

A KNOWN WORLD:
AN ANALYSIS OF DEFENSES IN ADAM SMITH'S *THE THEORY OF MORAL*
SENTIMENTS

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ABSTRACT

One of the essential elements for the human transition from a natural unreflective state to the conscious implementation of a moral structure is a psychological defense system. This leads us to analyze the psychological defense system that Adam Smith employs in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (TMS). The defense structure creates a knowable world, which we have termed as “known world”. By a known world we mean a world in which consensual rules are implemented and followed by all people creating a stable system. Thus the known world is a system that allows the implementation of a moral structure. Smith’s primary defensive structure is composed of the rationalization of his positions, the moralization of the rightness of his position and the rational intellectualization of his positions. These are all methods that allow for the separation (or splitting) of thought from affect. In addition, he carefully and exactly displaces anger according to his moral structure on to the proper objects of resentment. This type of displacement also requires both repression and suppression of affective impulses in order to accomplish displacement. All of these strategic defensive arrangements make possible the structure of his known world. In this paper, we argue that a system of defenses is necessary for the creation of Smith’s moral structure. This system of defenses in the TMS like any other defensive system has both strengths and limitations. Its strengths facilitate the structure of the moral system that Smith promotes, and its limitations exclude creativity, change, dynamism and spontaneity.

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper will examine Adam Smith's path breaking work in moral philosophy, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, heretofore referred to as TMS. Adam Smith's legacy was tied to the Scottish Enlightenment and French and American Enlightenments. Adam Smith's TMS created a bedrock for a moral and ethical structure. The TMS won him high praise from Hume, Burke and Kant. Smith's system was seen as a giant step forward and was the product of the age of enlightenment in the 18th century Scotland (Griswold 1999). Smith's work is a promulgation of the great themes of the Enlightenment. The TMS puts forward ideas that attempt to free us from war and faction, repressive institutions and especially religious institutions. His moral philosophy was very explicit about the correct attitudes of human behavior, took to task what was seen as the prejudicial and dogmatic assumptions about culture, social hierarchy, freedom and religion. He contended that modern liberty requires moral virtue not wisdom. Thus it is not built upon philosophical reason, but a doctrine of moral emotions. The TMS "is a book that seeks to show that "sentiments" (also termed "passions of emotions") can suffice for morality, virtue, liberty and in general for a harmonious social order. We are creatures of these passions. Smith seeks to understand and justify the passions as a basis for decent ethical life. The passions are not exclusive of reason, but as a basis for human life they displace "theoretical pursuits such as philosophy." (Griswold 1999, 14).

In his TMS, Smith explores the social, economical and political conditions of a moral society and its historical development as part of the process of civilization, laying out a blueprint for the moral foundations of modernity. Based on observations of human behaviour, he argues that human beings are by nature disposed to take an interest in other people's well-being even if their own utility is not affected by it. (Fricke, 2011, p. 3-4)

The development of Adam Smith's system of ethics and moral structure is based on what he calls sympathy. In modern lexicon probably a better way of understanding his use of the word is to substitute the word empathy. According to Smith sympathy is "our fellow feeling with any passion whatever." (p.13) Sympathy is considered as one of the principles of human nature

which interest people “in the fortune of others”. Even the greatest “ruffian” is not without it. Smith’s argument is that “sympathy” is the process that allows us to build morality.

Smith begins to develop his idea of sympathy by employing the characters of the actor and the spectator. In the TMS an actor and the spectator seek harmony because they get pleasure from the correspondence of their sentiments. In other words, the actor and the spectator seek harmony with each other’s emotions due to mutual sympathy. Smith prescribes actions that merit the impartial spectator’s approval. The desire for approval leads the actor to adopt those actions. The actor also acts with a sense duty by applying the same rules to himself. What is virtuous in this system is clearly defined. Actors aim to have the “temper, tone and tenor” of conduct that would be approved by the impartial spectator. The presence and interaction of the spectator with the actor, which approves or disapproves the actor’s passions, creates the behaviors that become the moral structure.

We argue that for a person to go from an unconscious unreflective state that seeks sympathetic interactions and approval from others to a more deliberate consensual morality, it is necessary to employ psychological defenses. Carrasco (2011) states quoting Griswold (1999) “[the] desire for mutual sympathy is the first motivation for moral conduct or as Griswold says ‘the mid-wife of virtues.’” Analogously we argue that to go from what Carrasco refers to, as “psychological sympathy” to “moral sympathy” necessitates a defensive structure. One of the essential elements to any social and moral structure is a psychological defense system that supports it. We often take it for granted. However, it is a necessary part of human interactions.

It is important to be clear what we mean by a “defense system” for the purpose of this paper. For this we need to refer back to the development of this concept in psychoanalysis and take it forward to our current use of the term for this paper. Within the original context of psychoanalysis, defenses were used interchangeably with the term resistances, and seen as a negative force. In this context, “defenses” were employed by one’s conscious attitude or ego to use the psychoanalytic term, to resist psychoanalytic interpretations and were seen as a negative force to resist treatment (Freud, 1921). By the mid to later part of the 1930’s the work of Anna Freud (1936) and Heinz Hartman (1939) looked to free the ego from an impossibly subordinate role relative to the instincts. Thus they and others began to look at defenses from the perspective

of their necessity for adaptation. Barrett and Yankelovich (1969) described this evolution starting with Anna Freud by saying that she,

“showed the ego and its workings in a new light. Where previously the ego’s defenses had been regarded as obstacles to successful therapy (the defenses were technically regarded as “resistances”) she showed that these resistances were, in fact, highly adaptive at least in their origins. She further demonstrated that ...each individual’s defenses (intellectualization, reaction formation, ego restriction, etc.) were characteristic to his total adaptation to life, forming a distinctive part of his personality.” (Barrett and Yankelovich, 1970, p. 96)

This began an evolution within psychoanalysis that included Ernst Kris (1952), and Erik Erikson (1950) among others that viewed the “defenses” as an important structural component that facilitated human adaptation for human development. These defensive adaptations cover the spectrum from managing the daily life struggles of anxiety and ambiguity on the one hand, to managing deep emotional affect on the other. As a result of this defensive structure, life becomes more manageable and less unpredictable. Depending on the nature of our defensive structure, which becomes a component part of our character structure, we have the advantage of a more manageable life and the limitation that any protective structure brings because it excludes certain experiences. Therefore it can be said that one’s defensive structure is a “compromise” (Freud, 1923).

