

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

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Abstract

This study combines the neurophysiological and psychological research work on early development which was pioneered by Gallesse, Dawkins, Girard and others with the more cognitively based approaches which are employed by the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories. Gender dysphoria is used to model the process. During the first two years of life there is a transition from exclusive domination by the internally focussed feed-forward and contagious physiological development processes to the point when the outward looking and feed-back processes of cognitive processes become fully involved. The nature of this transition is examined. It is demonstrated that the features which create the core gender and sexual identities of every person are physiologically rather than behaviourally or cognitively driven. Therefore as wide a range of moral attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are to be found amongst these people as those which exist in society at large. It is also demonstrated that a moral duality must exist whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways that conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies should be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships would be very severely condemned for their acts. That moral duality is contradicted by the traditional teaching of the Christian Church which condemns without exception every expression of gender and sexually variant behaviour as inherently sinful, and regards all of them as heinous acts.

The development of gender identity is shown to be just one example of a generally applicable process. A major and rapid advance in neural capabilities occurs at around the age of one and a half to two years. It follows that there are two distinct and differently directed processes which are involved in the creation of personality and self-identity. When these two processes are in harmony little difficulty may be expected. However when these contradict each other strong trauma can occur. In previous studies the influences of the early physiologically driven processes have been ignored, because it is presumed that cognitive abilities drive learning and development at all times of life. That omission is addressed in this analysis. The interactions between the two development processes are examined. The results identify the differences between identity driven and reward driven characteristics and behaviour. They also link into the distinctions between deviation and perversion as identified by Freud. They more closely define appropriate methods of treatment and management of each of these conditions. It is shown that development throughout life is stimulated and promoted by the continuing interactions between the internally generated neurophysiological development forces and the cognitively based mechanisms. It is concluded that these all act together to ensure that the highest levels of human capability, individuality and potential are created. This is a wide-ranging account which covers social, physiological, psychological and theological issues. Management methods are also discussed³.

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¹ Personal Biography <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SusanBiographyPapers.pdf>

² With updates to 2 August 2016

³ This document is available online at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/209P-RethinkPaperFull.pdf>

⁴ A biography of the author is available on: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SusanBiographyPicture.pdf>

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1:0: Introduction

Human behaviour has been predicted for centuries on the presumption that cognitive continuums can be applied to all processes of learning and development at all stages of life. That presumption is demonstrated to be incorrect in this analysis, where it is shown how learning and development takes place during the time when these continuums are inactive or absent. As a generalisation, this is within the first two years of life⁷. The traditional approaches fail to recognise these early processes and that omission is addressed in this investigation. This study combines the neurophysiological and psychological research work on early development which was pioneered by Gallese, Dawkins, Girard and others with the more cognitively based approaches which have been employed by the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories. The transitions between them are also examined⁸

It is shown in this analysis that the physiological, neurological and psychological aspects of brain development together form a finely tuned system in which the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence and inquisitiveness, together with the minimum degree of energy expenditure is formed. The development of atypical gender identities and gender dysphoria is used to test and validate the process⁹. The importance of this comes from their ability to link the earlier and later development processes in ways which have not previously been found. The identification of these early origins also means that it becomes possible to formulate a continuous process of identity and personality development which extends from infancy into adult life. It further demonstrates that these results are equally applicable to the development of other basic aspects of personality and identity, where equivalent processes are likewise involved.

The traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories attribute the development of gender identity to cognitively based processes which are driven by the social experiences of each child. Behavioural studies show that strong stereotypical gender oriented behaviour is encountered from around the age of three years. However according to these traditional theories any fixed sense of gender identity does not become established until much later in life. That does not accord with research on children where atypical gender identities are encountered. In these studies it is shown that the usually unconscious core gender identity, which represents (in gender terms) the sense of

⁵ Personal Biography <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SusanBiographyPapers.pdf>

⁶ Originally published: 3 September 2015: Revised and re-issued 3 March 2017. Last update 14 March 2017

⁷ The time when this occurs can vary widely between individuals. Two years is taken here as a median value but for some children this rapid transformation can occur much earlier within the second year of life.

⁸ For other descriptions, with references to sources see: Gilchrist, S. (2016h): "Science and Belief. A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-PaperPersonality.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2016d): "A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-InfluencesPersonality.pdf> : Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2013c): "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach":

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/207P-ReassessmentPsychologyExtended.pdf>

⁹ This document is available online at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/209P-RethinkPaperFull.pdf>

being the person one is, has already become fixed by the age of three years. Notably this cannot be changed in later life and current approaches associate the development of gender identity with the action of endocrinal influences from before birth. The contradictions between these two approaches are examined in this investigation.

The failure of the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories to acknowledge these pre-cognitive earlier developments is attributed to two main causes¹⁰. The first comes from the presumption that only cognitive processes are involved in the development of gender identity. This prevents any recognition of the earlier processes taking place, thus by definition the pre-cognitive elements cannot be acknowledged. The second is that when the subconscious core gender identity is in accord with the conscious sense of gender identity, little evidence of these earlier processes will be observed. This reinforces the presumption that only cognitive processes are involved. However in circumstances when the usually unconscious core gender identity conflicts with the conscious sense of gender identity which is later created, extreme trauma is often found¹¹.

There are therefore a transitional processes involved. It is shown that the development of personality and identity is characterised by continuing and intense struggles between the inbuilt, contagious, internally focussed, feed-forward and physiologically driven forces that are present from infancy, which fight against the controlling, feed-back and externally moderated processes of cognitive development that become effective in later life. A major advance in neural development occurs around the median age of two years. It is shown that core elements of personality and identity are created before or when the cusp of the neurophysiological transition period occurs: this means that the core senses of personality and identity arise from the actions of inbuilt neurophysiological forces alone. The consequence of this is that the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories can only act as overlays on what the physiologically driven forces have already formed.

The results of this analysis also demonstrate that a moral duality must exist, whereby those gender and sexually variant people who seek to live their lives in ways that are true to their own identities and according to the highest moral standards of society should be highly regarded and commended for their acts, while those who abuse these standards must expect to be very severely censured for the harm they create. The conclusions of this scientific analysis are contradicted by the traditional teaching of the Christian Church which condemns all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour, irrespective of purpose, as depraved, sinful and disordered acts. Much harm has been done, not just because of this traditional teaching, but also through the medical misdiagnoses which result.

A major concern of the author is that of finding out how and why this contradiction has occurred. A theological, historical and social investigation has therefore been conducted¹². By using the results

¹⁰ Freud, Piaget and others attempted to describe early development by creating social constructs such as the ego, super-ego and id. However the relationships between these are always described in cognitive terms. This in turn leads to the assumption that the traditional theories largely act on a blank canvas and that has been the foundation of much research. The limitation therefore lies in the theories themselves. Therefore the existence and influence of the innate physiological development processes before and up to the time of the neurophysiological transition period is denied. This is expanded on in section 2:* of this document and in: Gilchrist, S. (2017): "No, Pope Francis: Gender Identity is not a Choice". <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/227P-No-PopeFrancis.pdf>

¹¹ This describes a classic dilemma that is faced by many transgender people.

¹² Full descriptions are given in the following papers: Gilchrist, S. (2016h): "Science and Belief. A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-PaperPersonality.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2016d): "A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-InfluencesPersonality.pdf> . Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2013c): "A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/207P-ReassessmentPsychologyExtended.pdf>

of this neurophysiological and psychological study to remove the armour of the theological presumptions on gender and sexuality which have dominated Church and society for the last two thousand years, new insights are gained. These include previously barred interpretations of biblical texts. It is demonstrated that the same criteria relating to use an abuse should be applied to all heterosexual, cross-gender and same-sex acts of sex. In an extended theological analysis it is also shown that all transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be accepted alike. All sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention and there is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act. Instead of making all homosexual people the scapegoats for all sexual abuse, the correct role of the Christian Church should be that of combatting all forms of abusive sex¹³,

This is a wide-ranging account which covers physiological, psychological and theological issues¹⁴. Section 2 gives an introduction to the physiological and psychological elements and processes that are involved in identity and personality development. Section 3 contains a timeline of development and interactions with society. Section 4 examines in more detail some of the physiological and psychological aspects of the development processes. Section 5 describes how transgender experience is manifested within the individual, in everyday life and in relationships with society. Section 6 discusses the management techniques that may be used. Section 7 considers the religious dimension, including the condemnations which the Christian Church has imposed on gender and sexually variant people because of the doctrines it has enforced. In section 8 the cultural implications and the present day church are considered. In section 9 the discussion and conclusions are presented.

Full details and references to all sources are given in the research papers associated with this analysis. These papers can be accessed via the internet using the web address: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>. This address also appears in the footer on each page of this document.

¹³ For an account of the social, historical and theological studies, see the following papers: Gilchrist, S. (2016f): "*Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2016e): "*Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation on the Life and Teaching of Jesus*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/219P-InfluencesJesus.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2016j): "*Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church: Is it Not Time to Consider the Science?*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/226P-ConsiderScience.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2013a): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹⁴ For a fully referenced paper see: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach*". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm.

2:0: Elements of Formation

This section introduces key elements which are involved in the formation of personality and identity. Section 3 contains a timeline which shows how these combine to form the identity that is created. Section 4 provides a detailed analysis of some of the elements that are involved in the formation process.

2:1: Approaches

2:1:1: Top Down and Bottom Up

Research work on the fundamentals of personality development has discovered much about how learning and identity develops. In this investigation that is approached in two ways. The more modern research work by Gallese, Dawkins, Girard and others identify a “bottom up” approach which is driven by internal physiologically based mechanisms¹⁵. The automatic responses of mirror neurons promote the creation of empathy, possessive imitation and competition. These enable learning and identity to form as an inbuilt and internally focussed activity where the contagious, self-reinforcing and intense physiological demands create a compulsive drive. The ability to discriminate and to separate the self from the other and to make sense of the environment comes from learning how to inhibit these drives¹⁶. This means that learning capability is built into physiology, no goals are set, and their rejection of what is wrong develops from a physiologically driven response. The dynamics are such that the foremost challenge to be explained is not about how learning develops, but about how the observer can inhibit this physiological imitative process so that he or she does not respond by actually engaging in the same process or act. These features are discussed in more detail in section 4 of this account.

The traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories approach the same issues by using an externally focussed “top down” approach. However, in order to function these require a basic cognitive continuum to operate¹⁷. This must be able to associate thought, action and insight with some form of avoidance or reward. That in turn requires a neural co-ordinating structure to be operating within the pre-frontal cortex of the brain (the part of the brain which is responsible for acquiring knowledge by the use of reasoning, intuition or perception) for these processes to work. That neural structure is not present or active during the first two years of life. The absence of this neural co-ordination led Freud, Piaget and others to presume that development in early years is

¹⁵ Girard, R. (1965/1961) *“Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure”*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Girard, R. (1977/1972) *“Violence and the Sacred”*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. Girard, R., Oughourlian, J.-M. and Lefort, G. (1987) *“Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World”*, Stanford CA: Stanford University Press. Girard, R. and Williams, J.G. (1996): *“The Girard Reader”*. New York: Crossroad Herder (1996). ASIN: B004G5VBOO. Dawkins, R. (1989/1978) *“The Selfish Gene”*, Oxford University Press. 3rd edition 2006

¹⁶ Gallese, V. (2001): *“The “Shared Manifold” hypothesis: from mirror neurons to empathy”*. Journal of Consciousness Studies, 8, 33-50. Gallese, V. (2003): *“The Roots of Empathy: The Shared Manifold Hypothesis and the Neural Basis of Intersubjectivity”* Psychopathology, 36(4): 171–180. Gallese, Vittorio, Lakoff, George. (2005) *“The Brain’s Concepts: The Role Of The Sensory-Motor System In Conceptual Knowledge”*. Cognitive Neuropsychology, 2005, 21. Gallese, V. (2009) *“The Two Sides of Mimesis Girard’s Mimetic Theory, Embodied Simulation and Social Identification”*, Journal of Consciousness studies, 16, No 4. Gallese, V. and Sinigaglia, C. (2011) *“How the body in action shapes the self”*, Journal of Consciousness Studies, 18((7–8): 117–143.

Gallese, V. (2013) *“Bodily self, affect, consciousness and the cortex”*, Neuropsychoanalysis, 15(1):

42-45. Garrels, S. R (2004), *“Imitation, Mirror Neurons, & Mimetic Desire: Convergent Support for the Work*

of Rene Girard”, p. 29 (This is an earlier version of the paper that appeared as Garrels, Scott R (2006). Garrels, S.R.

(2006) *‘Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire: Convergence Between the Mimetic Theory of Rene Girard and Empirical Research on Imitation Contagion’*, Journal of Violence, Mimesis and Culture, 12-13, 2006: 47-86. Access at:

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.133.189&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

¹⁷ Gross, Richard (2015): *“Psychology: The Science of Mind and Behaviour 7th Edition”* Hachette UK, ISBN 1:471829758, 9781471829758

focussed on the growth of motor functions and some basic responses. Even though it is seen as a time of seething neural activity there was believed to be little co-ordination taking place. Instead of children very actively contributing to their own development during this period, the social learning and psychodynamic theories presume a much more limited and passive response¹⁸.

2:1:2: Transformation

A major neurological transformation rapidly occurs around the age of two years when the pre-frontal cortex of the brain begins to function as an integrated unit. There is a rapid increase in reasoning and learning capabilities during this period. Before that time it is shown that development takes place in a fragmented way. This is dominated by the internally generated physiological driving forces in a contagious feed-forward drive which maximises the information gained but with the lack of cognition, little order and control is applied. That order and control first come into effective action from the neurophysiological transformation period onwards when the brain begins to be able to use the cognitive capacities of reasoning, perception intuition and feed-back to examine and manage the core concepts of identity and personality which have previously been formed¹⁹.

2:1:3 Timing

This means that acknowledging the relative timing of each of these processes is crucial for an understanding of early development. The internally driven physiological processes dominate from birth and there is a gradual but staged transition towards the situation where the cognitive processes come fully into action²⁰. However the internally generated physiological forces remain active at all times. This transitional period lasts for the first two to three years of life. The inability to recognise the existence of the physiologically driven learning processes, and the often intense inputs that they provide, is a major shortcoming of the psychodynamic and social learning theories²¹. This failure is at least in part because the proponents and the presumptions inherent in the psychodynamic and social learning theories assume that cognitive capabilities and continuums are always available, and that these alone govern the processes of learning and development, at all times of life. That attitude is supported by the traditional teaching of the Christian Church and a great deal of literature is still being written today in which these assumptions are made.

