

Preface

My psyche is not a series of states of consciousness that are rigorously closed in on themselves and inaccessible to anyone but me. My consciousness is turned primarily toward the world, turned toward things; it is above all a relation to the world.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty
Phenomenology of Perception

Autobiography has an honorable place in the history of psychology. Already in 1930, Edwin Boring and Carl Murchison asserting the importance of the study of history for the discipline recommend that individuals who greatly influenced the discipline as well as individuals on the fringe should put into print their personal histories as these bear on their professional careers. Fifty years later, T. S. Krawiec maintains that autobiographies, although not truly history, do offer a personalized account of psychology, and that the wisdom of the elders can be shared with the reader, because each contributor, in his or her own characteristic mode, is dedicated to the profession, and so as model inquirers of psychological science offer us a personalized account of psychology.

What is challenging to the autobiographer is to locate his or her life within the larger context of history, of the traditions that embed his or her life. Doing so is challenged not merely by the contingencies in the course of their individual lives but by the very manner in which they try to orient themselves relative to the historical context. It is from within the historical horizon that a biographer attempts to center him or herself so as to enable the possibility of an autobiography contributing as a scientific document to the history of science. The biographer as a prospective autobiographer must characterize an objective context, a consciousness unbounded in every which way, but retain a depiction of the self as the point of intersection if the work is to be autobiographical. To the extent that the historical context can be articulated such that the biography of the self is an expression and contribution to historiography, to that extent is the autobiography a contribution to the history of science.

For autobiography is of interest only if readers recognize themselves in autobiographical accounts. Not primarily sympathetically, of course, however intriguing the life recounted in the autobiography, but to the extent that a presentation of the self opens up an understanding of history through the significance of the autobiography.

Autobiography ought to attempt to write the self such that its depiction sheds new light, as a form of historiography, on the course of history. Only in this sense can autobiography challenge and illuminate another reading of entrenched traditions. Autobiography constitutes the kind of historiography, an encounter with ourselves, that enables a renewed understanding of the history of the discipline and a counterpoint to the science that cannot be readily disclosed.

Autobiography necessarily finds its limit insofar as historical movements find their point of intersection in individuals, and to understand oneself in relation to these movements, one has to move outside oneself into the social and cultural traditions that characterize those movements. Autobiography enables us to read the individual's perspective of their life course as it elevates the significance of that perspective within a historical context making this significance both less certain and freeing the reader from the particularities of the autobiographer's life course. One searches here for the distinction between a reflective consciousness of one's life course, and a reflective consciousness of one's place in, and contribution to, the intellectual course of one's life. The biographer of the self relies on his or her reflective understanding of their experience but always in terms of categories that emerge in their reflection on life as constitutive of their professional life as they have lived it. The categories that frame the course of one's life are those wherein one locates oneself in the historical course of the science. Retrospectively, the significances uncovered in reflecting on one's past are always excessive beyond their individual meaning, value, and purpose, and to grasp the coherence among the events in one's life – as one's yearning for wholeness – one is thrown back unto discourses of traditions in which these significances play a role in understanding one's place in the larger social historical context. Autobiography is then a reconstruction of one's place in the larger social-historical order reliant on the discourses of traditions lived and received.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty reminds us that articulation of one's place invites us to rethink and reorient our image of wholeness relationally, as emerging from the relation between self and world embodied in action. This concern with wholeness is crucial in the contemporary context of increasingly specialization and fragmentation of perspectives, as well as the totalizing tendencies of the discipline that have made the individual superfluous even as reality is a consensus of instrumentalities. Wholeness is also a concern of the biographer whose depiction of the self is inseparable from questions of autonomy and responsibility and inevitably proves to be dependent on the language of traditions. This sense of personal wholeness becomes even more telling in a discipline, which putatively takes as one of its tasks to question ascriptions of responsibility and autonomy. Merleau-Ponty among so many others has cogently argued for a dispossession, or marginality, of the self as expressive of the wisdom embodied in traditions that are the background to any and all efforts to find one's place. Dispossession here captures the otherness of traditions and so our engagement with traditions that exemplifies an aura of receptivity expressive of our freedom in relation to the world.

Merleau-Ponty writes of embodiment as a tension between two unattainable wholenesses. The wholeness of a seemingly unmediated experiential ground upon

which reflection proceeds, concrete yet mediated, and the wholeness of ideality, language, symbolization, and expressive activity giving voice to the possibility of ideality. Embodiment is living the tension between two promises of wholeness in a broken world. In a way, writing oneself in finding one's place within traditions aims to overcome this tension and to recover the wholeness that is broken. If the wholeness of ideality is a reflection premised on the wholeness of the body, Merleau-Ponty recognizes this premise as one of tradition and institutionalization that cannot be redeemed, and hence the tension between the unattainable wholenesses remains in our every effort at reconciliation. The embodied self remains a mysterious hinge between the speaking-perceiving subject and the historical world wherein the yearning for wholeness is always situated within traditions orienting our individual and communal lives.