It is in this light that we use the term “defenses” as a necessary and important structural component to forming an attitude toward life. So when we speak of Smith’s use of defenses in his moral philosophy, we are attempting to analyze the strengths and limitations that are the natural extension of any defensive system. We view defenses as adaptive to a social and moral world.

The content of Smith’s work points to ego (adaptive) defenses that are in the service of ego ideals, what Freud (1923) came to term the super-ego. These super-ego ideals, we argue, are synonymous with Smith’s moral structure. We are applying basic psychoanalytic understanding

of defenses to Smith's elaborate 18th Century theory in order to bring to light the defensive structure that is needed to go from a natural unreflective state to a more ego-ideal based moral structure that Smith advocates.

On that basis we analyze the psychological defensive system that Smith employs in the TMS, his need for a known world; what this known world includes, what it excludes, and what are its consequences. By a known world we mean a world in which consensual rules are implemented and followed by all people creating a stable system. Thus the known world is a system that allows the implementation of a moral structure.

In addition, Smith saw the need for larger social forms to accommodate interactions among individuals. The capacity of individuals to contain the more chaotic aspects of human passion become more and more necessary as their interactions become more complex; particularly the capacity to delay the gratification of instinctual needs and impulses (Freud, 1920). It is therefore necessary to employ defenses that allow us to protect ourselves against the intrusion of inner impulses that would disrupt the social order and defenses which would protect us from the overwhelming influence of others that would also disrupt social order.

Smith's primary defensive structure is composed of the rationalization of his positions, the moralization of the rightness of his positions and the rational intellectualization of his positions. These are all methods that allow for the separation (or splitting) of thought from affect (Anna Freud 1936, McWilliams 1994). In addition, he carefully and exactly displaces anger according to his moral structure on to the proper objects of resentment. This type of displacement also requires both repression and suppression of affective impulses in order to accomplish its purpose. All of these strategic defensive arrangements make possible the structure of his known world.

In this paper, we argue that a system of defenses is necessary for the creation of Smith's moral structure. This system of defenses in the TMS like any other defensive system has both strengths and limitations. Its strengths facilitate the structure of the moral system that Smith promotes, and within that structure it limits individual creativity, change, dynamism and spontaneity.

ANALYSIS OF DEFENSES IN THE TMS

Prior to presenting our analysis we provide an overview of the four fundamental parts in the TMS: propriety of action, merit and de-merit, duty and virtues. We choose these parts because of their fundamental role in creating a known world.

Sympathy, which is described in the part entitled “of the propriety of action”, is the foundation of the entire book. According to Smith sympathy is “our fellow feeling with any passion whatever.” (p. 13) In this system where there is a “spectator” and an “agent” (or actor) sympathy occurs through spectator’s imaginative process. Spectator by putting himself in the actor’s situation forms an idea of how the actor is affected in that situation.

Fellow feeling is closely linked to approval and disapproval, and approval and disapproval form the basis of our sense of morality. We approve of other people’s sentiments to the extent we go along with them. Spectatorship is a crucial component of Smith’s system of sympathy because it is spectators who sympathize. Yet, we might sympathize with someone but not approve of him or her since we can sympathize with almost any passion. Equating sympathy with approval would destroy the possibility of ethical evaluation.

For Smith, all forms of fellow-feeling give pleasure. The agent’s consciousness of the spectator’s fellow feeling for him is a source of pleasure for the agent. Similarly, the spectator’s consciousness of his own fellow feeling for the agent is a source of pleasure for him. Correspondence of sentiments is what gives “another source of satisfaction”. Furthermore, any pains we feel by sympathy is usually outweighed by the pleasure of the correspondence of sentiments. Mutual sympathy, thus, is the source of the actor and the spectator’s search for harmony. Because of the pleasure of fellow feeling both the actor and the spectator work hard to reach harmony of sentiments.

In his discussion in the part entitled “of merit and demerit: or, of the objects of reward and punishment” Smith tells us that an action deserves reward if it is proper and approved of object of that sentiment. Similarly and action deserves punishment if it is the proper and approved of

object of that sentiment. It is gratitude that prompts us to reward and resentment prompts us to punish, and that we would like to be instrumental in rewarding and punishing. The passions of gratitude and resentment are seen as proper if they are approved of. As before, these passions are approved of "...when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them" (p. 81). To sympathize with the gratitude of the person who receives the benefit from the actions of the agent there must be propriety in the motives of the agent. A similar argument holds for resentment.

In the part entitled "of the foundation of our judgments concerning our own sentiments and conduct, and of the sense of duty" Smith discusses duty. Duty is our application of judgments of propriety and merit to ourselves, rather than to others. We approve or disapprove of our conduct in the same manner we do of others' conduct. We wish to examine our own conduct through the eyes of the impartial spectator. In order to attain the satisfaction of gaining the admiration of others we must again be the impartial spectators of our character and conduct. Approbation of others confirms our self-approbation and their praise increases our sense of praise-worthiness. For Smith, the sole principle of our conduct should be our sense of duty.