2:1:4: Disparities

When the same problem is approached from two directions it is essential that the correct interface is obtained. Piaget, in his theories involving social learning described discrete stages in the development process. At the boundaries of these major advances in neural capabilities occurs Freud developed constructs of identity such as the ego, super-ego and id which in turn recognises the different levels of neural function that are found. Both of these theories, and the later developments which are based on them, acknowledge the importance of recognising the growth of neural capabilities during the early years²². However the nature of the interactions between these various elements is always described in cognitive terms, and this is where the problems arise.

¹⁸ Precursors are fully discussed in Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

¹⁹ See section 4:5 of this account for more information

²⁰ Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

²¹ For additional information see: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*" and Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach*". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm

²² See sections 6:3 to 7 of: Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

That demands a more detailed examination of what cognitive capabilities are, and how they are applied in this document. A classic definition of cognition describes it as the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience, and the senses, where perception, discernment, awareness, apprehension, learning, understanding, comprehension, enlightenment, insight, intelligence, reason, reasoning, thinking are all involved. There is a sense of purpose behind each process in all of these. However in pre-cognitive development that sense of purpose is absent. A great deal of learning does take place during this time, but this is experiential in nature: in the absence of a sense of purpose this involves the processes of inhibition and the rejection of what is wrong.

Previous studies indicate that a rapid advance in cognitive abilities takes place close to the neurophysiological transformation period. That is also in line with recent research which suggests that quorum sensing behaviour is involved: imagine a crowd of individual elements milling round in a random way, imagine that communication between them at first only gradually develops. Once a sufficient number of links become active a threshold or quorum is reached. Many of the elements can now communicate with each other and once this happens all of these rapidly rush to any point of interest or global concept that is formed. Learning abilities before and after the neurophysiological transformation period therefore differs greatly from each other: and that must be taken fully into account when the transition between the development processes is mapped. A further key stage in this transition occurs the age of four years. This is associated with the development of a "Theory of Mind"; and the age of four years is usually the time when children become independently able to ascertain that something is wrong with what they are expected to believe. This is also the age when many transgender people begin to identify disquiet with the gender they are assigned to. However this is only a retrospective assessment which tells people what has already happened, since the core sense of gender identity has already become fixed at an earlier age.

2:1:5: A New Approach

At the present time a major concern is over the failure to link the two processes. A further difficulty has been the absence of a suitable case study which is able to map the transformations which occur. This analysis aims to determine the links between and the relative functions of the two processes by using gender identity and gender dysphoria for this purpose. The transformation of gender from a very early identification into adult complexity passes through all of these stages. Because of this it becomes possible to examine the growth of personality and self-identity from infancy into adult life in ways that could not previously be applied.

2:2: Characteristics and Conflicts

Cognitive continuums apply across function as well as time, and in their absence major contradictions in the development of identity can occur. Therefore conflicts can arise from failures in both processes. In this account identity driven conflicts are associated with disruptions which first occur before any cognitive continuum is formed. Reward driven conflicts come from sources which develop after cognitive continuums are put in place²³.

2:2:1: Identity Driven Characteristics and Conflicts

The different types of conflict have different characteristics. The conflicts which arise from sources before the neural transformation period are created by the physiologically driven forces of early development. In this analysis these are called identity driven conflicts. Because of the absence of

²³ See also: Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

cognitive abilities these identity driven conflicts are impelled by the rejection of what is wrong. The staged and delayed development of the pre-frontal cortex of the brain means that little neural co-ordination occurs²⁴. The individual elements that later coalesce to form a core sense of identity mature in isolation from each other²⁵. This is why these conflicts may have a very specific focus. There is limited correlation between the goals that are sought and the results which fulfil their demands.

In these identity driven conflicts goals cannot be set before the cognitive abilities have developed sufficiently for an individual to become aware of any discord that had occurred. That happens retrospectively because of the differing rates at which discrete aspects of development take place. This means that the later attempts to resolve these conflicts are efforts to remove contradictions in the development of a self-identity which has already been created. The work on the development of atypical gender identities shows that by this time the underlying sense of identity cannot be changed. Beyond the outcomes of attempting to fulfil that particular demand, no other behavioural consequences arise, and as great a variety of moral attitudes and behaviour can be found amongst these people as those which exist in society at large.

Disturbances which are associated with gender dysphoria display the characteristics of identity driven conflicts. In the case of transsexual people the goals of gender reassignment are forcefully sought, but the real objective is not one of wanting to be a man or a woman, it is that of enabling each person to be themselves. After transition gender usually ceases to be the focus, and many simply merge invisibly into society in the role that they now possess and own.

2:2:2 Reward Driven Characteristics and Conflicts

In contrast to the identity driven conflicts, the conflicts which arise as a disruption to the cognitively driven processes are here defined as reward driven conflicts. These do not come into effect before the cognitive abilities begin to be active and that occurs rapidly near the age of two years. There is a direct link between desire and reward. This applies even when displacement strategies are used or the link is not consciously known. Reward driven conflicts are often identified with lifestyle choices. Unlike identity driven conflicts management methods can be used which attempt to relate cause to effect. With reward driven conflicts willpower and domination may succeed in controlling their demands, and in their management the standard psychodynamic and social learning theories may be employed.

2:2:3: Management Methods

It is shown that attempts to use the techniques for reward driven conflicts on identity driven conflicts do not work²⁶. The more these are applied, the more they reinforce the contagious and self-reinforcing demands of the internal physiologically driven forces; and the more often the attempts fail, the more this creates a runaway drive²⁷. For identity driven conflicts the correct management methods must focus instead on calming their dynamics. For each of these two types of conflict, management techniques which are almost opposite to one another must be employed²⁸.

Even though the presumptions made by the psychodynamic and social learning theories do not allow for identity driven conflicts to exist, the difference between the two types of conflict is well

²⁴ Gilchrist, S. (2012): "*Personality Formation: Identity and Gender*":

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/204PPersFormIdentityGndr.pdf>

²⁵ See section 4:6 of this document

²⁶ See section 6 of this document.

²⁷ See sections 3:1 and 5:5 of this document

²⁸ See section 6 of this document for a more extended description of management techniques. See also: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality*". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm .

known. With the identity driven conflicts techniques which are akin to the management of alcoholism and depression must be used while for reward driven conflicts methods which relate cause to effect can be employed. Freud recognised the difference when he defined the relationships between perversion²⁹ and deviation in his analysis. However the knowledge that was available to him at the time limited what he could find.

This difference and the reality of identity driven conflicts is not recognised by the Christian Church. The theological presumptions adopted by the Church, decree that every form of behaviour associated with sexual and gender variation is the product of reward driven conflicts. These presumptions are based entirely on the traditions and on the early compromises that were made by the Christian Church. They are not, as is shown elsewhere in this analysis, based on the teachings of Jesus himself³⁰. Great medical and social harm has been created over the centuries because of the social condemnations and medical misdiagnoses that have been applied.

2:3: Condemnations

It is demonstrated in this investigation that a moral duality exists whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways which conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies can be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships should be very severely condemned, because of their acts. That directly contradicts Christian doctrine which defines it as a lifestyle choice which can be diverted through the predations of others, and which is always in pursuit of lust and immoral acts. Using the results of this analysis an extensive study of the history and the traditions of the Christian Church has been conducted. This has the purpose of finding out how and why these contradictions have occurred³¹.

This scientific study confirms that the duality exists and that its development is a fundamental consequence of the formation process. This means that in any society, and at any time, where gender and sexually variant relationships are expressed the same type of evidence for this duality will also be found. Therefore everybody in first century Greek, Roman and Jewish societies would have been exposed to these experiences: it would have been known to Jesus, and it is shown to be encompassed in the teachings of Jesus as presented in the Gospel texts. It is further demonstrated that the reasons for its denial, and also why all recognition of this moral duality has come to be lost, arose from the need of the early Christian Church to gain acceptance in the gender unequal and dictatorial Roman society. In addition to this it had to unambiguously separate itself from any possible association with the Greco/Roman Goddess cults. The changes that were needed to gain that respectability are evident in the epistles and letters which Peter and Paul wrote to the early Church. Because of the consequent condemnations and criminalisation, any knowledge of this moral duality has been completely suppressed.

The denial of this moral duality has enabled the Christian Church for the last 2000 years to condemn with impunity every type of expression of gender and sexual variation as lifestyle choices and as mortally sinful and heinous acts. However the removal of legal restrictions and criminalisation in many of today's societies means that evidence for this moral duality can no longer be hidden. In these societies it is now easy for anyone who wishes, to see this moral duality by comparing the distinctions between same-sex relationships and gender variant behaviour which is given in love and responsibility, with other same-sex activities and gender variant behaviour which

²⁹ Used in the sense that Freud intended and not in the pejorative sense..

³⁰ Gilchrist, S. (2016c): "*Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church*": [Introduction and Index]: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/217P-FoundationsSexGender.pdf>

³¹ See sections 7 and 8 of this account for more information

is engaged in for the pursuit of abusive and immoral acts. Unless the Christian Church can find ways of re-discovering and welcoming the positive aspects of this moral duality which is within its own history, it will continue to destroy itself in the eyes of the world.

The impact of the Church disciplines and doctrines on the social and cultural values of society has been enormous and this is why addressing these theological issues is a major theme of this study. The principal focus of this document is on physiology and sociology. However the discipline imposed on this examination demands that no judgement whatever is made on the truths or otherwise of religious beliefs. Therefore when theology is considered, this analysis focusses entirely on how and why these doctrines of the Christian Church have come to be formed³².

2:4: Current and Earlier Psychological Views

From 1965 John Money and other psychologists began to study the psychology of sexual variation and how the societal constructs of “gender” affect an individual³³. These studies also made the presumption that all learning and identification takes place through cognitively based functions, and that these alone can explain why gender and sexual variance, including transsexuality, occurs. Therefore these investigators assumed that children were born gender neutral, and that gender identification was a product of social conditioning during the first years of life. However studies of surgical reassignment of newly born and very young intersex children and those with genital malformation are known to cause the trauma that they become aware of in later life. It has been found that reassigning the gender of newly born infants can have disastrous results even if they have never been told that their reassignment has taken place³⁴.

It is this consistent history of failure and damage which has led to the discrediting and the rejection of psychodynamic and social learning theories, and to the present policy of waiting until intersex children and those with ambiguous genitalia are able to decide on their own the gender that they belong to. The author agrees that this is the correct policy to adopt. These failures have also led to a change in outlook, and the conventional views which are now put forward to explain gender and sexual variation attribute their development to the influence of hormones which act before birth.

Sexual differentiation in the brain does begin well before birth, and normal patterns of development are along female lines. Between the 6th and 12th week, testosterone and its derivatives accomplish masculinisation. A later wash of pre-natal hormones may more directly affect the brain structure, but the administration of these hormones at other times has no effect. Male to female transsexuality and female to male transsexuality is attributed to the inappropriate action or inaction of the hormones. That argument takes the view that pre-natal sex hormones have an indelible impact on brain development. This is considered strong enough to trigger an inconsistent gender identity which is resistant to social pressures, which means in turn that gender identity may resolve independently of the gender of rearing and genital appearance. However no explanation is given about how this can happen given the primitive nature of the pre-frontal cortex at the time of birth, or how the relatively limited degree of pre-natal and post-natal brain plasticity that is possible at the time of birth might be able to control the massive degree of brain plasticity and neural development which occurs during the second year of life.

Even though the neurophysiological and psychodynamic processes address the same issues from opposite directions, they both fail for the same reason - and that is because of their failure to recognise the existence of, and the dominance of, the internal physiologically driven learning processes during the first years of life. It is also shown that the same failure leads to incorrect

³² These matters are more fully discussed in sections 7 and 8 of this document.

³³ See section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2013d): “*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*”:
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

³⁴ Section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2013d): “*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*”:
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

interpretations of the early learning and development processes as they are predicted by the psychodynamic and social learning theories. This is again because of their assumptions that cognitive continuums exclusively apply to every process of learning and development in all parts of life.

2:5: Modelling and Transformation

All of the proponents of the neurophysiologically based development theories identify a common approach. In this, fragmented elements of individuality are at first formed in a disorganised way. These then compete and combine in such a manner that the more global concepts develop through the victories and coalescence of those elements which best succeed. Recent research suggests that a quorum sensing mechanism is involved³⁵. When that happens, a rapid transformation occurs. The components of identity and personality that then form are products of the momentum that has been created and not a logical choice.

The great advances in brain capabilities which occur during the neural transformation period suggest that this is the time when key elements coalesce. Even those who have researched gender dysphoria using the social learning theories put the latest date by which the core gender identity has become irrevocably fixed as between the ages of two and three years. The close correlation between both of these events and the explosion in language capabilities has also been noted, and it has been suggested that all of these are directly linked³⁶. This timing also ensures that the core sense of gender identity must have been formed before the cognitive activities become active. This means that it is created by the inbuilt and internally focussed physiological driving forces acting alone. Instead of acting on a blank canvas, as has been assumed in traditional social learning and psychodynamic approaches, the later externally focussed cognitive development processes, together with their associated psychodynamic and social learning theories, can only act as overlays on what has already been formed.

2:6: Modelling and Awareness

It follows that there are two distinct and differently directed processes which are involved in the creation of a gender identity. When these two processes are in harmony little difficulty may be expected. However when these contradict each other strong trauma can be involved. It is additionally shown that brain plasticity and the “domestication of the brain” lock the core senses of identity and personality permanently in place, so that a constancy of personality is created³⁷.

The relative timings of all of these processes are crucial and the rate at which the neurophysiological processes develop must be compared with the rate at which the cognitive abilities form³⁸. It is shown that all of the neurophysiologically based processes are largely complete by the end of three years. However children do not develop the capabilities to question consistencies in their own development until about the age of four years. When that happens they can be said to possess a “Theory of Mind”³⁹. This delay means that they will not have any conscious

³⁵ The easiest explanation to give is to imagine a cloud of little elementary concepts which are randomly milling around. Once some particular focus can be sensed many of the little concepts rush to that scene. The trigger happens when the pathways of the brain link sufficiently together. These elementary core concepts, such as the core gender identity, are then able to form because of the coalescence that has occurred.

