

The Biophysical Basis of Sociopolitical Thought

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Introduction

Baker, in *Man in the Trap*, provides us with clues to an understanding of sociopolitical thinking. He states that defenses can be of two types: muscular and intellectual. In the former case, contact with the biological core is present, although perception of it may be diminished or distorted. Muscular defenses predominate over intellectual ones. In the latter case, core contact is weak or even absent and intellectual defenses predominate over muscular armor (1:154). This is a descriptive distinction and does not provide an understanding of the bioenergetic basis for the difference.

Baker categorizes individuals on the sociopolitical spectrum according to the way they think: the conservative's use of muscular defenses is somehow related to his core contact. Although his thinking originates from the biological core, it is distorted as it passes through armor. The liberal's use of the intellect as a primary defense results from diminished core contact and he predominantly depends on his intellect to understand the world about him. He functions more from his head and less from his "gut."

However, the question of the specific biophysical basis that accounts for the difference in the thinking of conservatives and liberals remains unanswered. It is not sufficient to account for these differences by categorically assuming that conservatives use muscular defenses and liberals use intellectual defenses. Clearly, conservatives are capable of employing their intellect as a defense in their sociopolitical thinking, but they cannot do so as effectively as in the case of liberals. Also, clinical experience with medical orgone therapy of the two types reveals that, in addition to their intellectual defenses, liberals often have a great deal of muscular armor. Nevertheless, to the trained and experienced observer, the biophysical difference in the pattern of armor of conservatives and liberals is most often unmistakable.

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to understand the biophysical basis of thought itself. This subject will be discussed in detail in another context. Suffice it to say here that thoughts originate from sensation and emotion which are heterogeneous variations of the perceptual function (Equation 1) 1. Since sensation and emotion are

heterogeneous functions, they can transform into each other.



Equation 1

It is through the perception of radial movement of bioenergetic excitation that we experience emotion. It is through the perception of longitudinal movement of bioenergetic excitation that we experience sensation. 2 See Figure 1.

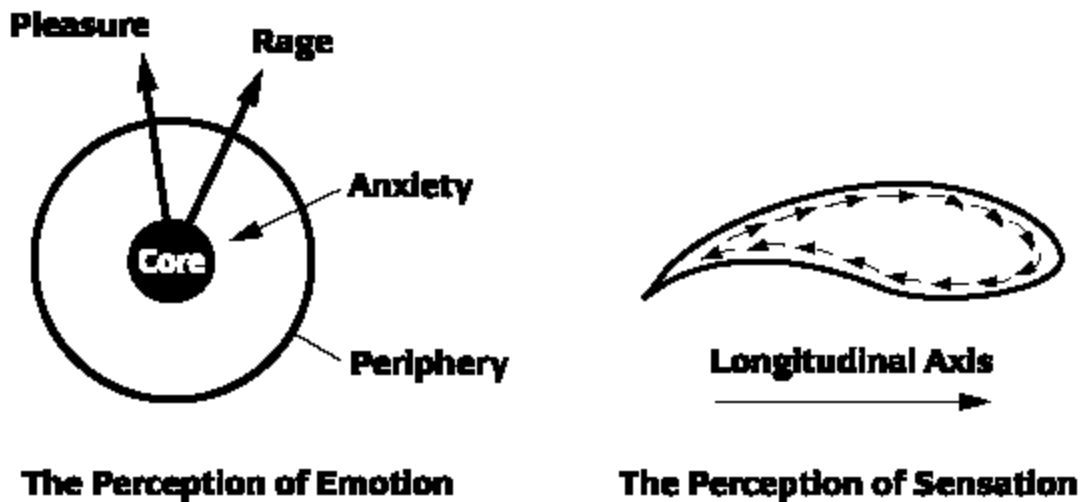


Figure 1. The Direction of Energy Excitation Accompanying the Perception of Emotion and Sensation

The perception of thoughts that are experienced in the brain originates from these two separate sources within the body.

The radial movement that gives rise to emotion is pulsatory (core-periphery). Its motor and sensory components flow through the autonomic nervous system (ANS). The longitudinal movement is in the form of a spinning wave motion of orgone energy. **3** It corresponds to the dorsal flow of energy through the sensory fibers of the central nervous system (CNS).

The classification of an individual on the sociopolitical spectrum appears in large part to be determined by which component of thought, radial or longitudinal, predominates. In conservatives, the radial component (emotion) predominates over the longitudinal component (sensation). The predominant source of excitation for their thinking originates in the vegetative centers in the biological core. These centers are located in the tissues of the autonomic nervous system. This accounts for the presence of core contact in their thinking and is the reason that muscular defenses predominate in conservatives. The use of this form of defense occurs because energy moving radially from the core to the periphery must pass through the voluntary musculature. In liberals, thinking originates primarily from the perception of the longitudinal component of energy movement. Since this movement corresponds to excitation moving from sensory nerves of the central nervous system to the brain, this accounts for their predisposition to use intellectual defenses. The biological core is not a major part of this system and therefore core contact with the voluntary musculature is either weak or absent. In extreme cases, those on the sociopolitical extremes, the transformation of emotion and sensation into each other is complete.