The part entitled "of the character of virtue" Smith addresses what is virtuous. He says that virtue consists in "the tone of temper, and tenour of conduct, which constitutes the excellent and praise-worthy character, the character which is the natural object of esteem, honour, and approbation." (p. 313). The fundamental virtues for are prudence, benevolence and self-command. "The care of health, of the fortune, of the rank and reputation of the individual, the objects upon which his comfort and happiness in this life are supposed principally to depend, is considered as the proper business of virtue which is commonly called Prudence". (p. 249)

Of benevolence Smith tells us that "...our good-will is circumscribed by no boundary, but may embrace the immensity of the universe". Even the "meanest" as well as the "greatest" man are cared and protected by "that great, benevolent, and all-wise Being, who directs all the movements of nature; and who is determined...to maintain...the greatest possible quantity of happiness". (p. 277)

Self-command is "not only itself a great virtue, but from it all the other virtues seem to derive their principle luster" (p. 284). Self-command is bringing down our emotions to what others

(especially the impartial spectator) can enter into. Self-command is a part of every virtue. However, it is not a sufficient condition for the entirety of virtue. One could have great command over the fear of death. When they are combined with justice and benevolence they are great virtues and increase the glory of other virtues. However, they may sometimes be “dangerous”. “The most intrepid valour may be employed in the cause of the greatest injustice.” (p. 284).

These structural components, sympathy, merit, duty and virtue are the corner stones of creating Smith’s known world. Sympathy is the structural mechanism by which we connect to the other. Because we have mutual sympathy we have the basis for morality. This is the basis for reflection about how we want to be treated and how we want to treat others. The remainder of the sections, duty, merit and virtue, are the rules and character traits that systematically carry out this morality based on sympathy.

Part I: Of the propriety of action

Throughout this section we will discuss the necessary defensive attitudes that are essential to develop the moral structure that are integral to his “know world.” Adam Smith’s system of ethics and moral structure is based on what he calls sympathy. According to Smith sympathy is “our fellow feeling with any passion whatever.” (p.13) Sympathy is considered as one of the principles of human nature which interest people “in the fortune of others”. Even the greatest “ruffian” is not without it. Smith’s argument is that “sympathy” is the process that allows us to build morality.

His conceptualizes the argument by using the characters of the “spectator” and “agent” or actor. The spectator puts himself in the actor’s situation and forms an idea of how the actor is affected in that situation. The dynamic of this interaction between spectator and agent is used throughout the book to illustrate the development of his moral structure. Smith says we put ourselves in the other’s situation because we don’t have any immediate experience of what others feel:¹

¹ Freud (1930) makes an analogous statement. “We shall always consider other people’s distress objectively- that is to place ourselves, with our own wants and sensibilities, in *their* conditions, and then to examine what occasions we should find in them for experiencing happiness or unhappiness.” (p. 89)

Though our brother is on the rack, as long as we ourselves are at our ease, our senses will never inform us of what he suffers. It is by *imagination* only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations. . . . by imagination we place ourselves in his *situation*, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we enter as it were into his body, and become in some measure *the same person with him*, and thence form some idea of his sensations, and even feel something which, though *weaker in degree*, is not altogether unlike them (emphasis added) (pp. 11-12). ²

This quote is an example of how Smith employs splitting as a defense maneuver. Smith splits the extreme affect of torture from the intellectual analysis of the process of sympathy. In so doing he establishes how important splitting is to this human experience. His objectified attitude allows Smith to speculate about morality because he is split off from the dominating affect that torture evokes.

It follows that Smith insists on entering into another person's situation rather than entering to another person's feelings. As Griswold (1999) summarizes, it introduces an element of objectivity, demands a measure of understanding and allows for the explanation of cases where "the spectator sympathizes with the actor even though the actor does not feel the emotions that the spectator thinks he does" (Griswold, 1999, pp. 88-89).

In this context it is also important to point out vision or seeing of oneself and others is important in the TMS (Brown 1994). Rothschild (2010) states that "The experience of moral judgment consists of looking at the inner life; of seeing inside, or seeing which cannot be seen. . . . To have moral sentiments is to have looked at, in as clear a light as possible, at the outside events of life, and to have imagined the life within." (p. 27).

Smith then expands sympathy, saying that it may seem to arise from a view of certain *emotion* in another person. "The passions, upon some occasions may seem to be transfused." (p. 13) He

² The phrase "become in measure the same person with him", or identification with the sufferer, is somewhat ambiguous. Do I suffer what I would suffer if I were in your situation, or do I suffer what you suffer if I were you? Smith initially suggests that I put myself in your situation, taking *my characteristics and person*. (p. 12). Yet later on Smith states that it is not I, who suffers on my account, but "I consider what I should suffer *if I was really you*" (p. 374)

then softens his stance on this matter by saying that this use of sympathy does not hold universally true because we need to know the situation that led to the feelings of the agent. He uses the example of an angry man, saying that such emotion may upset us against him and that anger does not generate immediate sympathy.

Smith gives credence to the emotional experience and at the same time he exclusively evaluates it intellectually. He creates a linear and logical structure that we are terming a known world by splitting the emotional experience from the cognitive structure of morality that he is creating.

Spectatorship is a crucial component of Smith's system of sympathy because spectators sympathize. The spectator is not a real person, but a product of the imagination of the actor. The imagined spectator is another who observes the actor at a *distance*. The existence of an impartial spectator, however, is due to existence of real spectators. Outer people are internalized to construct the inner man. As such the impartial spectator is not a specific member of society. Smith considers the impartial spectator as an inner man. (Broadie, 182) Since the agent is imagining how he would be judged, the judgments he is imagining are his own. The spectator is an introject of the approval and disapproval that occurs as the result of human interaction. It is similar to the Freudian notion of "super-ego." (Freud, 1930)³

"Mutual sympathy" refers to the experience of two people feeling for each other's experience. It is this correspondence of sentiments that gives "another source of satisfaction." Even in the face of painful feelings of others we are pleased when we are able to feel sympathy for them. In modern psychoanalytic parlance, we might call Smith's mutual sympathy an elaboration of the mirroring process between two people, which affirms mutual experiences. Smith saw this type of interaction as bringing pleasure and later on elaborates on this "mutual sympathy" as a further building block of his moral structure.