³⁶ See section 4 of this document

³⁷ Gilchrist, S. (2016h): “*Science and Belief. A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life*”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-PaperPersonality.pdf>

³⁸ See footnotes to Gilchrist, S. (2016a): “Taking a Different Path”: Chapter 10 in: “*This Is My Body: Hearing the Theology of Transgender Christians*”, Ed: Beardsley, T. and O’Brien, M: Darton Longman and Todd. May 2016 ISBN 978-0-232-53206-7 Notes for this chapter are available on: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/sourcesA/index.htm>

³⁹ For a description of Theory of mind see Goldman, A.I. (2012): “Theory of mind”: in “*Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Cognitive Science (2012)*”. Ed: Margolis, E. Samuels, R. and Stich S. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780195309799

awareness of the neurophysiologically based battles that are involved in early development. Conflicts arising from this time which have not been resolved will stay hidden in the subconscious mind until some change or trauma brings ensures that conscious awareness occurs⁴⁰.

In principle gender identity could be used as a model to examine these processes. The problem with this is that the development of the core gender identity takes place before any conscious awareness can be created. When there is no clash between the results of the earlier and later development processes they will simply act together to affirm and strengthen the understanding of gender identity that is consciously formed. Therefore it is considered that no direct evidence for any earlier process will be observed. However strong conflicts certainly occur in the case of gender dysphoria, where people develop a core sense of gender identity which is contrary to their biological sex and which is in opposition to the outcome that the cognitive development processes expect. This means that gender dysphoria becomes a valid test to model how development proceeds and that this can be applied before, during and after neurophysiological transformation occurs.

It should also be noted that gender dysphoria is only a specific example of a generally applicable process. Therefore many other characteristics of personality and identity will be formed in an equivalent way. This has a number of implications. The first to note is that all evidence for these conflicts is completely hidden except in cases where conflict between the earlier and later development processes occurs. That is one reason why the inherent duality in gender and sexually variant behaviour is often denied by the Christian Churches, it is also why all such behaviour can be considered to be lifestyle choices which are in pursuit of disordered behaviour and disreputable sex. The second is the consequences it has in the development of gender theory, where there is no awareness or ignorance of the internal physiological forces involved. Today standard gender theory often takes no account of these earlier processes⁴¹. That gives a deficient approach to gender development, and the reasons for the extremities of conflict faced by transgender people fail to be understood. Great harm was done in the early management of gender dysphoria by medical clinicians who continued to pursue the social learning model for the treatment they provided; despite the evidence against it which was increasingly being accrued⁴². This misuse continues today when uninformed psychiatrists and psychologists are asked to give advice. The firmness with which gender is fixed also makes it difficult for the general public to understand the issues that are involved.

There are additional features. These results do not only define the differences between identity driven and reward driven characteristics and conflicts: they also link into the distinctions between deviation and perversion⁴³, as identified by Freud. They more closely define appropriate methods of treatment and management⁴⁴. It is additionally shown that development throughout life is stimulated and promoted by the continuing interactions between the internally generated neurophysiological development forces and the cognitively based mechanisms which pursue understanding and reward. It is concluded that these all act together to ensure that the highest levels of human capability, individuality and potential are created.

2:7: Neural Co-ordination

Published online: May 2012 DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195309799.001.0001:: http://fas-philosophy.rutgers.edu/goldman/Theory%20of%20Mind%20Oxford%20Handbook_.pdf.pdf

⁴⁰ See section 9 of Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

⁴¹ Standard gender theories: See section 7 of, S. (2013d): "Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>. Also "Gender: cognitive theory::How do cognitive psychologists explain gender development?" Available at: http://www.psychotron.org.uk/newResources/developmental/AS_AQB_gender_CognitiveBasics.pdf

⁴² See: Colapinto, John (2001): "As Nature Made Him: The Boy Who Was Raised as a Girl": Harper Collins: ISBN 0-06-019211-9.

⁴³ Used as Freud intended, not in a pejorative sense.

⁴⁴ See section 5 of this document

There is considerable disagreement about how the core sense of identity first comes to be formed. That merits further consideration in this account. It is shown that the development of learning capabilities and brain physiology are inevitably linked. Around the age of two years the rapid and wide-ranging transformation previously indicated in section 3:1 takes place⁴⁵. Up to this time the pre-frontal cortex of the brain remains in a relatively undeveloped state⁴⁶. Neural activity, which was previously localised in nature, rapidly spreads. Distant areas of the brain become connected, and networks between the two hemispheres develop. There is an explosion in language abilities and cognitive capacity. For the first time the pre-frontal cortex of the brain can start to function as a single co-ordinating unit.

This transformation also occurs at the time when the exponents of the old social learning theories found that a core sense of gender identity is created. In this analysis it is separately shown to be the time when basic global concepts can start to be formed. The value of using gender dysphoria as a case study comes from its ability to link these two processes. Because of this linkage it becomes possible to identify a continuous process of identity and personality development which extends from infancy into adult life.

It also follows from this analysis that there are fundamental differences in the learning capabilities which are present before and after this transformation occurs. However in current practice these differences are ignored. Crucial to any understanding of the development of self and gender identity is an understanding of the different ways in which the learning capabilities develop before and after this transformation. That includes the full acknowledgement of what their limitations are. These capabilities are profoundly influenced by the staged and the late development of the pre-frontal cortex, and the manner in which brain development takes place.

2:8: Brain Development and Physiology

In human beings the pre-frontal cortex is still very primitive at birth. The synaptic density in this area of the brain, which is indicative of the number of brain connections, shows at least a tenfold increase between birth and the age of two to three years. At this time the synaptic density peaks at between one and a half to twice the adult value and then it gradually dies back.

Brain plasticity defines the ability of the brain to physically reshape itself in response to external inputs. In the pre-frontal cortex this peak in synaptic density also corresponds with the peak period of brain plasticity. However different areas of the brain reach their peak values at different times. When plasticity is at its highest the learning potentials in each area of the brain can often exceed adult values, but these abilities become significantly reduced outside these times.

Brain connections which are most used become stronger, those who are less used weaken or disappear. After each period of peak brain plasticity that part of the brain becomes much less able to reshape itself: so that characteristics which have previously been developed become locked in place. It is demonstrated that these changes enable a constancy of personality to be created and that the core concepts of gender identity and personality become irrevocably fixed by the age of three years⁴⁷. The constancy is such that only a stroke, tumour, dementia or other physical brain damage can cause the personality to change. This is borne out by the transgender experience, where it is found that all later attempts to fight, to change or to suppress the core sense of identity do not succeed, and it is the attrition that is caused by this constancy and the insistence of its demands which leads to collapse.

2:9: Tuning

⁴⁵The time when this occurs can vary widely between individuals. Two years is taken here as a median value but for some children this rapid transformation can occur much earlier within the second year of life.

⁴⁶This is the part of the brain which controls intuition, perception and organised thought.

⁴⁷ See section 4:7 Of this document.

Compared with other brain functions the development of the pre-frontal cortex is delayed to a very late stage. It is argued that this delay enables the greatest possible human potential, intellectual capacity, curiosity and individuality to be created, but it also makes it more likely for variations and errors to occur⁴⁸. Energy requirements are another consideration. In an adult brain these demand about 20% of an adult's total intake, but in an infant it is closer to 50%. It is concluded in this analysis that the physiological, neurological and psychological aspects of brain development together form a finely tuned system in which the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence and inquisitiveness, together with the minimum degree of energy expenditure is formed. Development is driven by the contagious self-reinforcing physiological forces and wide variations in outcomes will also be found.

2:10: Neural Maturation

The physiological and psychological processes of development in infancy and in early childhood have been investigated by various research schools. In all of these a common theme is established whereby initial development begins with the establishment of separated elementary elements of thought which later coalesce together to form more complex elements. From these the basic concepts of identity can then be formed.

Gallese⁴⁹ shows that these processes are fundamental to brain physiology, whereby the resonance of mirror neurons enables learning through the automatic physiologically driven processes of imitation and empathy to progress. Dawkins⁵⁰ describes a similarly contagious process in which individual elements (memes) are formed and compete with each other to succeed. Only the successful survive. Girard, whose work anticipated that of Dawkins and Gallese, describes a similar process in the form of possessive imitation⁵¹. This is for possession alone - it is not possession for any purpose or achievement or goal. Girard defined this type of possessive imitation as mimesis. He

⁴⁸ See section 1:1 of Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf> and Gilchrist, S. (2012): "*Personality Formation: Identity and Gender*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/204PPersFormIdentityGndr.pdf>

⁴⁹ Gallese, V. (2001): "*The "Shared Manifold" hypothesis: from mirror neurons to empathy*". *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 8, 33-50. Gallese, V. (2003): "*The Roots of Empathy: The Shared Manifold Hypothesis and the Neural Basis of Intersubjectivity*". *Psychopathology*, 36(4): 171-180. Gallese, Vittorio, Lakoff, George. (2005) "*The Brain's Concepts: The Role Of The Sensory-Motor System In Conceptual Knowledge*". *Cognitive Neuropsychology*, 2005, 21. Gallese, V. (2009) "*The Two Sides of Mimesis Girard's Mimetic Theory, Embodied Simulation and Social Identification*", *Journal of Consciousness studies*, 16, No 4. Gallese, V. and Sinigaglia, C. (2011) "*How the body in action shapes the self*", *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 18((7-8): 117-143.

Gallese, V. (2013) "*Bodily self, affect, consciousness and the cortex*", *Neuropsychanalysis*, 15(1): 42-45. Garrels, S. R (2004), "*Imitation, Mirror Neurons, & Mimetic Desire: Convergent Support for the Work of Rene Girard*", p. 29 (This is an earlier version of the paper that appeared as Garrels, Scott R (2006). Garrels, S.R. (2006) "*Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire: Convergence Between the Mimetic Theory of Rene Girard and Empirical Research on Imitation Contagion*", *Journal of Violence, Mimesis and Culture*, 12-13, 2006: 47-86. Access at: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.133.189&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

⁵⁰ Dawkins, R. (1989/1978) "*The Selfish Gene*", Oxford University Press. 3rd edition 2006

⁵¹ René Girard is a historian, literary critic, and philosopher of social science. Much of his writing is devoted to developing the idea that human culture is based on a sacrifice as the way out of mimetic, or imitative, violence between rivals. His writing covers anthropology, theology, psychology, mythology, sociology, cultural studies, critical theory, and literary criticism as well as philosophy. His work on early development anticipated much of the core frameworks of development espoused by Dawkins Gallese and others. His work mostly lies inside the spectrum of anthropological philosophy and it has an emphasis on psychology and religious belief. In this latter area he has a strong following. However it is only the psychological aspects of his work which are relevant to the development of personality and identity that are made use of in this article. Dawkins and Girard take very different approaches to religious issues. Dawkins and his school do not cite or make use of Girard's work but that of Gallese does. Dawkins uses the word "mimesis" to describe his understanding of imitative behaviour, while Girard had earlier used "mimesis" to describe his. Both words describe similar processes, but they interpret it in different ways. Because of this lack of cross-citation confusion may arise. A useful account which links the work of Girard to that of Gallese and others is given by Garrels. Full details are given in: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach*". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm .

identified this as a self-reinforcing process where each feature builds on the preceding one and only the strongest win. Girard applied his analysis to intra-personal as well inter-personal behaviour.

At this early time in life children do not possess the mental capability to distinguish between these two types of behaviour. Therefore co-operation between groups, as well individuals can be created to reinforce the rivalry that occurs. At first this is fleeting but later it can become more firmly established, so that tribal alliances are created. This result is significant since it shows that these tribal allegiances can be created through the actions of the internally driven self-reinforcing physiological driving forces alone. These concepts of self-identity extend beyond personal boundaries to define the place and role of the child in society, and from this it can be argued that a collective and unconscious identification may be formed.

2:11: Learning Restrictions

It has already been made clear that during the first two years of life the impetus for learning and development is internally engendered by the physiologically generated forces alone. These are all fragmented processes and neural pathways cannot be mapped to a centre which does not yet exist. Therefore it is essential to establish the extent and the limitations of the learning capabilities which are possible during this early time.

In their first year it has also been shown that babies respond very well to direct stimulation, but observational learning seems to have little effect. Without the cognitive ability to link the future to current events it is shown that outside learning inputs which are intended to reinforce the expectations of rearing have little influence. In addition there are no cognitive capabilities which are able to identify the link between cause and effect. This means that goals cannot be defined, and learning is driven by the rejection of what is wrong. If conflict occurs, the dynamics of development take over and any awareness, influence or relevance of a cause may be lost. Without any overall co-ordination being present it is demonstrated that a baby cannot make the distinction between interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences. This means that within these first two years of life it is only basic characteristics associated with the place of the child within society and the associated senses of tribal allegiance that can be created. However it is also shown that the core elements of personality will be in place soon after the end of this period, and a constancy of personality is formed.

2:12: Timing, Individuality and Momentum

A further consideration relate to the timing and the way that cognitive abilities can begin to have an effect. There is the rapid maturation in brain physiology and cognitive ability around the age of two years. Recent research suggests that quorum sensing mechanisms are involved, and this would appear to be the time when the transformation occurs. Quorum sensing happens when a particular pathway becomes sufficiently dominant to take over control, and when the neural structures in the brain become able to link together sufficiently to allow more global concepts to be formed. The process proceeds rapidly, and from what had previously developed as tribal alliances, more global concepts, such as the sense of core gender identity are created. These results confirm that the powers of cognition do not become available to children until after this transformation has begun.

The consequence of this is to create a sense of core gender identity which follows directly from what the tribal alliances had conveyed. The contagion of the physiological driving forces with the inability to absorb the cognitively based learning inputs from external sources, which include those imposed by the expectations of rearing, means that development proceeds under its own momentum. Initial elements of thought are rejected or reinforced.

Girard has shown that once a particular path has been established the direction it follows becomes very difficult to change. Without sufficient powers of cognition to check its direction, development

can often be perverse, for it can regard genuine corrections that should be made as obstacles to be overcome: and this further increases the strength of the drive. Typical or atypical gender identities may therefore develop. There is an advantage to this randomness when it is seen as part of a tuned process during which the greatest possible degrees of individuality and human potential are formed. From a statistical point of view alone it would be expected that a proportion of people who have gender or sexually variant identities would be created without the requirement for any external cause.

2:13: Pre-Disposition

This does not stop pre-disposing factors from being involved. Studies have shown that there are gender related differences in the behaviour of babies, and that these are observed from immediately after birth. The contagion involved in early development may be sufficient to allow gender linked alliances amongst babies of like mind to be created. Once these are formed they can be difficult to change. The gender reassignment of newly born intersex children or those with genital malformation externally reverses the expectations of rearing which are imposed by others in society. However the internal expectations which are created by the physiologically based learning processes are unaffected by the reassignment that has taken place. Clashes and conflicts that arise because of such early reassignment may therefore be found, but their existence will remain hidden until children can first assess for themselves the correctness or otherwise of what has happened to them, and that occurs from around the age of four years.