According to the convention of orgonometry all natural functions develop to the right and the direction toward the common functioning principle of functions is to the left (see Figure 2).

From an orgonometric perspective, those on the political right tend to think in the left direction, and those on the political left tend to think in the right direction:

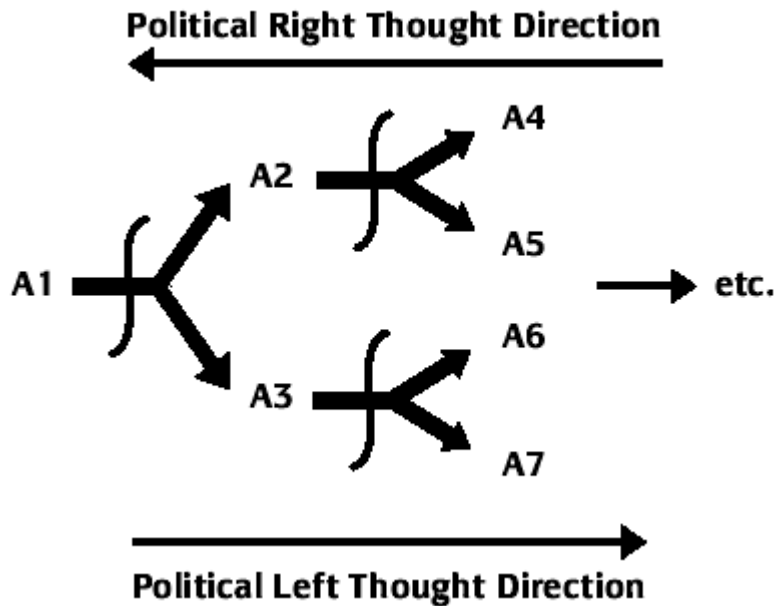


Figure 2. The Direction of Political Thought

The reason for this difference is that the conservative's greater degree of core contact gives rise to thinking that is in the direction of unifying principles. Conversely, the liberal's lack of core contact leads to thinking in terms of greater complexity and specialization without unifying or integrating principles. **4** Because of armor the pre-dominating form of thought is used defensively over the other. These differences do not become apparent until the individual engages in sustained thought (reasoning), as exemplified by ideological thinking.

The Exception that Proves the Rule

For a long time I was doubtful of the validity of this formulation because I believed that there were liberal individuals who had strong emotions which would be, as in the case of conservatives, a source for their thoughts. Then, one day, it suddenly dawned on me that the feelings of liberals were actually derived not from emotion but from sensation and that the emotional component from the core was weak, if not entirely absent. The thinking of liberals derived from bodily sensations often gives the appearance of originating from their emotions. The source of confusion is in the word feeling, which pertains not only to emotions but also to sensations as well as ideas. The feeling of liberals is better described as sentimentality, a term that has the qualities of affectation,

excessiveness and, at times, even mawkishness (defined as having a faint sickly flavor, slightly nauseating and insipid). A good example of this kind of expression is contained in the popular song "Feelings" which superficially gives the appearance of emotional expression. However, when listened to carefully it is clear that the lyrics originate more from the intellect than from the emotions.

Pity, a feeling with a weak emotional component, is held in high esteem by liberals, especially when it is directed toward certain preferred underclass groups. Bertrand Russell, a classic example of a liberal character, believed that the three most important activities in life were love, work, and pity (feeling sorry) for suffering humanity. Guilt and shame are other feelings that have both an emotional and a sensory component. 5 Since these feelings are anchored in the skeletal muscles, liberals have poor contact emotionally with their guilt and shame. They are therefore more likely to assuage their guilt feelings by acting out in the sociopolitical arena. Because liberals identify with the psychopath (antisocial character), they do not perceive the lack of shame or guilt of the psychopath. Although conservatives have just as much guilt as liberals, they are in better contact with the emotional component of guilt and are therefore less prone to act out. Instead, they deal with it in their personal lives as, for example, in their practice of religion.

The Origin of the Differences in Sociopolitical Thought

Baker again provides clues as to the genesis of the differences in the process of thinking between liberals and conservatives (1:170).

The modern liberal lives almost entirely in his intellect. His brain is the substitute for genital potency; it gives him a basis for feeling superior, much as the phallic character uses his erect penis to feel superior. The liberal pierces everyone around him with his sharp brain. In place of phallic contempt, the liberal uses intellectual contempt, arrogance and clever verbal castration.