³ Freud (1930) asserts that "...the community, too, evolves a super-ego under whose influence cultural development proceeds." (p. 141). "The cultural super-ego has developed its ideals and set up its demands. Among the latter, those which deal with the relations of human beings to one another are comprised under the heading of ethics." (p. 142)

Fellow feeling is closely linked to approval and disapproval, and approval and disapproval form the basis of our sense of morality. He is elaborating on the use of “fellow feeling” in the development of moral structure. Because we find pleasure in such fellow feeling and its lack brings pain, approval and disapproval are great but not exclusive sources of motivation. He indicates that even if we sympathize we can disapprove, thus he does not give a sympathetic view of all passions. We approve of other people’s sentiments to the extent we go along with them. Sympathy is not to be equated with approval. Because equating sympathy with approval would destroy the possibility of ethical evaluation and “entail that disapproval amounted to no more than the inability of a spectator enter into the situation of an actor.” (Griswold, 2006, p. 25) Sugden (2002) also rightfully argues that approval that the imaginative identification constitutes is only partial because it is only in this case disapproval is possible.

The actor is continuously interacting with the spectator putting himself in the spectators’ perspective. In this dynamic the actor is seeking the relief, which can be experienced when his affections and the spectators’ are in concordance. This can often result in the actor lowering the pitch of his emotions. As Smith puts it “we...endeavor to bring down our passions to that pitch, which the particular company we are in may be expected to go along with them.” (p. 28) As such there is a premium put on the containment of one’s emotional pitch for the sake of social order. This once again reflects Smith’s bias of reason over passion, which is accomplished by the splitting of, thought and affect. This allows the intellectual rational of bringing down “our passions ...to go along with them.”(p.28)

Actor and spectator seek harmony with each other’s emotions thus replacing the power of the individual by the power of the community.⁴ This is due to mutual sympathy. Mutual sympathy, thus, is the source of the actor and the spectator’s search for harmony. Because of the pleasure of fellow feeling the actor works hard to gain the approval of the spectator. Furthermore the actor desires to avoid the pain of solitude that would come from disapproval. The spectator in turn works hard to approve the actor because of his longing for pleasure of sympathy. The actor works harder than the spectator because the actor’s emotions are related to a real situation,

⁴ Freud (1930) makes an analogous statement. “The replacement of the power of the individual by the power of a community constitutes the decisive step of civilization.” (p. 95) “the characteristic features of civilization remains to be assessed: the manner in which the relations of men to one another, their social relationships, are regulated...” (pp. 94-95)

whereas the spectator's emotions are imaginary. The actor is more invested in the situation and has more at stake than the spectator. Smith goes on to say that it is Nature that teaches spectators and actors to reach harmony. This harmonious world is the moral world, the known world.

Smith's perspective on the passions goes from the personal level from the interplay of the agent and spectator and move on to the development of a larger social structure. When this social structure reaches a critical mass, it then becomes the basis for his social order, and the structure of what in this paper we have deemed the known world.

Smith outlines his elaborate understanding of the human passions that are in need of self-command. Indeed self-command becomes the basis for self-government, and the usefulness of those virtues that support the social order. It can be seen once again how necessary it is for a clear defensive system is to enable the action of self command. The chaos of unbridled passion threatens the self-command that is essential to the personal and collective moral system. Smith clearly discriminates among the expression of certain feelings states. On the one hand he is very open to the acknowledgement of most all aspects of human emotion and feeling states. However on the other hand particularly to the modern reader, he is quite unrestrained with his level of discrimination between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, and is very exacting in his preferences. For example Smith tells us that "We are disgusted with that clamorous grief, which without and delicacy, calls upon our compassion with sighs and tears and importunate lamentations." (p. 29). Similarly he tells us "The insolence and brutality of anger, in the same manner, when we indulge its fury without check or restraint, is, of all objects, the most detestable." (p. 30). On the other hand, according to Smith, "to feel much for others and little for ourselves...constitutes the perfection of human nature." (p. 30)

Smith goes on to demonstrate his differentiation relative to the passions. He defines: passions which take their origin from the body; passions that take their origin from the imagination, such as love; unsocial passions such as hatred and resentment; social passions, such as generosity, humanity, kindness, compassion, mutual friendship and esteem, all the social and benevolent affections; and the selfish passions such as grief and joy.

These passions are discriminated on the basis of his sense of propriety and virtue as they relate to the social structure. Smith argues against what he refers to as the bodily passions such as sex and

hunger. Bodily passions are beneath dignity in their expression and he advocates for a strong level of repression. In his discussion of bodily passions he employs both moralization, and compartmentalization to rationalize his known world. Smith goes as far as to say that while on the one hand we have sympathy with bodily pain, on the other hand if a violent outcry is made from pain he states that the spectator would never fail to despise him. This is typical of Smith's attitude towards all passions that take their origin from the body. He acknowledges it but is against its expression. This is literally repression. In this case he distinguishes what is not acceptable, then he advocates for repression.

He moves on and talks about the passions that derive their origin from the imagination and speaks of love between the two sexes. Even though he acknowledges that love is an important human emotion on the one hand, he takes a strong stand against its expression on the other. Smith further declares that although love's expression might be "ridiculous" and though it might have dreadful consequences, its intensions are not mischievous.

The unsocial passions of hatred and resentment are also derived from the imagination and as with love, he advocates strongly against their expression, seeing them as not being graceful or becoming. He next turns to the social passions of generosity, humanity, kindness, compassion, mutual friendship and esteem, "all the social passions of benevolent affections." These passions please the impartial spectator in almost every occasion. Smith goes on to talk about what he calls the selfish passions of grief and joy. He sees them as neither amenable nor terrible.

Smith acknowledges that we have a desire to be respected and respectable. On the one hand he acknowledges that one way to achieve that is to become rich and powerful, however he also says that "This disposition to admire the rich and powerful and to despise to neglect persons of poor and mean condition though necessary to establish and maintain the distinction of ranks and the order of society is the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments." (p. 72). Here Smith is both rationalizing and moralizing the need for distinction of rank and wealth. On the other hand the other way to become respected and respectable is through the practice of virtue. Smith states that only a select group of people admires others for their virtue, while the mob generally admires people for their wealth and power.