Even though pre-natal brain plasticity may set an initial direction of travel it remains difficult to see how it can have a more influential role than that, given the primitive state of development of the pre-frontal cortex at birth, the contagious nature of the driving forces which are involved and the massive impact of brain plasticity around the age of two years. In this study it is also shown that it is not required. More detailed discussion on pre-disposition issues is contained in section 4 of this account.

2:14: Review

This analysis sees the formation of gender identity as a two stage process. It is argued that the dynamics of tribal allegiance first carry forward and reinforce the particular directions that early identification has set. The second stage occurs when these tribal identities become physically fixed in place by the massive changes during the peak period of brain plasticity in the pre-frontal cortex. This occurs around the age of two years. The formation of gender identity extends across all of these processes and this is used to map the transformations that occur.

The primitive state of brain development within the pre-frontal cortex, and the lack of neural interconnections during the first two years prevent cognitive continuums being created. These continuums act across both time and function, and in their absence little integration occurs. During this period learning and development are dominated by internally driven physiologically based and contagious forces which involve empathy, possessive imitation and inhibition. The rejection of what is wrong is the means whereby distinctions between the self and the other are made. Without any overall co-ordination being present it is demonstrated that a baby cannot make the distinction between interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences. Therefore concepts of self-identity extend beyond personal boundaries, and from this it can be argued that a collective and unconscious identification can be formed. This means that during these first two years of life it is only basic characteristics associated with the place of the child within society and the associated senses of tribal allegiance that can be created. In the absence of cognitive abilities to link the future to current events it is shown that outside learning inputs which are intended to reinforce the expectations of rearing have much less influence than people would expect.

The limited capabilities of the neural structures at this time mean that no cognitive capabilities are available to monitor the direction that is taken, and they do not provide the ability to interpret the links between cause and effect. Because of the strength of the self-reinforcing physiologically driven forces the dynamics of development take over. These establish a self-generating momentum and it becomes difficult to change even a perverse direction of travel after it has been set. Tribal alliances which lead to the creation of typical or atypical associations with gender are established. Because of this momentum and these limitations, they may be relatively unchecked.

There is the rapid maturation in brain physiology and cognitive ability around the age of two years. Recent research suggests that quorum sensing mechanisms are involved, and the sudden development in the pre-frontal cortex of the brain at this time enables links to rapidly be created, and core global concepts to be formed. The consequence of this is to create a sense of core gender identity which follows directly from what the tribal alliances had provided, and typical or atypical senses of gender identity may be found. The developing brain physiology and the need to create a constancy of personality means that the core elements of identity have become unchangeably locked in place by the age of three years.

An important element in development is the timing of these changes. The strong, contagious feedforward forces which dominate early development, and are created by the internal physiologically driven processes must be moderated by the feedback from the later acting external controlling forces which cognition provides. If the cognitive processes are too strong or become active too early, the processes involved in the creation of individuality, creativity and human potential will be inhibited. The more that this happens the more people will increasingly become clones of what their parents and society provides. On the other hand if these cognitive processes are too weak or if they become active too late, chaos will result.

It is concluded that the physiological, neurological and psychological aspects of brain development together form a finely tuned system in which the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence and inquisitiveness, together with the minimum degree of energy expenditure is formed. Some pre-disposing factors may be involved in the creation of atypical gender identities. However from a statistical point of view alone it would be expected that a proportion of people who have gender or sexually variant identities will be created without the requirement for any external cause.

2:15: Identification

Knowledge of these conflicts will not be available to a child before cognitive abilities have developed sufficiently to recognise disruptions that occur. Therefore a major challenge for the cognitive processes is one of making sense of the developments that have already taken place. The dominant changes which lead to the enforcement of these conflicts occur at the time when the core senses of gender and personality are created. This means that the impact of these conflicts on later life depends on what happens at that time.

In this analysis it is considered that the conflicts which are associated with gender identity must be seen as the symptom of the failure to build a coherent sense of self identity, rather than the cause. This means that for everyone the development of their own gender identity, atypical or not, proceeds in the same way. Transsexuals develop a gender allegiance which is contrary to their biological sex, but this is at least as firmly held as those for whom their gender identity and allegiance follow a normal path, indeed it may be argued that the gender allegiance and identity which is felt by transsexuals should be even stronger because it has had to be fought for all along the way. The physiology of brain plasticity and synaptic pruning which takes place from around the age of two years subsequently locks these in place, so that from this action a constant personality and gender identity is found.

2:16: Consequences

At the present time two different theories with different outcomes are used to forecast behaviour and experience during the first two years. The title of this paper is “Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process”. Clearly there is a need to reconcile these differences in ways which also takes the strengths and the deficiencies of each of these theories into account. The social and theological impact of the failure to recognise these differences is also studied. This analysis shows that there must be some form of transition between the roles which are played between the physiologically based and cognitively based processes. When and how quickly this occurs, together with the role that gender identity plays in revealing what happens, are prime subjects of this study.

In this analysis it is demonstrated that the development of the core elements of personality and identity, including the core gender identity, arise through the early action of the physiologically based driving forces alone. That conclusion is very important for understanding the relationship between the different developmental theories. Although the subsequent cognitive processes may further refine and develop this sense of identity they can only act as overlays on what has already been formed.

This investigation uses the development of gender identity as a case study to examine the development of personality and self-identity. However it further shows that these results are equally applicable to the development of other basic aspects of personality and identity, since all of these are formed in a similar way. Because of the physiological processes that are involved in the maturation of the brain it additionally shows that the core elements of each of these aspects of personality and identity are irrevocably fixed in place at around the age of three years. Therefore, instead of just being relevant to the development of gender identity, these results can be applied to the development of personality as a whole.

2:17: Genetic Inputs

Although genetic influences may play an important part in the development of some conditions, their influence is expected to vary according to the nature of the condition that is encountered. In the case of autism for example genetic influences may play an important part, in the case of gender dysphoria they may only create a pre-disposing influence, in the case of the development of tribal identities there may be none. Attempts to prove the existence of genetic inputs by examining the physical structure of the brain is only likely to show the changes in brain structure which have been created due to the high degree of brain plasticity that has taken place during the first two years of life.

2:18: Structure

At best this introduction can only give an overview of the process. This is considered in more detail in the remaining sections of this account. Section 3 summarise some encounters. Section 4 traces the development of personality and self-identity through the various stages of its formation by using transsexuality and gender and sexual variance as models for the study. Section 5 examines how transgender experience is manifested within the individual, in everyday life and in relationships with society. Section 6 examines the management techniques that may be used. Section 7 considers the religious dimension, including the condemnations which the Christian Church has imposed on gender and sexually variant people because of the doctrines it has taught. In section 8 the cultural implications and the present day church are considered. In section 9 the discussion and conclusions are presented.

Full details and references to all sources are given in the research papers associated with this analysis. These papers can be accessed via the internet using the web address which appears in the footer on each page of this article⁵².

⁵² Use the web address: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm> to access all of the research papers and references to the sources which are associated with this article.

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

Susan Gilchrist

3:0: Encounters

3:1: Experiences

An initial common history for transsexuals is that of repression of the inner sense of gender identity. This continues until this repression can no longer be sustained. Providing some sort of outlet has the effect of affirming the true gender allegiance which is opposite to that being enforced. The more strongly and more often this is resisted the stronger it becomes. The dynamics create a runaway drive, where repeated compulsive encounter further increases the demand. The scapegoat is usually the most obvious symbol of the trauma, and this is normally the genitalia of the birth assigned sex. Without other means of escape, gender reassignment surgery becomes an overwhelming demand, and the relief when that is completed is enormous. Removing the symbols of the rejected gender allows transsexuals to move forward in their new role. Most merge invisibly into society in roles appropriate to the gender allegiance possessed. The contrast between behaviour and desire suggest that gender is the focus but not the drive, and reassignment satisfies the objective of allowing people to be themselves.

It has been shown in this analysis that the creation of the core gender identity is a consequence of the internally generated physiological driving forces and identity driven conflicts alone. The bipolarity associated with identity driven conflicts is discussed further in section 5 of this document. When this discordance of identity is compensated for or relieved, a threshold may be crossed. As a result of this crossing both conscious desires and the impact of the conflict can disappear. Because of this bipolarity all knowledge of the conflict can be suppressed from early childhood until later in life. This can last for many years and for many transsexuals the conflict may first erupt into consciousness at a time of crisis, puberty or when depression occurs.

3:2: Progression

5 main elements are identified. The first element is that of acquisition, which occupies the first two years. At this time the pre-frontal cortex of the brain is still in a relatively primitive state. Central co-ordinating functions have not yet developed and cognitive processes cannot yet work. Concepts of self-identity extend beyond personal boundaries to determine the place and role of the child in society, and tribal alliances may be created. Nevertheless the contagious and self-reinforcing driving forces of physiology ensure that of large amounts of poorly co-ordinated information is acquired. The contagious feed-forward processes which are associated with this ensure that the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence and inquisitiveness is formed. Pre-disposition is also considered.

The second element, which is here called transformation, coincides with the time when the rapid development of the pre-frontal cortex takes place. There is also a large advance in cognitive capabilities. Instead of tribal associations, individual concepts of self-identity can begin to be formed. Language, and the ability to link thoughts together rapidly develop, and elementary core global concepts can begin to be created. The feedback and controlling forces involved in cognitive development can start to ensure that overall co-ordination is gained.

The third element is when a constancy of personality is created. Here it is shown that at least some of the basic core elements of self-identity have become irrevocably locked in place by the physical

restructuring of the brain⁵³. The unused or little used brain connections die back. Those that are most used are strengthened and the brain becomes physically reshaped to correspond to the core concepts which have already been formed⁵⁴.

The fourth element of awareness becomes evident at the latest by three years. From this time onwards children start to try to make sense of what the earlier processes of formation have created. Maccoby and others have shown that, by their own actions and intentions, children create very strong and exclusive gender stereotypes for themselves from around this time⁵⁵.

The final element occurs from the age of four years when children first become sufficiently self-aware to interrogate their own minds and when they are first able to sense the correctness or otherwise of what has taken place. When this happens, children are said to possess a "Theory of Mind"⁵⁶. By the time it becomes possible for anyone to look down at their bodies and to declare to themselves that: "I am a woman" or that "I am a man". If that check brings a conflicting result it is too late for changes to be made.

3:3: Impact

It is shown that the development of self and gender identity is the outcome of as finely tuned process where the maximum degrees of individuality, curiosity and human potential are attained. This means that there is a different end point for every individual who resolves their conflict with the gender that they are assigned to - and this can account for the great variety of experience that is encountered. People also respond in different manners. Some reject the gender they are given from the outset and seek transition and reassignment as soon as possible. Others over-compensate in the ways they endorse their birth assigned gender role. Yet others try to suppress the discomfort they find. What is experienced by the individual is the outcome of intense struggles, and because of this a distinction between identity and allegiance is here made. This is discussed further in section 5 of this document. If identity expresses what is found by combining all of the individual strands of thought, then allegiance represents the outcome of what the struggles then create.

Some religious fundamentalists make use of this bipolarity and religious euphoria to claim that a "cure" can be found. However the degree of religious euphoria which is needed to hide the force of these conflicts is unlikely to be sustained. When the collapse or relapse occurs, the guilt, self-loathing and condemnations which are imposed by these fundamentalist teachings can be enormous. The rejection and the condemnation of these people by the church or sect they had belonged to on the grounds of their alleged wickedness, can have a devastating effect. The more this sense of identity is fought or suppressed, the stronger the trauma becomes. For as long as the Christian Church continues to argue that all forms of gender and sexual variation are the consequences of reward driven behaviour, these iniquities will continue to exist.

⁵³ See section 4:7 of this document

⁵⁴ See section 5:3 of Gilchrist, S. (2013d): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/201P-PersonalityDevelopmentAndLGBTPeople.pdf>

⁵⁵ Maccoby, E and Jacklin, C.N. (1974): "*The Psychology of Sex Differences*": Stanford University Press; ISBN 0804708592, 9780804708593

⁵⁶ Theory of mind (which is often abbreviated to ToM) is the ability to attribute mental states including beliefs, intents, pretending, desires and knowledge to oneself and others. It also includes the ability to interpret the validity of features, views and intentions that are presented as being correct and to understand that others have beliefs, desires, intentions, and perspectives that are different from one's own.

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

Susan Gilchrist

4:0: Formation

The value of using gender identity as a case study to test the validity of these arguments is because it crosses the boundaries between the various processes. Even though personal experiences vary greatly, common elements in these developmental processes can be identified. An overview of these elements is given earlier in the introduction. As part of a more detailed analysis, this section considers in developmental stages and in greater depth, the growth of the physiological and psychological maturation processes that are involved.

4:1: Acquisition

This analysis uses the research work by Gallese, Dawkins, Girard and others, which has shown that the first two years of life are characterised by an overpowering, contagious and self-reinforcing drive for the acquisition of isolated and poorly co-ordinated information. The types of learning processes that are available depend on the staged and delayed development of the pre-frontal cortex. In specific areas these learning capabilities can exceed adult capacity, while in other areas very little development takes place. These are all fragmented processes and without any overall co-ordination being present during this early period it is demonstrated that a baby cannot make the distinction between interpersonal and intrapersonal experiences. This means that within these first two years of life it is only basic characteristics associated with the place of the child within society, and the associated senses of tribal allegiance that can be created. The feed-forward elements of the process ensure that the maximum possible gains are achieved, and the often hidden but unrestrained violence which is inherent in these processes is demonstrated throughout all of this research.

A great deal of attention has been paid to the learning processes which are active during the first two years. These include the impact of empathy and delayed imitation. Learning is experiential and the ability of the infant to separate the self from the other begins with the development of the physiological processes of inhibition, which creates the rejection of the automatic response to every experience that a baby is programmed to create. Gallese identified the role of mirror neurons, Girard showed that tribal associations provide the driving forces and Dawkins argues for the competition of memes. Because of the unrestrained and self-reinforcing nature of these dynamics, chaos theory might be considered to apply. Like the apocryphal story of the butterfly which flaps its wings in Patagonia and causes a hurricane in Britain, the interaction between cause and effect is likewise lost. Causes might include the natural variations in development which arise from a process which is tuned to create the maximum individuality in each person. From a statistical point of view alone it would therefore be expected that a proportion of people who have gender or sexually variant identities would be created without the requirement for any external cause.

4:2: Dynamics

The development of any personal self-identity and personality is also a multi-faceted activity and the contagious processes of early development, together with the delayed development of the pre-frontal cortex permits many variations to take place. However the nature of learning is also specific and understanding which relies on cognitive abilities cannot be gained. Neural pathways cannot be mapped to centres which have not yet been formed. Therefore the attitudes to rearing which depend on such higher level cognitive functions cannot be absorbed. During their first year babies respond very well to direct stimulation, but observational learning seems to have little effect. This

applies despite the attention children are often given and this means that those expectations of rearing which adults seek to communicate to babies will have little impact on their lives before these functions are in place.