Orienting ourselves within traditions is necessarily a dispossession of self yielding, on reflection, a sense of marginality, which is simultaneously a creative resistance to and an affirmation of our collective humanity in yearning for wholeness, openness, and wonder. The challenge of the autobiographer is to recover traditions, lived and thought, without which we should be unable to configure our participation in creatively and critically thinking the ideality of knowledge. Creativity is here the pivot of traditions and the aspiration for wholeness; it is the tension of participating in traditions and engaging in formulating our understanding of the world. Marginality is living and thinking on the borders; undoing the normative in life and thought and of affirming what is meaningful in an alienated world.

In asking our contributors, representing two continents and four countries, to tell of their personal and professional life course in relation to the history of the discipline, I requested that they locate themselves within the discipline such that the reader is given to understand something of the formative power of both. This task demands that the autobiographer knows something of the historical objects, their connectedness and coherence, which characterize these as productive forces exhibiting the development of the discipline. Our contributors understand the discipline in a particular way, as having determinate possibilities, and find themselves as contributors to and participants in a discipline, marginalized, sometimes profoundly, from its various intellectual traditions. To the knowledgeable reader, this will come as no surprise; indeed, it is of their remarkable and yet marginal status in the discipline that our contributors were selected and agreed to contribute to this volume.

It is not my place to retell their contributions yet a couple of reflections are in order not on their contributions but on the contributors' inclusion in this volume. Our contributors take their departure from a strong sense of the "psychological" as belonging to their lived experience both within and outside the discipline. Their thinking about psychology has much to do with what psychology has to offer our understanding of life in living it. There is an equally strong sense that the discipline's self-understanding, in its proffered schools, theories, and explanations, is subject to the intuitions of the life nexus of our contributors. It is from within this life nexus that they find themselves marginalized, and marginalize themselves, in formulating their view of the discipline as a systematic and historical endeavor. In recounting their marginality, opposition, "go it alone," they do so in relation to

the hegemony of the discipline's scientific-technological institutionalization, so as to preserve something of the intimations of how things become meaningful at all, not in doing but in thinking and living.

This volume was an extraordinarily long time in the making. At the urging of my friend Bob Rieber, I wrote a proposal for the project and we agreed on a list of potential contributors in 1999 and publishing arrangements were formally in place in 2002. In between, Kurt Danziger, Andy Giorgi, and Joe Rychlak had agreed to participate and submitted manuscripts within a year or so. The manuscripts by Erika Apfelbaum and Robert Rieber, whom I convinced to contribute, came later and went through several revisions. David Bakan's contribution came together once I received the letters and notes, which were in Bob Rieber's possession, and Fred Weizmann agreed to fill in David's last years. Carl Graumann was the last to join our contributors and was eager to revise and elaborate his recently completed German autobiography for a North American readership. Remarkably, all our contributors honored the spirit of our proposed theme: to write oneself into the history of the discipline. The contributions vary considerably in length and an editorial decision was made, given that the proposal aspired to seven contributors and a reasonable length volume, to honor the contributors' judgment of length. Moreover, the authors were granted considerable leeway in to their use of references and citations.

David Bakan died in 2004. As noted above, his contribution is largely based on letters and notes he provided in reply to several questions first posed to him by Robert Rieber, more than a decade ago. The two had been friends for years, and Robert had planned to preserve something of David's rather unconventional career as a psychologist years before the present volume was conceived. Eventually, David agreed to participate as a contributor to this volume but the care of his wife, Minnie, prevented him from reworking his extensive notes. I formatted the letters and notes made available by Rieber, and Professor Fred Weizmann, Chair of Psychology at York University, and David's friend and colleague for many years, contributed materials on David's later years at York. Both Professors Weizmann and Rieber read the final version of David's autobiography.

Carl Graumann accepted my invitation to contribute to this volume just as he had completed his German language autobiography in 2004. He had planned and was working on an extensive revision when he died in 2007. His contribution is a revision of his German language autobiography with some additional notes completed prior to his death and added by his wife Professor Lenelis Kruse. Lenelis Kruse and I are grateful to Professor Raleigh Whiting, Professor of Modern Languages, and Associate Dean of Arts at the University of Alberta for his very fine translation of Carl's autobiography. The task of translation is a demanding one, and Professor Lenelis Kruse read with enthusiasm the final English translation of her husband's manuscript.

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