This final section of sympathy continues to shape the creation of the “known world” through its rationalization for a stable social order. He creates this “know world” through the splitting of thought from affect, moralization of the rightness of his positions, the rationalization of his position, and then intellectualizing his overall structure. Starting here with “sympathy,” Smith shows the development of a meticulously constructed, rational structure. Implicit in his system is a desire for social order, stability, propriety and consistency. These are the hallmarks of what we are postulating as a known world. Psychological defenses are necessary to make this structure possible in the face of the fundamental human condition, which includes emotion and irrationality.

From a defensive perspective it is first necessary to separate affect from cognition. This separation is accomplished through rationalization, moralization, and intellectualization. Briefly, he rationalizes the need for the separation of affect from cognition. He then uses extensive moralization to bolster the need to exalt certain passions as virtuous while others are not. He accomplishes his discriminations through a rigorous application of purely intellectual reason. His structure requires (as he in fact indicates) the selective repression of certain emotions such as pain. Smith also uses the displacement of emotion (particularly anger) from one source to a legitimate target. The legitimate target of anger is based on the spectator’s evaluation. Finally as was indicated in the previous text, Smith consigns certain feeling states to a devalued position and associates them with weakness.

Psychological defenses enable the building of his structure. Smith’s defensive system necessarily includes and excludes certain life experience. This exclusion of experience both facilitates his structure and limits its flexibility and application because it eliminates certain aspects of human experience. This also includes the development of a systematic method for a collective morality and structure. In so doing it excludes uniqueness and individual development that fall outside of his known parameters.

Part II: Merit and demerit: objects of reward and punishment

In this section Smith is rationalizing the use of merit and demerit as a means of shaping social behavior. This is the implementation of his rationalized hierarchical values from which reward and punishment are deemed appropriate. He is concerned with “ the beneficial or hurtful nature of the effects which aims at, or tends to produce consists of the merit and demerit of the action, the qualities by which it is entitled to reward or is deserving of punishment.” (22). Merit and demerit are the active mechanisms that govern behavior. In this section Smith provides us the rules of his “ known world” by stating what deserves reward and what deserves punishment. It is gratitude that prompts us to reward and resentment that prompts us to punish, and that we like to be instrumental in rewarding and punishing. The net effect of the ongoing practice of these rewards and punishments is to create a consensual morality practiced by the collective culture and reinforced by the active use of merit and demerit or rewards and punishments.

The objects of gratitude and resentment are seen as proper if they are approved of. As with sympathy, these passions are approved of “...when the heart of every impartial spectator entirely sympathizes with them, when every impartial spectator entirely enters into, and goes along with them,” (p.81). The impartial spectator represents the moral structure that constitutes the proper objects of gratitude or resentment. In Smith’s reassertion of the importance of the impartial spectator we are again seeing the uniformity of his thought across every aspect of his theorizing. He rationalizes the use of punishment and reward to implement this position.

He then compares the virtues of beneficence and justice. On beneficence he tells us the following: “Actions of beneficent tendency, which proceed from proper motives, seem alone to require reward; because such alone are the approved objects of gratitude...” (p. 91) Along this same line the man who does not reward his benefactor when he has the power to do so is also “is guilty of the blackest ingratitude.” (pp.91-92) Also hurtful actions that proceed from improper motives deserve punishment. The motivation for such resentment and punishment is given to us by nature for defense only. Resentment is seen as a safeguard of justice and the security of innocence. Smith is speaking about resentment as a philosophical and societal defense against hurtful actions and injustice on the part of the agent.

The text goes on to address another important virtue in this section, which is justice. Justice is unique from the other virtues. Griswold (1999, p. 228) tells us that justice for Smith is first a social and political virtue, and that it may be extracted by force. The rules of justice are precise; Smith compares them to the rules of grammar. Justice is a “negative virtue” (p. 95) and “only hinders us from hurting our neighbor.” (p. 95) He asserts that retaliation is an important instrument to bring about justice:

“Every man doth, so shall it be done to him, and retaliation seems to be the great law which is dictated to us by nature... The violator of laws of justice ought to be made himself that evil which he has done to another; and since no regard to the sufferings of his brethren is capable of restraining him, he ought to be over-awed by the fear of his own.” (p.96)

Here Smith rationalizes the use of retaliation as a basis for social control. By the use of retaliation Smith endeavors to create guilt and remorse. He points out that remorse plays an important role in adhering to justice: “it is made up of shame from which the sense of impropriety of past conduct; of grief of the effects of it; of pity for those who suffer by it; and of the dread and terror of punishment from the conscious of the justly provoked resentment of rational creatures.” (p. 99) The violator of justice feels “all the agonies of shame, and horror, and consternation.” (p.98) It should be noted that shame is the signal that lets the agent know that he has deviated from a particular moral structure, or the known world that compels the agent to follow the rules of the structure. When looked at this way, Smith is building on what from a psychoanalytic perspective are the component parts of the superego structure.

Smith assumes as one of the basis for his moral/superego structures that one finds indefinite solitude horrifying. This is what keeps someone who has violated some aspect of this structure from fleeing justice by flying away from the social group. “ But solitude is still more dreadful than society...the horror of solitude drives him back to society.” (p. 99) In order not to be left in this situation the agent is compelled to adhere to the rules of the known world.

In contrast to shame and punishment, feelings of being the natural object of love and gratitude, esteem and approbation arise in a man who has performed generous actions. He finds himself applauding himself as the impartial judge would, which is a very agreeable state. There is harmony and friendship that such a person experiences with mankind. All of these sentiments constitute the conscious incorporation of merit. This is also illustrative of how the reinforcement and rationalization of proper behavior is facilitated within the moral structure. Human consciousness and awareness of both the merits and demerits of our actions speak to the internalization of Smith's known world. From a psychoanalytic perspective this constitutes the internalization of a consensual superego structure.