The conventional views which are put forward to explain gender and sexual variation attribute their development to the influence of hormones which act before birth. The consequence of this is that male and female babies at birth have different perspectives depending on whether or not testosterone has had the required result. This pre-natal brain differentiation is taken to be the determining factor in the development of gender identification, however the initially primitive state of the pre-frontal cortex and the absence of neural integration, do not provide the co-ordination that is needed for any meaningful concept of gender to be created during these early years of life.

At most pre-natal plasticity is only likely to create this gender related differences in the behaviour of babies, which is observed immediately after birth. However tribal identification may be sufficient to allow gender linked alliances amongst babies of like mind to be created, and this may be the pre-disposing factor that is required. Girard and Dawkins have shown how such alliances can occur. At this time only isolated elements of thought have been formed, and once a particular path has been established the direction it takes becomes very difficult to change. Co-operation may be established to reinforce rivalry. At first this is fleeting but later it can become more firmly maintained. Without any overall monitoring processes being present these same dynamics may also act to reinforce a direction of development that has already been set. When that happens, experiences which would be expected to correct atypical behaviour may instead become obstacles to overcome. The result of their challenge is not that a correction is made, but that the original direction of travel becomes reinforced.

The development of gender identification is considered to be a two stage process and it is the creation of tribal alliances which first carries the process forwards. During the first two years the physiologically driven processes of neural resonance, possessive imitation and empathy strongly influence the development that takes place. Coalescence can only take place after the required neural interconnections have developed. That transformation takes place around the age of two years. Before this time those elements which later coalesce to form a sense of gender identity remain as individual and isolated strands of thought. However it is also the strength and the momentum of the earlier tribal dynamics which informs the sense of gender that is found later in life. The second stage occurs at around the age of two years when the massive degree of brain plasticity which then becomes available both creates and subsequently locks the sense of core gender identity in place.

4:3: Pre-Disposition

The contagious and self-reinforcing nature of these dynamics does not preclude the influence of pre-disposing mechanisms which promote a particular trend. Far from the passive processes predicted by the psychodynamic and social learning theories, children take a very active role in developing their own experiences during their early years. With no cognitive capabilities being available at this time these can develop independently of the expectations of rearing. However that awareness is not available to children until later in life. Gender reassignment of newly born children reverses the externally imposed expectations of rearing. However this does not change the internally driven processes of gender identification, which continue undisturbed. Therefore the gender reassignment of newly born intersex children or those with genital malformation establishes a pattern of development, whereby the creation of gender identities which conflict with the expectations of rearing are more likely to occur.

4:4: Hormones and Pre-Natal Influences

The conventional views which are put forward to explain gender and sexual variation attribute their development to the influence of hormones which act before birth⁵⁷. The consequence of this theory is that newly born male and female babies have different perspectives depending on whether or not testosterone has had the required result. According to this explanation the pre-natal brain differentiation is taken to be the determining factor in the development of gender identification. Endocrinal influences may have supplementary effects. However the contagious nature of early development, together with the initially primitive state of the pre-frontal cortex together with the absence of neural integration do not provide the co-ordination that is needed for any meaningful concept of gender to be created. As has been previously noted, the absence of cognitive abilities also means that development at this time can take place independently of the expectations of rearing. However male and female babies have been shown to respond differently to the same external stimuli only hours after they have been born. It is argued that it is these behavioural influences; and it is not any direct association with gender which determines the direction that development takes^{58 59}. Girard has shown that the momentum created by the contagious and self-reinforcing processes of early development produces tribal associations of children of like mind. The core elements of personality and identity are only created after sufficient neural co-ordination has occurred. Even a small trigger may define the direction in which subsequent development occurs, and in this context it is possible for pre-natal influences to have a lasting effect. Once the direction of development has been established the dynamics take over so that the influence and awareness of any cause may be lost.

These processes apply equally to all of the core elements of personality and identity which are eventually created. Therefore the extent of genetic and endocrinal influences is likely to vary between them. In regard to autism for example, genetic and/or endocrinal influences may play a very important role. In the case of gender dysphoria it could be more likely that a pre-disposition is created; and with tribal identity which distinguishes groups of people in society there may be none.

4:5: Relative Influences

It is shown in this analysis that development in the pre-cognitive conflicts is driven by the contagion of the dynamics rather than the reaction to any cause. These conflicts are characterised by the

⁵⁷ See GIRES (2006), GIRES (2012), Besser et al (2006) for a general overview of the present understanding.

⁵⁸ See: Gabriel, Paula Stefaneli Ziotti; Formiga, Cibelle, Kayenne; Martins, Roberto; & Linhares, Maria Beatriz Martins. (2013). Also: Boatelle-Costa, E., Costas-Moragas, C., Botet-Mussons, F., Fornieles-Deu, A., & De Cáceres-Zurita, M. L. (2007). Some behaviours may involve the primitive or newborn reflexes, but others can involve attention span and holding length of gaze

⁵⁹ Recent work has confirmed sexual differentiation in brain structure and function before birth and in early life. In epigenetic studies on the foetal brain, Spiers et al (2015) shows sex differentiation with highly significant differences in DNA methylation between males and females at a number of autosomal sites (sites relating to a chromosome which is not a sex chromosome), with a small number of regions showing sex-specific DNA methylation trajectories across brain development. Dumais and Veenema (2016) showed that there were sex related differences in the neuropeptides vasopressin (VP) and oxytocin (OT) and their receptors. It is understood that these receptors very often modulate social behaviours in sex-specific ways. Gao et al (2015) aimed to characterize the important developmental process of the brain's functional network architecture during the first 2 years of life. They observed significant sex differences. Boys demonstrated faster network-level connectivity increases among the two frontoparietal networks than girls. These are networks that are crucially involved in the selection of sensory contents by priority and attention. That might be expected to lead to the more rapid identification of behavioural goals and expectations among boys. Forger (2016) takes the view that circumstantial evidence alone suggests that the establishment and maintenance of sex differences in the brain depend on epigenetic modifications of chromatin structure. She points out that more direct evidence has recently been obtained from two types of studies: those manipulating a particular epigenetic mechanism, and those examining the genome-wide distribution of specific epigenetic marks. In her view, however, the evidence suggests there is unlikely to be a simple formula for masculine or feminine development of the brain and behaviour. Instead, underlying epigenetic mechanisms may vary by brain region or even by dependent variable within a region. This recent research suggests that, while there various sex differences encountered in foetal and early brain development the individual effects are related to specific features and areas. They do not themselves support the concept of a "male or "female" brain. However they also relate to differentiation is social behaviour. These epigenetic influences might promote the development of neural pathways in gender related ways.

rejection of what is wrong instead of a desire for reward. Attempts to control them by searching for a cause is shown to be counterproductive: therefore the appropriate management techniques should concentrate on calming the dynamics instead⁶⁰. The contagious nature of early development also means that there is unlikely to be any single cause for the development of any sexual or gender variant condition. However there are some primary features which are likely to dominate the manner in which they are created.

Two main formation mechanisms are identified. One comes from the momentum created by the intensity of physiologically driven forces that involve the mirror neuron system⁶¹. The second is due to genetic or endocrinal influences before or near birth. The lack or absence of cognitive abilities means that a third formation mechanism, that of social learning, is limited in its effect.⁶² None of these excludes the other⁶³. Some indication of the relative influences of the first two processes may come from children who have been assigned or reassigned to a gender at or close to birth⁶⁴. A significant but restricted concordance is found. This indicates that gender reassignment of intersex children should never take place until they are able to decide for themselves what is right.

In all cases it is demonstrated that quorum sensing methods may be primarily responsible for creating the core gender identity⁶⁵. This means that identities are set by the direction the process has taken; they are not the product of cognitive thought. Although different formation processes may be precursors to the creation of the core senses of self-identity they all lead to the same result. Awareness of the conflicts between the conflicting expectations that are created by the divergent identity driven and later reward driven development processes can only begin to appear after there is sufficient neural co-ordination to allow the core senses of identity and a "Theory of Mind" to develop. For individual people these conflicts have always existed and it is understandable for them to believe that they have always been present from birth.

4:6: Transformation

This stage is identified by the sudden and rapid advance in infant behaviour. There is an immediate flowering of capability and an eruption in language ability around the age of two years. MRI scans show a change from what had been mostly localised neural activity and as at least one researcher put it, the brain "lights up". Recent research suggests that a "Quorum Sensing" process is also involved: (For a description of how this works, imagine a crowd of people milling around in a common space, but not interacting with each other. Each represents an isolated stand of thought. Suddenly someone shouts loud enough for everyone to hear: then everyone rushes to that point.)

⁶⁰ Gilchrist, S. (2015a): "*Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/209P-RethinkPaperFull.pdf> and Gilchrist, S. (2013e): "*Management Techniques for Gender Dysphoria with Particular Reference to Transsexuality*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/205P-ManagementTechniquesInGenderDysphoria.pdf>

⁶¹ Cattaneo and Rizzolatti (2009); Iacoboni and Gaffan (2009); Keysers and Fadiga (2008); Rizzolatti and Fabbri-Destro (2010).

⁶² Kerlin (2004); Meriggiola and Gava (2015); Minot Presentation (2005); Rosenthal (2014).

⁶³ There is currently intense discussion about the relative importance of nature versus nurture and the extent to which genetic and endocrinal influences are involved. This analysis allows for these, but it does not require it.

⁶⁴ Dessens et al (2005); Diamond and Sigmundson (1997); Diamond and Watson (2004); Kipnis and Diamond (1998); Ochoa (1998); Reiner (2004).

⁶⁵ Quorum Sensing is encountered when separate entities find ways to communicate with others to pursue a common purpose. Much research is now carried out on communication in bacteria colonies and the creation of artificial neural networks, where particle swarm optimisation techniques may be used. Mechanisms similar to quorum sensing can also be observed in colonies of ants and bees. It is similar to crowd behaviour at a time when a point of interest is found. That point must be big enough to attract attention, but once that is gained (the quorum) all the other elements who are nearby rapidly join in. In this analysis it is considered that the same thing happens at the time when the individual global elements that are used to make up the core senses of identity and personality can first combine. That is associated with the rapid and large increase in neural interconnectivity which takes place in the brain at around the age of two years. See: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*". Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

However this mechanism responds to the moment and it does not give a balanced result. Instead of neural activity being mostly confined to local areas, neural activity becomes widespread. The left and right hemispheres become functionally connected and the pre-frontal cortex begins to be able to function as a single unit for the first time. The resulting interactions promote a rapid development of the cognitive processes which allow more global concepts to be created. Trends that have already been established are confirmed and it is shown that from what had been initially transmitted as tribal identities, the core elements of personality are formed.

The recognition that there is a major physiological change at this time is common to all theories, including those of Piaget and Freud. The flowering of language matches the rapid development of the pre-frontal cortex and the identification that children make with their gender occurs at the same time. Indeed these features are so closely matched that language acquisition and gender identification have been considered to be part of the same process. This means that gender identification must precede or is concurrent with this transformation. This additionally means that cognitive processes do not contribute to any early gender identification that occurs.

It has already been noted in the introduction that this conclusion is very important for understanding the relationship between the different theories. Later cognitive processes may transform and affirm this sense of gender identity but they do not create it. While the subsequent cognitive processes may refine and develop this sense of gender identity they can only act as overlays on what has already been formed.

The feedback and controlling forces of cognition and analysis which are needed during this later period must not only be strong enough to overcome the contagious drives of imitation and acquisition which continue to exist, they must also ensure that an individual personality which stays constant over time is created. However, although the cognitive processes provide control of behaviour they also change in response to current situations. Therefore an additional method of maintaining constancy is required. Here the impact of brain plasticity plays an important part.

4:7: Constancy of Personality and Later Development

It has been shown that the unrestrained and contagious forces which are active in early life, together with the delayed development of the pre-frontal cortex are good for ensuring that the maxim possible intellectual potential and individuality are obtained. However this has to transform into the creation of personal characteristics and a unique individuality which remains constant though out life. That means if you meet somebody once, you will be able to recognise the same individual when you meet him or her again, even if many years have passed.

The development of language is taken to epitomise the development of integrated cognitive functions. Therefore it is not surprising that language development has been intensively studied and there is one telling point to note. During this period of peak plasticity children can differentiate between all of the sounds in many different languages, but after this peak period of brain plasticity that ability is lost. Learning potentials in each specific area can often exceed adult values when plasticity is at its peak, but significantly less at other times. It has been noted earlier that brain connections which are most used become stronger, and those who are less used weaken or disappear. From then on the ability of children to differentiate between sounds is confined to their native language(s): this is why those who learn another language at a later stage often speak with a foreign accent, however fluent in the new language they become. Outside this period of peak brain plasticity the brain is much less able to reshape itself so that characteristics which have previously been developed become locked in place. Furthermore, those abilities which have failed to develop may never be acquired.

The close relationships between the development of language skills and the creation of the core gender identity have already been noted. The recognition that both the core gender identity and the

language skills are irrevocably established by the age of three years strongly suggests that identical processes are involved. These conclusions are further supported by the work of Hood and others on what has been called “the domestication of the brain”⁶⁶. It is argued here that it is the reduction, or the pruning, of the brain connections which from this time enforce the constancy of personality that is formed. Different parts of the brain reach their peak values at different times, and the same pattern is found in all of these areas. The constancy is such that only a stroke, tumour, dementia or other physical brain damage can cause the personality to change. This is borne out by the transgender experience, where it is found that all later attempts to fight, to change or to suppress the core sense of identity do not succeed, and it is the attrition that is caused by the constancy and the insistence of its demands which leads to collapse.

Brain plasticity and permeability⁶⁷ extends throughout life. These are increasingly being recognised as always having a fundamental part to play in the development of human identity, personality and capability. However it should also be noted that in different neural regions, brain plasticity peaks at different times⁶⁸. In puberty brain plasticity and permeability greatly increases. During this period considerable changes in personality can occur. If they have not already done so, this is a time when many gender and sexually variant people first become aware of their conditions.

However these developments must also be seen in the context of the now gradual, but still continuing decrease in the number of brain interconnections⁶⁹. This decrease is counter-intuitive but it arises because the increasing brain organisation means that those neural pathways which are no longer needed die back. The degree of re-organisation may also be large. This overall number of brain interconnections drops from the peak value of one and a half to twice the adult value during the ages of between two and three years. That peak coincides with the time when the core elements of personality are formed. Even though many pathways die back, there are massive increases in the other pathways in the brain which correspond to the development of new skills and abilities.

