauvoir.

I think history has shown how easily seduced people are by power and authority. From a religious standpoint – and I say this as somebody who is about to embark, as I write, on a course of study in theology – we can say that man is fallen. If man is fallen, we have to be vigilant about the powers of evil. The problem with a pure humanism, with man (in the Biblical sense, humankind) as God, is that it gives people a sense of security in the power of their ‘reason’ or ontological certitude. I think we have to return to Levinas here, and to recognise his ethical postulate; that to totalise the other, or a whole society, is a gross violent totalisation of the other and contra a religious sensibility (Levinas was a Jew). We, as Levinas warned, forget this ethical postulate at our peril.

I think many people are in a state of forgetfulness. But, I believe, as it is a war of good versus evil, this will in time bring out the best in humanity. There will be casualties, psychologically, spirituality and physically, but we can already see the signs where people are coming together as not seen for a very long time. The way I see it, we in the West have had it very good for many decades. Nothing really much has occurred – well, not at least in terms of the scale of the Covid 1984 challenge. This challenge of Covid 1984, a battle between good and evil, will bring out the best in us.

Let me end our conversation with a quotation from Ephesians, as discussed in the wonderful book by D.M. Lloyd Jones, *The Christian Warfare*:

Ephesians 6:10–13

The Whole Armor of God

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

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