Smith says, "All members of human society stand in need of each other's assistance... Where the necessary assistance is reciprocally afforded from love, from gratitude, from friendship, and esteem, the society flourishes and is happy." (p. 100) There is great value in such harmonious assistance with one another. According to Smith society cannot subsist when members hurt and injure one another. Here he makes a strong case for the self-perpetuating nature of his known world based on the conscious awareness of idealized potential for happiness and social harmony.

He reasserts the necessity and importance of justice to reinforce this harmony and the warning that injustice threatens it: "in order to enforce the observation of justice, therefore, Nature has implanted in the human breast that consciousness of ill-desert, those terrors of merited punishment which attend upon its violation, as the great safe-guards of the association of mankind, to protect the weak, to curb the violent, and chastise the guilty." (p. 101) In so saying he indeed personifies what Freud (1923) came to refer to as the superego.

In this section, Smith is solidifying his moral structure by adding the governing components of merit and demerit. As we indicated in this section the accomplishment of merit and demerit requires the exercise of both moralization and rationalization to justify the use of punishment and reward to reinforce his views on social justice.

Part III. Of the Foundation of our Judgments Concerning our own Sentiments and Conduct, and of the Sense of Duty.

In this section Smith goes into what he refers to as duty, which he sees as the applications of judgments of propriety and merit to ourselves. We approve or disapprove of our own conduct in the same way that we of others. We examine our conduct through the eyes of the impartial spectator. This observation is accomplished by removing ourselves from our immediate situation, viewing our sentiments and motives, and then making judgments about them.

Modern psychoanalytic Kohut (1968, 1971), Winnicott (1971) thinking supports Smith's assertion that interpersonal object relations which bring about "mirroring" are integral to human development. The mirroring of significant others, particularly the mother in early development, is fundamental to how we come to know our genuine or "true" selves. These experiences of ourselves through the eyes of those who are significant to us also help in development of our sense of morality, cultural identity and consensual norms. This mirroring from significant others also conveys a defensive structure that is integral to the personal and cultural norms that are conveyed in these interactions.

Smith talks about the human need for communication with other members of our own species and how as a result such societal interactions shape our perceptions about ourselves. He tells us:

Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, with any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, than of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. All these are objects that he cannot easily see, which naturally he does not look at, and with regard to which he is provided with no mirror that can present them to his view. Bring him into society, and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before.
(p. 129)

Smith sees each human being as inextricably intertwined with others; indeed we are social beings and are only at home in relation to others. We have moral criticism of others and others have it of us. "This is the only looking-glass by which we can, in some measure, with the eyes of other

people, scrutinize the propriety of our own conduct.” (p. 131). The spectator is an analogue of what Freud (1923) refers to as a superego function. Smith focuses on what would be termed the development of the “superego” functions of morality. Thus the known world is created through these interactions, which includes the development of propriety, merit and demerit.

This superego development evolves through the observation and mirroring of significant others. Smith goes on to further assert that not only do we want praise, but also we want to be praise worthy. The approbation of others confirms our self-approbation and their praise increases our sense of praise-worthiness. Smith makes a very strong argument that one of the great motivators is what Freud (1920) later saw in a similar light and termed the “pleasure principal.”

Smith goes on to express strong views about Nature. “ The all-wise Author of Nature has...taught man to respect the sentiments and judgments of his brethren; to be more or less pleased when they approve of his conduct, and to be more or less hurt when they disapprove of it. He has made man, if I may say so, the immediate judge of mankind; and has in this respect, ...created him after his own image, and appointed him his vicegerent up on earth, to superintend the behavior of his brethren.” (p.149) He clearly advocates that Nature gives the impartial spectator the authority to determine where we ought to go.

A strong emphasis is placed on self-command. Self-command is acquired from the great discipline of Nature and gains the regard of the real spectator of our conduct. Smith equates the level of self-approbation that one has with the level of self-command. Nature rewards proportionally to the level of self-command and good behavior that one has mastered. He further rationalizes that those who are best able to acquire complete control of their joys or sorrows are those who feel the most for the joys and sorrows of others. Those who have the most exquisite humanity are those who are most capable of acquiring the highest degree of self-command. Smith’s statements about Nature indicate a defensive grandiosity, as he seems to be arbitrating for God which is the basis for his moral/superego development. His rationalization of moral/super-ego development as being based on Nature/God anchors his defensive structure in the deity.

For Smith, half of the human disorders are seen as the result of self-deceit. “Our continual observation upon the conduct of others, insensibly lead us to form to ourselves certain general rules concerning what is fit and proper whether to be done or to be avoided. It is thus that the general rules of morality are formed. They are ultimately founded upon experience of what, in particular instances, our moral faculties, our natural sense of merit and propriety, approve, and disapprove of.” (p. 185). This leads to the point that Smith is making in this section, these general rules are referred to as a sense of duty, “ a principle of the greatest consequence in human life, and the only principle by which the bulk of mankind are capable of ... directing their actions.” (p. 188) He views these rules as sacred and necessary.

Smith becomes obsessively redundant on this matter when he restates that our moral facilities were intended to be governing principles of human nature. These rules are to be regarded as the “commands and laws of the Deity, promulgated by those vicegerents which he has thus set up within us.” (p. 193) He sees this as the gesture of a beneficent God that set all of these rules up for the happiness of mankind: “When the general rules which determine the merit and demerit of actions, come to be regarded as the laws of an All-powerful being, who watches over our conduct, and who, in a life to come, will reward the observance, and punish the breach of them; they necessarily acquire a new sacredness from this consideration.” (pp. 197-198)

Smith finally declares directly; that the sole principle of our conduct should be our sense of duty. When our actions arise from a sense of duty and with regard to general rules then all questions are answered. He then allows that these rules are generally loose and inaccurate and that they can scarcely conduct our lives entirely by them. The only exception is the virtue of justice. The rules of justice are compared to the rules of grammar.