This type of process has been described as the “Domestication of the brain” and where it occurs, smaller brain sizes are found⁷⁰. This net reduction is considered in this analysis to be a consequence of the tuning of the brain in which these later developments are refinements and adaptations of the brain to meet the current needs and circumstances, without removing the underlying sub-stratum of core elements of personality and identity that had been locked in place not later than the ages of two and three years. There are other indicators for this development pattern. Plasticity peaks in different areas of the brain at different times. In early development the peak period of brain plasticity for the pre-frontal cortex occurs from about one and a half years of age to three years. During this period an explosion in linguistic capabilities takes place. Language learning capabilities are greatly accentuated inside this period but outside this time they are considerably reduced. The impact of this is seen when a foreign language is learned: deficiencies will be found if the learning takes place after this peak period. This has a lifetime impact. Various

⁶⁶ This reflects a more general issue. Over the last 20,000 years the human brain has shrunk by about a tennis ball in size. Some argue that this erosion means that modern humans are indeed getting dumber. Other authorities argue just the opposite: Over time, as the brain shrunk, its wiring became more efficient, transforming people into quicker, more agile thinkers. Still others believe that the reduction in brain size is proof that humans have tamed themselves. Domesticated sheep, pigs, and cattle, all are smaller-brained than their wild ancestors. In this investigation it is argued that an equivalent form of brain shrinkage is responsible for the constancy of personality that is created.

⁶⁷ The ability of the wiring and the physical structure of the brain to change in response to external inputs

⁶⁸ The large changes and increases in brain plasticity which can take place during these peak times contrasts with the relatively limited changes outside them. The peak period of brain plasticity of the pre-frontal cortex, which is the area of the brain responsible for acquiring knowledge by the use of reasoning, intuition or perception occurs between one and a half to three years. Language skills and personal identification, including that of gender, are closely associated with this period. For additional discussion see: Gilchrist, S. (2013): “*Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach*”.

Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

⁶⁹ As measured in terms of synaptic density.

⁷⁰ For an introduction see: Hood, Bruce: (2014)

investigators have indicated that the development of gender associations and language capabilities are closely linked. If that argument is followed it affirms the experience which shows that the core sense of gender identity by this time has been permanently established.

The human brain has shrunk by about ten percent in the last twenty millennia and there must be little doubt that its domestication has taken place⁷¹. However an additional issue is one of determining the impact this creates in everyday life. The lived experience of transgender people may be relevant. In section 1:2 that is described. For these people, the conflict is often seen as a battle between their gender identity that is created through their interaction with others, against the core identity each person feels deeply inside. Many try to fight and suppress the deeper feeling for much of their lives. There is a bipolar element to these conflicts: at times suppression may succeed but the discord may erupt into conscious awareness at any time. The demand gets stronger as age increases. Attempts to fight, to change or to suppress the core sense of identity do not succeed and it is the attrition that is caused by the constancy and the insistence of these demands which leads to collapse⁷².

It is argued in this investigation that transgender experiences should not be treated in isolation; and that the core gender identity is just one of the many such elements that are formed. It is through the action of all of these elements that the base for a constancy of personality is created. The permanence of this is such that only a stroke, tumour, dementia or other physical brain damage can cause the personality to change. The stability given by brain domestication is considered to set the direction for the continued development of neural capabilities and for the flowering and development of personality and identity which later occurs. Transsexuals either need to seek gender reassignment, or find ways to live with this conflict for the rest of their lives.

4:8: Awareness

This is the period from two to three years onwards when the conscious separation of the self from the other begins to develop, and it is when children start to be able to make sense of what has already taken place. The development of these cognitive capabilities is characterised by the development of a "Theory of Mind". This describes how children can learn to interpret and manage their own thoughts. It can be considered to begin from the time of transformation around the age of two years, but it is not properly functional until the age of four years, which is the time when people first become sufficiently able to stand apart from their own thoughts, and identify where errors occur. It is also the age when many transsexuals begin to feel there is something wrong with the gender they have been assigned to. However change by this time is no longer possible since it has already been shown that the core sense of gender identity has become inviolably fixed by the age of three years. This means that unless transition and reassignment is undertaken, this discomfort lasts for life.

⁷¹ Over the past 20,000 years, the average volume of the human male brain has decreased from 1,500 cubic centimetres to 1,350 cc, which is about a tennis ball in size.

⁷² This is fully discussed in Gilchrist, S. (2013): *"Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach"*. Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm> .

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

Susan Gilchrist

5:0: Manifestations

Human behaviour has been predicted for centuries on the presumption that cognitive continuums can be applied to all processes of learning and development at all stages of life. That presumption is shown to be invalid in this analysis where it is demonstrated that these continuums are absent or inactive during the first two years.

Cognitive continuums act across function as well as time. Because of their absence in the early years, the continuum presented by the traditional theories which argues that gender and sexuality interrelate with each other inside a continuous spectrum of identity and behaviour, does not exist. The different elements form in relative isolation instead. The internal physiologically driven learning processes enable a distinction to be made between what is right and what is wrong. What is wrong will be rejected, but the absence of a cognitive continuum limits the ability to turn this into an understanding of the relationships between cause and effect.

During this time the learning characteristics and limitations are associated with identity driven conflicts and an understanding of how these features manifest themselves in later life must be based on what the internally driven physiological driving forces can create. There is a roughness in this process. It is argued that individual components are not lost within this coalescence but these remain hidden inside the matrix underneath. This underlying graininess disturbs the coherence of selfhood that is being formed.

5:1: Allegiance and Identity

The difference between these comes from the need to make sense of what the roughness creates. The processes of social identification begins from about the age of three years and Maccoby⁷³ and others have shown that children associate themselves with very strong and exclusive gender stereotypes from around this time. In part this development may be due the pressures which society imposes. However because of the continuing strength of the internal physiological driving forces, this gender polarisation may also be internally driven. This is a time when children need to test and develop for themselves their personal identities, and to satisfy their own need to belong. The more that these tests give a confirmatory or a contradictory result, the greater the divergence becomes. If identity embodies the initial combination of all of the individual strands of thought, allegiance represents what the struggle then creates. Rather than a gender identity which is the sum of what these elements would first form, strongly polarised and mutually exclusive senses of gender allegiance are created. In this analysis the differences between identity and allegiance are defined using these terms.

⁷³ The book, "The Psychology of Sex Differences" published by Maccoby and Jacklin in 1974 presented a pioneering synthesis of research in the area of sex differences in development. Their work stressed the biological influences that lead to differences between men and women and suggested that social, cultural, and parental influences were not the primary determinates of gender roles and preferences. In addition to being influenced by their biology and the social environment around them, children engaged in "self-socialization." The authors suggested that in this proactive process, children themselves draw inferences from the roles and behaviours in which they see men and women, boys and girls engaging. Depending on their developmental level, children then use these inferences to guide their own behaviour. Other studies have ignored the biological elements and identified the development of gender identity and gender role allegiance as being due to social learning alone. Maccoby, E and Jacklin, C.N. (1974): "*The Psychology of Sex Differences*": Stanford University Press; ISBN 0804708592, 9780804708593

In the case of children who have developed an atypical sense of core gender identity, the more earnestly they try to embrace the stereotypical tribal behaviour of the gender they are expected to belong to, the greater the discord becomes. At this time tribal divisions become very important and the sense of association or alienation that is created may make their polarisation even more complete. These arguments mean that each person creates an exclusive and polarised gender allegiance, which is either male or female and it is one to which total loyalty is required. The extent of this polarisation is even more marked when transvestite and transsexual behaviour is compared.

5:2: Bipolarity

It is shown in section 2:2 that conflicts may be of two types. Reward driven conflicts generally do not involve issues of self-identity and they only form after the cognitive learning processes have developed. The behaviour that develops is devoted to the pursuit of a reward. Therefore a substantive relationship between goal and behaviour occurs, even though that relationship may not always be consciously expressed.

Identity driven conflicts may be characterised by the obsessive and compulsive pursuit of a particular goal, but after that goal has been reached, the overwhelming intensity of the drive to reach it frequently contrasts powerfully with the modesty of the outcomes that are expressed. These conflicts show bipolar characteristics. They can manifest themselves with extreme intensity on the one hand, and yet seem to disappear on the other.

This bipolarity arises because of the contradictions and incompatibilities between the different core elements of identity and personality that are created during the first two years. These are contradictions which cannot be resolved because the consequences of brain plasticity and synaptic pruning have locked them in place. As they are driven by rejection alone, no evidence of any goal appears and no goals are set when no contradictions exist. Therefore identity driven conflicts may only erupt when threats to identity occur: and once that happens the full strength of the internally driven contagious and self-reinforcing driving forces are released. Thus in tribal and religious conflict situations it is the breakdown of the cognitive control which transforms situations of previous harmony into ones where genocide can take place. In the case of gender identity the same type of breakdown leads to the transformation of gender identity as a matter of little everyday concern into one where massive trauma is found.

Conflicts that are associated with alcoholism and depression usually lead towards oblivion and death. Those types of identity driven conflicts are here described as conflicts of *mortido*. However the same conflicts can also have a positive outcome when the driving forces behind them stimulate the drive for achievement and the exploration of new ideas. These are here called conflicts of *libido* instead. The way that people do this can lead to the admiration of others. They may provide a means whereby the greatest human potentials are achieved.

5:3: Communication

A further consequence of this bipolarity is that it makes it difficult for people who do not have to deal with issues of gender and sexual variation to understand either the nature or the extent of the trauma which is encountered or even why these conflicts should exist.

Culturally based tribal identities develop in a similar way and the core elements of these are similarly fixed in place by the age of three years. It can be difficult for people who have not been exposed to their early pressures to identify with the extremities of the feelings that can be encountered or to understand why their violent conflicts should exist. An appreciation of this is needed to understand why seemingly moderate people can be turned into violent extremists

supporting terrorist groups⁷⁴. Dealing with tribal identity is also a generational issue. It is incumbent on everybody of the present generation to take the right action now to ensure that tribal discords which have been engraved in their own minds are not carried on to the next.

5:4: Marriage

It has already been made clear that the core elements of personality and identity are determined by the physiologically driven forces. Gender dysphoria develops through these physiologically driven processes and the development of sexual orientation exhibits the same dynamics. The non-existence of any cognitive continuum and the absence of any overall co-ordination which is able to link these two features, means that each develops independently of the other.

This separation is observed in practice. It means that gender allegiance and sexual orientation can go their different ways. That is part of transgender people's experience. Many transsexuals marry in their imposed gender role for all the right reasons and love they possess. However as age increases the drive to transition gets stronger, and if no way is found to manage these dynamics the outcome can be a total, sudden and catastrophic collapse. This can have devastating results. When gender and sexuality are in conflict it is usually gender that wins. There is the destruction of relationships and commitments through the failure to cope, even when love is as strong as ever. There is the blame for letting oneself down, the hurt to other people that has been caused and the guilt for the inability to conform to the edicts of others and one's own expectations. Here too crippling harm can be created by the attitudes of some religious groups who heap guilt on transsexuals who cannot follow the path they prescribe. Further attempts to fight the conflicts only act to destroy the relationships that are sought and to accelerate the demand. The trauma these create can be enormous. Many marriages break up even though the transsexual partner desperately seeks to maintain the relationship, for despite their need to transition they lose nothing of the love that is found in the relationships and commitments they have made.

5:5: Transvestites and Transsexuals.

With transvestites and transsexuals the same type of moral duality and the same lack of linkage between gender and sexuality is encountered. The Beaumont Society is the main United Kingdom support organisation for transvestites. From its foundation, and for many years afterwards, membership of the society was confined to men who have a male heterosexual identity. The Women of the Beaumont Society gives support to their partners and wives.

People cross dress for many reasons. For some people this is to do with sexuality. However this section considers gender motivated transvestites alone. The differing experiences of transvestites and transsexuals also act to reinforce the polarities that are created. The more transsexuals express their cross gender identity the more their experiences confirm that it is correct. Attempting

⁷⁴ As well as the consequences of this bipolarity there are other reasons why people may become trapped and the roles of play and pretend can have a significant effect. It is shown in this analysis that the creation of a coherent sense of self identity depends on the abilities of the externally sourced cognitive processes of perception, intuition, rewarding and reasoning to make sense of the core concepts of self-identity which have previously been created by the internal and physiologically driven forces of empathy, possessive imitation and inhibition alone. These cognitive processes do not come into action until the age of about two years. The idea that by denying guns or toys of violence to children, or by refusing access to gender typed toys may confuse the symptom with the cause, because if the power of pretend is to be fully developed, the conflicts and divisions which these items symbolise are issues to which children also need to be exposed. Play, because it is bounded by pretend, can have an important role in distinguishing symbolism from reality and in learning what to avoid. However this can also be misused. A classic example is a strategy that is sometimes used by terrorist groups or gangs, which first may give a child some symbolic but legal symbol of the organisation which the child is asked to keep hidden on its behalf. By the time that turns into an illegal gun, or a knife, play has become reality. The child is trapped, and the retributions of the normal justice processes do not provide for any later escape. A paradox therefore exists in that an exposure to issues of division is needed for the learning processes to succeed, and for the power of pretend to be fully formed.

to suppress it promote a runaway drive, which leads to failure and collapse. Transvestites may similarly try to suppress their cross gender identity and also fail. The need for an outlet through the enactment of their cross gender identity then arises. However instead of creating the same runaway drive, the act of expression acts as a test which confirms and enforces the truth of the male gender allegiance they possess.

It is considered that both conditions are driven by the rejection of the imposed gender. However the disturbances to the gender identities and allegiances that are created produce opposite results. For transvestites the ability to pass as a woman in society becomes the key ambition. Through expression it also becomes the scapegoat to reject. The compulsion becomes self-limiting since the act of expressing the female has the effect of affirming the truth of the male. If this compulsion is resisted it can become overwhelming, but the expression of the cross gender identity gives only temporary relief. Some do live full time in the cross gender role. However for most the need for expression is episodic although the compulsion is no less severe. All the medical attempts to relieve transvestites of their compulsion have failed. Now the usual advice is to encourage transvestites to accept their drive, to find an acceptable means of expression and to treat it like a hobby to be enjoyed.

When transvestites and transsexuals first start to explore their gender identities it can be difficult for them and for others to distinguish between the two conditions. As the exploration progresses the differences become more clearly seen. The dynamics of the conflict send people in different directions and this polarisation creates the divisions which separate the two groups.