While conservative sociopolitical thinking originates from the distorted perception of frustrated genital impulses originating from the biological core (emotions), the sociopolitical thinking of liberals originates from the shift of energy (frustrated genital impulses) from the pelvis to the brain. This shift results in the transformation of emotion into sensation. It can be written organometrically as follows:



The individual's sociopolitical character is set early in life. I have seen examples of sociopolitical thinking and behavior in preadolescent children.

These disturbances are not limited to the sociopolitical arena. They extend into many areas of the individual's life.

Religion

There are striking qualitative differences in the manifestations of religious mystical experience as they are observed from the different sides of the sociopolitical spectrum. It is from these experiences that the qualitative differences in religious mystical thought are derived. There is a preponderance of one source of thought (emotion or sensation) over the other:

- Where the radial component (emotion) predominates, individuals are attracted to conservative, orthodox or fundamentalist sects.
- Where the longitudinal component (sensation) predominates, individuals are attracted to the liberal sects. Examples include the liberal persuasions of Judeo-Christian religions, Buddhism and other Eastern religions, and New Age religions, etc.

Popular Music and the Arts

From the standpoint of sociopolitical characterology, popular musicians and artists and their audiences can be roughly divided into two general types. The musical tastes of the political right tend toward popular religious music (i.e., "Christian music"), classic country music, and mainstream music of past decades ("oldies"). This music contains a certain amount of genuine emotional expression and sometimes has real depth. It has the ability to stir the listener from within.

Pop music from the political left, the predominant music preferred by today's masses of youth, consists of sounds externally impressed on the listener. It is usually harsh and

often vulgar. It appeals because it excites the senses and not the emotions, and therefore deserves to be called "sensational." 6 Harsh sounding, offensive and distracting in its most extreme form (rap music for example), it is often little more than repetitive sounds mechanically bombarding the senses of the listener. There is no evidence of beauty in the quality of musical sounds nor is any intended. 7 Much of what passes for art today is also the product of individuals who are on the political left. It is often created to shock or titillate.

The social consequences resulting from these various forms of distortion help to further polarize society into opposing ideological camps. The effect is to produce uniformity in feeling and thinking in each group, liberal and conservative alike.

Conclusion

There are two energetic components that give rise to thought- emotion and sensation. Accordingly, people usually fall into two general categories. Those whose thinking is derived primarily from the perception of the radial component of energy movement (emotion) lie to the right on the sociopolitical spectrum. Those whose thinking is predominantly derived from the perception of the longitudinal component (sensation) lie to the political left. The two components can occur in any combination. In healthy individuals emotion and sensation are perceived with equal intensity. Since neither function in the service of defense, emotion, sensation and intellect are in harmony.

Footnotes

1. Although this equation deals exclusively with the perceptual function at the most complex level of organismic integration, in which it is the common functioning principle of emotion and sensation, functions identical to emotion and sensation occur at all degrees of biological integration from the simplest to the most complex levels. For example, pleasure and anxiety can be perceived on the level of individual cells (somatic perception) or on the level of the whole organism(psychic perception).
2. The autonomic nervous system constitutes the physiological basis for the perception of emotion. The central nervous system constitutes the physiological basis for the perception of sensation.

3. The spinning wave consists of the wave and the pulse function. Evidence will be provided showing that the wave and pulse functions are structuralized in the axon and the cell body of the neuron, respectively.
4. An example is the standard method of classification of psychiatric disorders of the American Psychiatric Association, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM IV), which relies exclusively on symptomatic criteria and ignores the patient's underlying characterological diagnosis.
5. Guilt is based on the perception of inhibited rage held in the voluntary muscles. Liberals do not perceive guilt because of poor contact with their core. Although liberals have muscular armor, one has the impression that they are not grounded "in their muscles" (2). Their energy is drawn upward into the brain. The origin of muscular armor in liberals appears to be the result of blockage of the longitudinal (sensory) movement of energy, rather than blocked radial (emotional) movement from the core. In the conservative, feeling sorry is a reaction formation to ward off awareness of the rage.
6. Music on the left approaches emotional expression only by being sentimental. Music on the right, especially if performed by mystical musicians, can also be sentimental. The fact remains, however, that music on the right does express emotions of varying degrees of depth while that on the left relies on sensation.
7. The effect of liberalism on today's culture has also degraded the quality of classical music. Classical musicians today are far less emotionally expressive in their performances than those of forty years ago and before. This can readily be appreciated by comparing recordings of the great artists of the past to those of today. Also, the preference of many of today's musicians to use period instruments over modern ones is a sign that they are more interested in the sensations produced by the music than the emotional expression.

References

1. Baker, E. *Man in the Trap*. Princeton, NJ: ACO Press, 2000. (Originally published in 1967 by Macmillan, New York.)
2. Crist, P. In a personal communication.