The general rules appear to be circular. God created these rules and the right-minded approve of what is virtuous, then they become general rules. It is our duty to follow the general rules. Greater good comes from virtue. If we agree to be virtuous then we are in a much better social cultural environment. If we do this it will create the greatest freedom for the greatest number of people. The ordering is as follows: virtues, accomplishment, social system with greater commerce, and greater freedom.

Smith accomplishes this large linear system of thought by the enormous use of rationalization. This system is supported by his deference to the higher wishes of the deity. He seems to have made a grandiose identification with the deity in order to accomplish this large task. In short, he attempts to subdue the instincts and put them in the control of his rational morality under the authority of God.

Part VI. : Of the character of virtue

Virtue is a cornerstone that is present throughout TMS. In this section Smith describes and defines the traits that are necessary for his moral structure and moral world. For Smith virtue shapes the “tone and temper, and tenor of conduct, which constitutes the excellent and praise-worthy character, the character which is the natural object of esteem, honor, and approbation.” (p. 313) In short virtue for Smith is the ideal attitude by which we approach our life and that of others, and virtue shapes the attitude that we exercise when carrying out our lives, and manifest in relation to our “own happiness and secondly, as it may affect that of other people.”(p. 248) As can be seen, virtue then interacts with all of the other principles that he so meticulously articulates in TMS. He presents an intellectually articulate and linearly rational argument for the integral use of virtue in his moral structure. In his idealization of virtue there is a defensive perfectionism that postulates an ideal attitude. This aspect of his defensive structure sets out a perfectionistic ideal that does not include the human reality which often falls short.

Virtue is discussed though out the TMS. For example, when Smith discusses sympathy early in TMS, he describes the efforts of the spectator to enter into the emotions of the agent. And for the agent to bring down his emotions to what the spectator can go along with. This is founded on two different sets of virtues: self- command and propriety. It also allows the spectator and agent to find the appropriate pitch for a given emotion. Another example comes in his section on merit and demerit where he talks about the virtue of justice. Justice is a social virtue that is required for

the existence of society. Justice bears the distinction of being the one virtue that may be enforced by force and have a greater precision than other virtues. Smith compares the rules of justice to the rules of grammar. Justice is primarily a “negative virtue, in that it’s abstention from wrongdoing.” (p. 95)

Smith’s fundamental virtues from which others are derived are: prudence, benevolence and self-command. “The care of health, of the fortune, of the rank and reputation of the individual, the objects upon which his comfort and happiness in this life are supposed principally to depend, is considered as the proper business of virtue which is commonly called Prudence.” (p. 249). Security is identified as the first object of prudence; and a prudent man is serious in his studies, is sincere, is always capable of friendship, and is not offensive in his conversations. In addition a prudent man is industrious, frugal and sacrifices the present for the future enjoyments. Following from this attitude a prudent man lives within his income, is contented with his situation, and does not subject himself to any responsibility that is not imposed by duty. The prudent man is also just. He does not harm others, cheat, or steal. He does not have ambition to dominate others. Smith sums up the acts of a prudent man by declaring that he has the entire approbation of the impartial spectator. Prudence is a very important virtue for Smith, he demonstrates this by writing a long paragraph about each of the attributes of a prudent man, and he exactly describes each attribute. In this discussion Smith describes in hierarchical detail the idealization of virtue in all of its manifestations. In order to accomplish the idealization of the virtues of prudence, benevolence and self-command he uses intellectualization, rationalization, moralization and compartmentalization of virtues into specific categories of behavior and motives. As a result of such perfectionistic attitude, and such rational defenses, human feelings (particularly those that do not fit into preformed rational forms) are put in a devalued realm.

It follows that Smith also places a great deal of importance on exercising self-command in relation to others and sees no good reason to hurt the happiness of our neighbors unless there is a proper resentment for an injustice that has been attempted or actually committed.

On how the character of the individual affects the happiness of other people Smith tells us that every man is first recommended to his own care. Then there is an expanding circle of individuals that we are to care for: our immediate family; our extended family. There is a

partiality towards members of our own circle. “The general rule is established, that persons related to one another in a certain degree, ought always be affected towards one another in a certain manner, and that there is always the highest impropriety, and sometimes even a sort of impiety, in their being affected in a different manner.” (p. 258). He considers what he calls natural affection the “effect of the moral than of the supposed physical connection...” (p. 262).

He then turns to friendships. The necessity and convenience of mutual accommodation among well-disposed people generates a friendship similar to what takes place in those who are born in the same family. He considers attachments that are founded upon “esteem and approbation of his conduct and behavior...the most respectable.” (p.264). The attachment based on “the love of virtue” is the most virtuous. After those people come those who are rich and powerful, the poor and the wretched. The former, however determine the peace and order in society, which is more important than the relief of the miserable. Once again, we see a rationalization of rank, distinction and class difference. This rigidly defined hierarchy idealizes certain attachments and social rankings and necessarily devalues others. This defensive idealization serves to include those attitudes and behavior that perpetuate his moral structure and exclude those that do not.

As an extension of the love of virtue, Smith declares that Nature has formed men for mutual kindness, and that “kindness is the parent of kindness.” (p. 265) He makes it clear that the evolution of virtue comes from a universal benevolence that knows no bounds, and is interwoven with a Divine Creator. “The idea of that divine Being whose benevolence and wisdom have form all eternity contrived and conducted the immense machine of the universe so as at all times to produce the greatest possible quality of happiness is certainly of all the objects of human contemplation by far the most sublime.”(p. 278) Here Smith gives the impartial spectator the authority of God. This grandiose identification with the deity supports the perfectionistic idealization of his hierarchy, and is the fundamental defensive position to his moral structure. Without his appeal to an absolute authority as the rational to his system, the defensive justification of his structure would not work.