It is the same need to make sense of their identity which means that each person, and the demands of society create an exclusive and polarised gender allegiance, which is either male or female and it is one to which total loyalty is required. Today the relaxation of the requirement to conform to gender stereotypes has resulted in an increasing number of women and men coming forward who are now defining themselves as gender queer. This is a very wide ranging group but the refusal of this group to identify themselves with any one gender enables the creation of other outlets which are able to endorse the strength of the conflict's demands.

5:6: Scapegoating

By combining the physiologically driven process of possessive imitation with the cognitively led processes of management which use the scapegoat mechanism, Girard came closest to developing an understanding of the interactions between the conflict types and the driving forces that are involved. However the differences and the changes in relationships between the physiological forces and the development of cognitive abilities during early life were not fully addressed by Girard. He also uses cognitively based arguments to describe how possessive imitation works. Nevertheless once both of these processes have become active, this analysis supports the results that Girard presents.

Girard shows that scapegoating mechanisms have a large part in managing human demands. He believes that early in human evolution, people learned to control internal conflict by projecting the violence created onto a scapegoat outside it. Through this mechanism, blame which would otherwise create severe damage and destruction is transferred to a symbolic or sacrificial object. This strategy has been so effective that scapegoating mechanisms have been used to control violence ever since.

The successful use of a scapegoat depends on the combined belief that both sides have found the cause and the cure of their troubles in the common enemy which the scapegoat represents. The more strongly the two sides fight each other the more they come to mirror each other through the rivalry they create. Once the scapegoat is destroyed or expelled calm is restored, the sense of relief is enormous. A transformation takes place for, instead of seeing only the differences both sides can

now see the common elements that their rivalry had created. Paradoxically, and also because of its route to destruction, the scapegoat can be given great power as the harbinger of peace. For transsexuals the scapegoat is usually the most obvious symbol of the trauma, and this is normally the genitalia of the birth assigned sex. Gender reassignment surgery becomes an overwhelming demand, and the relief when that is completed is enormous.

However the scapegoat mechanism only resolves conflicts between two elements of equal standing where a common enemy may be found. The conflicts which transsexuals face are ones which balance the values of the life that has been built and the relationships with others against the selfhood which is created by the more fundamental and deeper sense of gender inside. This is an unequal battle. Although the core gender identity remains constant throughout life, its opponents change with relationships, commitments and time. In contests like these the scapegoat mechanism is ineffective because the strongest win and the weakest are destroyed. A further difficulty with the scapegoat mechanism is that it is only able to offer temporary relief when the underlying sources of the conflicts still remain. Girard recognised these issues. The arguments he presents are based on the principle that by understanding how the scapegoat mechanism works and the forces that are involved, appropriate action can then be taken to ensure that the impact it creates and the dynamics which lead to it are destroyed.

Removing the symbols of the rejected gender allows transsexuals to move forward in their new role. For some this may be no problem and for these people gender reassignment is the right course to take. However for others this leads to unacceptable demands. Gender identity is just one component of a multi-faceted life, and the damage this would bring to marriage, relationships, commitments and other values in life may be too great to bear. In these cases the scapegoat mechanism cannot work since no agreement on a common enemy can be found; and the more these conflicts are fought the stronger they become. If no alternative is available the trauma that this creates may lead to catastrophic collapse. A consequence of this disaster is that many or all of the things which have been the most earnestly fought for and cherished are destroyed by the devastation which results. Other management techniques are therefore needed and these must calm the conflict's commands.

5:7: Thresholds

During the first two years the cognitive abilities are not active or available, no goals can be set, and all of the forces which set apart the self from the other are driven by rejection alone. Therefore if ways can be found to overcome this rejection, a threshold can be crossed where the conflict disappears from conscious view. Nevertheless the underlying discord still remains. Some religious fundamentalists use this bipolarity and religious euphoria to claim that a "cure" can be found. However the degree of religious euphoria which is needed to hide the force of these conflicts is unlikely to be sustained. When the collapse or relapse occurs, the guilt, self-loathing and condemnations which are imposed by these fundamentalist teachings can be enormous. The harm that this does will continue to be reinforced for as long as the Christian Church pursues its traditional doctrine which condemns all gender and sexually behaviour of any type as mortally sinful and heinous acts.

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

Susan Gilchrist

6:0: Management Methods

Even though transsexuality is seen in terms of the compulsion to seek gender reassignment, the real objective for transsexual people is not to become men or women; it is to be true to their own selves. Earlier in this account it is shown that the conflicts which are associated with gender identity must be seen as the symptom of the failure to build a coherent sense of self identity, rather than the cause. It is also shown that transsexuals develop a gender allegiance which is contrary to their biological sex, but this is at least as firmly held as those for whom their gender identity and allegiance follow a normal path, indeed it may be argued that this should be even stronger because it has had to be fought for all along the way.

When no other obstacles are present the path towards transition and gender reassignment seems the obvious course to take. Indeed the consequences of resisting it or preventing almost inevitably lead to catastrophic collapse. The suicide rates are very high. However there is a wide range of behaviour and the choice of management methods must match the objectives that are sought. Therefore it is necessary to be realistic about the objectives that are set. This means that the aim of these management methods should not be to deny or to prevent progress towards transition and gender reassignment. Instead they should aim to make a smooth change possible so that if it is needed it can come at the right time, for the right reasons and in a way that minimizes the trauma it creates.

For people who have created full lives in the gender role expected of them, transition and gender reassignment swaps one set of problems for another. Many fight against transition and gender reassignment for this reason. Management methods adopted should support these people as well. Many also fight against this because of the guilt and the condemnations which church and society imposes. Therefore methods and techniques are urgently required which can be used to give hope and help to these people on their different journeys, long before any crisis occurs.

These management methods should enable hope and help to be found by providing greater understanding of the nature of the conflict, greater acceptance by society and by enabling people to achieve a greater degree of self-esteem in their lives. This brings significant challenges and they are often made almost unsurmountable by the rejection of society. However, more than these changes on their own, a reversal in perspective is also needed which creates a firm base. This base can then be used to transform what had been an uncontrollable compulsion into more controllable demands. Therefore the aim of these management methods is not to determine any particular direction that should be adopted: it is to ensure the maximum possible freedom of choice can be maintained.

6:1: Seeking Transition

A common view amongst psychiatrists who deal with these issues is that the journey towards reassignment is almost inevitable. For people who want to pursue this path the services that Gender Identity Clinics should offer, are first to check that the wish for this is genuine and then ensure that the processes of surgery and reassignment, which also includes adjustment to the new role is carried out as smoothly and effectively as possible. One of the procedures normally required by Gender Identity Clinics is to require their clients to take a "life test", which requires people to live continuously in the sought for role for a period of between one or two years.

By the time most people approach Gender Identity Clinics they have already made the decision to pursue gender reassignment. However that decision is rarely as clear cut. This may have come after many years of trying, and failing, to balance the aspects of their identity which are built on commitments, love and relationships with others against the insistent and deeper selfhood which is enforced by gender inside. That decision may be made only when the pressures become too great to bear, or collapse occurs. After this, the goal of reassignment may be obsessively pursued. The consequence of this is all too often the destruction of the love and relationships that these people had most wanted to keep.

Approaching a Gender Identity Clinic, with its requirement to take a “life test” imposes a further challenge to these values. Even though the aim of these clinics is to do the best for their clients, the standard pathways they offer are always geared towards reassignment as the objective and, because of their challenges to the former lives and to existing values these policies impose they become self-fulfilling in their demands⁷⁵.

6:2: Avoiding Transition

By seeking not to transition people have to live with the conflict. Instead of trying to fight or suppress it there is the need to transcend its demands. With identity driven conflicts it has been shown that an approach similar to alcoholism must be employed. The first requirement for this is to totally accept one's personal involvement. The second is to acknowledge that willpower cannot be used to control the conflict. The third is to find a way of neutralizing the conflict's dynamics. The fourth is to live life each day at a time.

The fifth is to abstain from expressing its demands. However there are limitations to this approach. While alcoholism leads towards destruction and death, the aim in this case is to resist what could be regarded as a fulfilment of life. This means that if the method is to succeed the hope of finding fulfilment in the existing role must always be greater than the rewards which transition and gender reassignment could bring.

The bipolarity associated with identity driven conflicts has already been noted. It is demonstrated that this arises because of the contradictions and incompatibilities between the different core elements of identity and personality that are created during the first two years. These are contradictions which cannot be resolved because the consequences of brain plasticity and synaptic pruning have locked them in place. However, when no contradictions exist, no goals are set, and no evidence of any goal appears.

This means that identity driven conflicts may only erupt when threats to identity occur. They can manifest themselves with extreme intensity on the one hand, and yet seem to disappear on the other. It has already been shown that fighting these conflicts does not succeed and with failure the full power of the physiologically driven forces is enforced. However by using management methods which seek to reconcile the discordance of identity which underlies these conflicts it is also shown that a threshold can be crossed which calms the dynamics that are created. When this happens awareness of the conflict may seem to disappear, and experience of this has been noted elsewhere⁷⁶.

Christian fundamentalists are partly right when they argue that the religious euphoria they create can make these conflicts seem to disappear. The enormous harm that is caused by their actions comes from their presumptions that alleviation is a cure, that these are reward driven conflicts and also because of the condemnations they apply to people who fail to conform to their demands. It

⁷⁵ Gilchrist, S. (2015): "A Path of My Own". Presentation to Person Centred Care and Support: Transgender and Non-binary Symposium 30 June 2015. Directorate of Patient and Public Voice and Information NHS England.
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SuF0630q-TransgenderNBSymposiumSlidesSil-30jun15.pdf>

⁷⁶ For more details see Gilchrist, S. (2015): "Living with Difference". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm .

has been shown that the guilt, self-loathing and the rejection imposed by these groups can be extremely destructive. Attempting to fight these conflicts only increases their demand, and if any management method which encounters the existence of a threshold is to succeed a total reversal of outlook is required.

6:3: Challenges

Abstention may seem to be obvious solution, particularly because this can cross the threshold where the impacts of the gender conflict seem to disappear. After these have departed, the apparent need for the approach of transcendence also vanishes and the effect of this is to distance the conflict from the conscious mind. However crises, which may seem to have little to do with the gender conflict, can cause it to erupt into conscious awareness. This is most likely to happen when the hope of fulfilment in the existing role is lost. The bipolarity associated with the conflict may lead to a catastrophic collapse and the next one of these might be expected to be worse than any previous one that was encountered. These requirements impose a high standard, and at any time depression because of some un-related crisis could easily be the reason why failure occurs. Transcendence turns into suppression and all of the evidence shows that an approach of abstention cannot be permanently sustained.

This vacillation is an outcome of the bipolar nature of the identity driven conflicts. it is the main reason why abstention fails. Instead of jumping from crisis to crisis it may be necessary to avoid any action which distances these conflicts from the conscious mind. That means either finding or being forced to develop ways of living with the reality of the true gender identity on a day to day basis. This imposes another major challenge. Every expression of the true sense of gender identity reveals the correctness and rightness of this natural role. The self-reinforcing nature of these experiences and the corresponding drive for the rejection of the birth imposed role makes it more difficult to engage in or to fulfil any activity which that role specifically expects. At the time when it is necessary to return to the birth imposed role it can be almost impossible to change back.

When a crisis does occur, changing back may become impossible. If that happens, one classic expression of collapse is that the people affected suddenly and unexpectedly appear dressed in the role that is true to their gender identity. They are also more likely to do this to the people with whom they most closely interact, often to whom no preparation has been given. The anger and frustration which leads up to the crisis means that the pressure to do this can be great. However this type of drama may only occasionally occur. Most people may simply confess to their partners and significant others instead.

6:4: Inversion

For people who genuinely are transsexual the present understanding is the desire for gender reassignment becomes inevitable, and for many the compulsion becomes so strong that all other obstacles are destroyed or set aside. If this is to be managed a firm base must be found which can be used to transform what had been an uncontrollable compulsion into more controllable demands.

Because of the strength of the self-reinforcing physiological driving forces the dynamics of development take over. Methods of management must look for ways of calming these dynamics instead of looking for a cause. This requires a total inversion of thought. It is because it demands the complete acceptance and welcoming of the reality of the gender identity which is possessed. Simple acceptance is not enough. The identification with the correct gender identity has to be complete for without this degree of commitment it is not possible to find the firm base. It also has to be cherished and used in a positive way since it is necessary to look for the richness it is able to bring.

This action does not diminish or reduce the awareness or indeed the intensity of conflict. It means that, instead a conflict which attacks at the roots of identity and personality, it now strikes at the top. From conflict with unstable foundations which would otherwise have led to catastrophe and collapse, it connects to a stable base. This gives a greater ability to resolve its demands and it can empower a greater freedom of choice. The management methods involving transcendence, which are described in the previous section may fail on their own, but with a firm base they can now have some hope of success.

6:5: Changes

This approach involves building a truce which balances the aspects of self-identity which build on relationships with others against the selfhood which is created by gender inside. Although the sense of gender identity remains constant throughout life, the others change with relationships, commitments and time. Maintaining this truce cannot succeed unless an outlook is adopted which gives the freedom to be able to accept and manage change whenever it is required. This is not an easy course. It is about finding ways to manage a volcano of emotions that can erupt from deep inside.

6:6: Making a Choice

The implications of this are that the pursuit of gender reassignment and transition should be the right path to adopt if no obstacles exist. Since gender identity for everyone is formed in the same way, and because the only objective of this action is to change the frame of reference in which life is lived there should not be any moral condemnations to consider. This is despite the condemnations which others enforce. However the only choice which can be made by the individual is the freedom to do what is right, and it must be totally believed in to succeed.

However this restriction can lead to many future concerns. As age increases the pressure grows stronger for commitments diminish and ideals for the future give way to the realities of the past. The possibility of moving towards gender reassignment must always be kept open otherwise fear of entrapment with age will destroy the transcendence required. The need to live each day at a time and also to keep these options open means that the cloud of unknowing increases as age progresses. There is the continuing trauma of living two lives.

Another key element is that of understanding the nature of the conflict itself. It is shown in this analysis that the conflicts which are associated with gender identity must be seen as the symptom of the failure to build a coherent sense of self identity, rather than the cause. Repeated failures to resolve these conflicts means that scapegoats can be created. These may have great power and become the focus of the trauma that occurs. They are often the genitalia of the rejected sex. However Girard has shown that once the reasons for the creation of the scapegoats are understood, and that this knowledge is also acted on, they lose their effect. Therefore more than focussing on gender identity, management methods should consider the discordances to self-identity that has been formed. In the case of transsexual people the goals of gender reassignment are forcefully sought, but the real objective is not one of wanting to be a man or a woman, it is that of enabling each person to be themselves.