Of self-command Smith says “The man who, in danger, in torture, upon the approach of death, preserves his tranquility unaltered, and suffers no word, no gesture to escape him which does not

perfectly accord with the feelings of the most indifferent spectator, necessarily commands a very high degree of admiration.” (p. 280). Similarly he sees the command of anger as a great and noble power. According to Smith the disposition to anger, hatred, envy, revenge, and malice, the passions that drive men from one another would offend the impartial spectator. Here Smith idealizes an extreme view of self-command even in the face of self-destruction, and then moralizes the virtuousness of such a defensive position.

Acting according to the rules of perfect prudence, justice and benevolence may be considered perfectly virtuous. However, he says, a man’s own passions are likely to mislead him. These other virtues then must be supported by self-command. Self-command is emphasized throughout the TMS as “not only itself a great virtue, but from it all the other virtues seem to derive their principle luster.” (p. 284). One of the principle acts of self-command is bringing down our emotional expressions to what others (i.e. the impartial spectator) can enter into.

Throughout this section Smith makes the argument for self-command in relation to one’s life. In particular he focuses on the emotions of fear and anger which require the greatest exercise of virtue. Indeed he sees the spontaneous indulgence of these and of other such emotions as vanity. Consistent with his meticulous observations and exacting prescriptions, he also orders the passions in terms of their difficulty to contain. On the one hand there is anger and fear that require the highest degree of virtuous self-command to the restraint of affection that requires less. On the other hand, the exercise of virtue is intended to provide harmony within the individual and harmony within the greater society. Smith puts it clearly: “ The virtues of prudence, justice and beneficence have no tendency to produce any but the most agreeable effects. Regard to those effects as in originally recommends them to the actor so does it afterwards to the impartial spectator. In our approbation of all those virtues our sense of the agreeable effects of their utility either to the person who exercises them or to some other persons joins with our sense of their propriety and constitutes always a considerable frequently the greater part of that approbation.” (p. 309)

This section points out Smith’s diligent exercise of a defensive structure to create and maintain a known world. He has skillfully intellectualized the exercise of virtue and has moralized the

hierarchy of virtuous acts. This structure is rationalized through the appeal to, and grandiose identification with a deity to support his structure. Self-command is an important structural component of virtue and dictates the most obsessive compartmentalizing of human impulse and interactions. As such, spontaneous and intuitive human actions are put in a devalued position. In addition individual feeling states are devalued in favor of collectively approved attitudes and actions.

II. DISCUSSION

This paper attempts to look at Adam Smith's TMS and the essential psychological defensive arrangements that he employs to implement his theory of moral structure. In particular, we are arguing that the transition from the initial condition of sympathy that Smith postulates, to the implementation to his moral structure requires a psychological defense system to facilitate that transition. As such this paper attempts to address this gap in the literature.

We have presented the fundamentals of his elaborate and elegantly structured theory that results in what has been referred in this paper as a known world. Smith's work is dependent upon the use of psychological defenses to 1) implement his moral theory in the face of the natural human unreflective and instinctual human condition, and 2) to facilitate its necessary internal consistency. As stated earlier in this paper, defenses are necessary operational components to any system that is applied to human behavior, and as such has both strengths and deficits. We often take for granted the need for defenses because they are so much a part of our particular social structure. Indeed, the human need for defenses allow us to come to terms with and make sense of the otherwise chaotic nature of internal need and external reality, and cannot be overstated. A further example of this has been discussed in Ozler (2012). Smith's theory creates a social and moral structure that prescribes a set of priorities and behaviors. In order to implement these priorities and behaviors, there is a need to manage the instinctual affective life within an individual that interacts with these priorities. Indeed this is where a defensive structure becomes necessary.

Smith's reliance on sympathy as a foundational part of his work also creates the need for defenses to limit the overwhelming affects that sympathy creates in our interactions with others.

Our capacity for sympathy also reveals the need to limit the influence of others experience upon us.

In the broadest perspective Smith's theory is defending against the fundamental instincts of aggression, and sexuality. In particular it defends against the affects that are the result of the dynamic conflict of these instincts both within an individual and in relation to others. Further, his system evolves into the prescription of an elaborate arrangement of social interactions where he defends against the potential of losing his relationship to others. He adopts an exclusively rational perspective that makes his system is vulnerable (as any individual would be) to the eruption of irrational affect, unforeseen circumstances, or the spontaneous expressions of feeling that do not fall into the prescribed category of feeling values that his structure dictates. In particular he defends against the expression of affective states such as rage, anger, hate, frustration, sexual desire, and affection, in a spontaneous way that falls outside his structure.

In Smith's view, we are saddled with opposing forces of an inner human condition, which includes instinctual impulses on the one hand, and on the other hand are also endowed by God with "all-seeing...powers of judgment." (Rothschild, 2010 p. 27) In order to resolve these discrepancies within the human being we argue that a defensive system is necessary to bring about this "all seeing" ego ideal.

One of the most dominant defenses employed by Smith is that of splitting: the turning of emotional states into good and bad, black and white, or right and wrong. In particular his system has little room for the subtleties of context or uniqueness. His theory defends against the expression of affect by evaluating such expression with the "disapprobation of the spectator." He further reinforces this split by rationalizing and moralizing about the "virtue" of the suppression of affective states.

All of Smith's structures (virtue, propriety, merit, duty) are applications of his foundational defense system that we have outlined. In his thoughtful and meticulous way he has masterfully woven together these structures to create a logic tight system of morality and behavior. The strength of Smith's purely rational approach is that it can be internally consistent, linear, follow logical rules, and can conceptually account for a large portion of behavior and details. It further supports a majority collective view of human action based on the external need for relationship

with others which is mediated by the “approbation” of others. On the other hand this rational approach leaves little room for individual differences, creativity, change, dynamism, and spontaneity within it’s system. Because of it’s exclusive focus on the dependency of the individual on the approbation of others, it also leaves out people who “march to their own drummer” such as: Martin Luther, Martin Luther King, Gandhi, and Einstein, all of whom were able to go in their own direction, sometimes at great peril and at the risk of great disapprobation by the dominate culture. The attributes and personal styles that are left out of Smith’s “known world” would easily be the subject of yet another study.

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