6:7: Dynamics

It has already been shown that dissonances in gender and sexual variation are the products of identity driven conflicts. The creation of the core gender identity, and the discordances of self-identity are found to be created by contagious internally driven physiologically based forces, and the core elements of personality are also shown to be unchangeably locked in place by the age of around the age of three years. The absence of any overall neural co-ordination and the self-

reinforcing strength of these drives mean that the dynamics take over and no direct cognitive links between cause and effect can exist.

However conventional methods for dealing with these largely dismiss the dynamics and look for direct links between cause and effect. Treating these conflicts in this way is to treat them as though they are reward driven conflicts. The techniques that are used to manage identity driven conflicts and reward driven conflicts are almost opposite to one another. Therefore this use of the incorrect methods of management has created serious counter-productive effects.

6:8: Approaches

The enormous feelings of guilt, rejection and self-loathing which transsexuals experience come from two sources. One is the attitude of the rest of society, and the second is the consequences of breaching or damaging the commitments, love and relationships in the life that has been built. The need to resolve the attitudes of society are made very clear in the context of this article, and this has to be addressed through public education and the creation of better understanding. The second source is dealt with by creation a structure and an attitude which is able to manage the force of the dynamics that are found.

This strategy supports those who seek gender reassignment. By calming the dynamics and removing the forces of compulsion people are more able to make proper arrangements to minimise the problems caused by transition and follow this route in an orderly way. The path to collapse of people who do not wish for gender reassignment can likewise be avoided. This means that these people too can have a greater freedom of choice in the actions they take.

6:9: Acceptability

By far the greatest blockades to successful management are the barriers and condemnations which society imposes. That creates a major hurdle, for progress towards the adoption of these management methods cannot be made until a degree of self- acceptance and self-esteem can be created which is able to overcome society's demands.

Identity driven conflicts spread across the whole spectrum, and the distinction between conflicts of libido and mortido are here made. Conflicts of libido create positive outcomes which can drive human potential to new heights but conflicts of mortido have the opposite effect. These methods also have more application than just to gender issues, for they can be relevant to the development of personality as a whole.

Alcoholism and depression are here considered to be conflicts of mortido since their unassuaged outcomes lead to oblivion and death. In contrast to this, gender dysphoria is the result of a conflict of libido, since the search is for fulfilment of life. That needs to be given support. Nevertheless the consequences of both conflicts can lead the serious difficulties when they take people in directions which society does not expect. Alcoholics who fail to keep control of their addiction are given understanding and help. In Christianity, Islam and Judaism at the present time, the fundamentalist teaching on people who fail to keep to their religious doctrines on gender and sexual variant behaviour; condemns them to perdition instead.

6:10: Present Situation

Much of the information used in this analysis has been available for a considerable time. However there has been considerable resistance to change. Numerous books and treatises are still being produced on the presumption that early development is determined exclusively by the action of the cognitive learning and development processes that are embodied in the long standing theories. There are various reasons for this delay, some of which may relate to a resistance to change. Others may reflect a culture which is less geared to the disciplines required for the application of

new knowledge and research. Perhaps most often and most seriously, the greatest damage is caused by using the doctrines that are enforced by the Christian Church, which likewise regards these as reward driven conflicts, and which also treats every form of expression as lifestyle choices that must be condemned as mortally sinful and heinous acts.

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

7:0: Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation on the Life and Teaching of Jesus⁷⁷.

Susan Gilchrist

7:0: Introduction

A comment which the author received states, "I think any research that attempts to distinguish between Jesus and the early Church is wading into difficult water. We only have the Jesus that's given to us by the early Church, which wrote the Gospels and edited the Canon". This assumes that is the only source. Many arguments are presented on this basis. Wherever there is a teacher, there are also people in that society to be taught. Without any other input, society afterwards will only reveal what the students and the Church want to be heard. The first requirement is therefore to determine what the culture and social expectations of first century Greek, Roman and Jewish societies were before this teaching was delivered.

What the neurophysiological and psychological analysis has done is to confirm that the inherent duality in gender and sexually variant behaviour is not the product of any social environment but is fundamental to the human condition. Therefore evidence for it should be found in every society at any time where gender and sexually variant behaviour is expressed. That is true of first century Greek, Roman and Jewish societies as well. Many people have provided a great deal of research and information about the first century Greek, Roman and Jewish societies without any reference to Christianity and Christian belief. The approach adopted in this analysis is make use of all of this information to independently examine the social and cultural background against which the teaching of Jesus and the early Church took place, before giving any consideration whatever to the words of Jesus and the teaching of the Church.

A new perspective is therefore obtained by using the results of the neurophysiological and psychological study. This supports the attitudes of the Greek philosophers who set the dividing line for acceptable behaviour between the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex. It was the abuses of power in Roman society which gave permission for the abuses of sex.

It is shown that, not only was Jesus aware of the duality inherent in gender and sexually variant behaviour, it was encompassed in his teaching and his life. This means that the contradictions between the traditional Church and the results of the neurophysiological and psychological study arise from changes in the theology of the Church. The first century Church had a major problem in dealing with the cultural clashes and gender coercion in these grossly unequal societies. In rising to that challenge the recognition of the duality inherent in gender and sexually variant behaviour was unfortunately lost and this is where the contradiction occurs. That change is followed by a second presumption that; because marriage between a man and a woman was rightly celebrated as a second best choice (celibacy was the first), every other relationship involving love and attraction by definition had evil and disruptive intent. When the teaching of Jesus and the early Church is examined using the principles outlined in this analysis, the paradox which is found is that there was

⁷⁷ Versions of this section are also available separately at: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation on the Life and Teaching of Jesus": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/219P-InfluencesJesus.pdf> and as part of a compendium: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/217P-FoundationsSexGender.pdf>

far less need than expected for the early Church to “write the Gospels and Edit the Canon” as has been suggested. The strains come more from trying to make the teaching of Jesus conform to the doctrines of the present day Church.

That is a radical conclusion, which the author did not expect. It is also necessary to emphasise that the duality inherent in gender and sexually variant behaviour is totally respected. All sexual behaviour must be judged against the purity of its intent, and there is no toleration whatever of inappropriate or abusive sex. The material presented in this section is adapted from: Gilchrist, S. (2016): “Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation on the Life and Teaching of Jesus”. This is available at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/219P-InfluencesJesus.pdf> . The results of this analysis specify some far-reaching conclusions concerning the history, traditions and theology of the Church.

In the previous sections it is shown that this investigation began as an exclusively neurophysiological and psychological study to examine the development of self-identity and personality in infancy and in early life. Gender dysphoria is used as a case study to model the process. It is demonstrated that features which create the core gender and sexual identities of every person are physiologically rather than behaviourally or cognitively driven. Therefore as wide a range of moral attitudes, beliefs and behaviour are to be found amongst these people as those which exist within society at large. It has also been shown that the driving forces behind the conflicts that arise from gender and sexual variation come from the need for people to be true to themselves⁷⁸. It is demonstrated that a moral duality must also exist whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways that conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies should be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships should be very severely condemned for their acts⁷⁹.

That moral duality is contradicted by the traditional teaching of the Christian Church which condemns without exception every expression of gender and sexually variant behaviour as mortally sinful, and it regards same-sex intercourse as a heinous act⁸⁰. As well as independently establishing the background to the teaching of Jesus an extended theological analysis is conducted which is in the form of a critique of the traditional teaching and doctrines of the Christian Church. It uses the results of the neurophysiological and psychological study to determine how and why this contradiction occurs.

Five perspectives are employed. The first perspective examines the traditional Church teaching in the light of the understanding developed by this neurophysiological and psychological investigation. The second perspective works backwards within Church history and traditions in an attempt to

⁷⁸ This analysis also introduces the concept of allegiance. This develops because of the strength of the internal struggles. Identity defines the raw components which drive the conflict. Allegiance is what people are aware of and it evolves from trying to make sense of the disparities which these conflicts create.

⁷⁹ Gilchrist, S. (2016): “A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life”.
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-InfluencesPersonality.pdf>

⁸⁰ Much of the traditional present day Christian teaching on gender and sex relies on the work of Thomas Aquinas. Under Aquinas any sexual act engaged in for lust was a sinful act. That attitude might be mindful of the passage in Matthew 5:27-28 where Jesus condemns feelings of lust experienced by a man towards a woman. Here Jesus is recorded as saying: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” However Aquinas also had to deal with a historical situation. The Catholic Church teaches that sexual intercourse has a purpose; and that outside marriage it is contrary to its purpose. Among what are considered grave sins are masturbation, fornication, pornography, homosexual practices, artificial contraception and procurement of abortion. Civil definitions of sexual abuse condemn all acts which cause either immediate or long term physical or psychological harm to either or both parties or individuals who engage in any sexual act. The work of Aquinas is discussed in detail in Section 4 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): “Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf> Also Section 9 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): “Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships”. <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

determine what the earliest doctrines adopted by the Christian Church had been. The third independently examines the social and the cultural backgrounds of the Greek, Roman and Jewish societies in which Christianity and the early Church had first been formed. In the light of the first three perspectives, the fourth perspective seeks to ascertain the teaching of Jesus himself. The final perspective examines the relevance of these issues to present day life. The second and the third perspectives adopt reverse standpoints to examine the history and the theology of the Christian Church.

The search for these moral dualities requires new viewpoints to be considered. What may be horrendous in one society can be acceptable in another and cultural clashes play an important role. The requirement to make valid comparisons means that the same techniques must be used in the examinations of all of the other relevant religions and cults. This includes their social interactions with first century society. Each is therefore subjected to the same form of critique, which uses the results of the neurophysiological and psychological study to examine how their moral codes and teaching have developed. The danger of this approach is that it could find dualities where none exist. That concern is understood, and the truth of this investigation depends on the quality of the evidence it presents.

The results of this analysis demonstrate that knowledge and acceptance of this moral duality is present in the teaching of Jesus. It is also shown how and why this awareness has been lost and subsequent centuries of criminalisation and condemnation have prevented any awareness of this moral duality being restored. In gender unequal societies of today these condemnations still have considerable force. However this moral duality can again be observed in the gender equal societies of today. It is shown in this investigation that the credibility of Christianity and the Christian Churches is being destroyed in these societies through their failure to adapt. This has a major impact and the consequences are considered. Despite these concerns and the objectivity that is pursued in this investigation, the author continues to work within the Church to change it, for there is much more to the Gospel of Christian Love than just these matters of gender and sex.

7:0:1: Additional Resources

Further accounts are given elsewhere⁸¹. Previous papers describing this analysis were submitted to the Church of England in August 2014. This was prior to the start of the "Shared Conversations Process"⁸². Details of the submitted papers are given in the footnote below⁸³.

⁸¹ A companion document: Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church has several parts*". The second of these gives an overview of the neurophysiological and psychological investigation. The third examines the influences of gender and sexual variation on the life and teaching of Jesus. That is the topic that is covered in this section. The fourth reviews church history and the development of the Christian traditions from the time of Jesus towards the present day. The fifth examines the issues facing the present day Church. Access to all of the research papers which report on this study is provided via the internet at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm

⁸² Shared Conversations: See: Church of England (2015) Grace and Disagreement article: Grace and Disagreement Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality: [Accessed 15/10/2015]: <https://churchofengland.org/media/2165248/grace2.pdf> . Also: Church of England (2015) Shared Conversations Website: [Online]. [Accessed 15/10/2015]: <http://www.sharedconversations.org/>

See also: Gilchrist, S. (2014) *Controversy and Challenge: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in the Present Day Christian Church*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/018B-ControversoryAndCrisis.pdf>

⁸³ Gilchrist, S. (2012): "*Personal submission to the Church of England House of Bishops Working Party on Human Sexuality*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/004B-SGSubmissionToHoBSexualityReview2012.pdf> . The submitted papers are: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach*". <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/207P-ReassessmentPsychologyExtended.pdf> Also: Gilchrist, S. (2014): "*Controversy and Challenge: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in the Present Day Christian Church*". <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/018B-ControversoryAndCrisis.pdf> And: Gilchrist, S. (2014): "*Christianity and Crisis: An Overview of Gender and Sexual Difference in the Early and Modern Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/017B-ChristianityAndCrisisOverview.pdf>

7:0:2: Science and Theology

Religion and Science take complementary approaches. Science works on the basis of certainty and from the bottom up. Religion addresses the needs of society from the top down where the principles of faith are applied in the full awareness of doubt. The Church must defer to what science presents when science has shown that the principles upon which its theology is based are incorrect. However other issues intervene. Theology and religion have an enormous input into the development of the moral standards and ethics of society. In addition to the scientific and religious inputs there is the need to consider the social and political arguments which define and enforce the moral and cultural values which society adopts. This analysis focusses entirely on how and why these doctrines of the Christian Church have come to be formed and the discipline imposed on this examination demands that no judgement whatever is made on the truths or otherwise of religious beliefs.

What is important for the purpose of this document is to consider the changes which Christianity had to make to succeed in transforming itself from a movement which had been shaped by the religious, cultural and social background of a conquered and subject society into one which conformed to the dominant culture of the Roman Empire itself. This includes the relationships between power and sex, and it examines how and why Christianity was tamed when it sought acceptance by the dominant state. In addition to using the results of this study to examine the development of the Christian Church, the same criteria are applied to the examinations of the other first century Greco/Roman religions and cults. Detailed analyses of these are given in Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*"⁸⁴. Assessing these traditions from this particular standpoint demands a full exploration of the good that arises as well as the evil that is done. However it should not be assumed that the Goddesses were invariably paragons of virtue. Their disruption and sexual provocation could be extreme⁸⁵ and cultural clashes between different societies played an important part in fostering the condemnations of the Christian Church⁸⁶.

It is demonstrated in this analysis that within the first century Middle Eastern cultures freedom of expression of particular forms of same-sex relationships existed. People would have experience of what these involved, and the knowledge of the moral duality identified in this analysis would have been available to Jesus and to those who lived at that time. That sense of moral duality is also shown to be present in the relevant first century Greco/Roman cults: however it is completely absent from the present day teaching of the Christian Church⁸⁷. Similar moral dualities are encountered across cultures and continents⁸⁸, where people who seek to transcend the sex/gender boundaries by living in ways that are true to the ideals of both lives may be given a high and often priestly

⁸⁴ An analysis of these is given in: Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

⁸⁵ Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Sex and Thunderbolts; A Speculation*". In preparation

⁸⁶ Even within one cult there could be a variety of purposes. The three goddesses, Cybele, Bahuchara Mata, and Inanna/Ishtar who stood at the head of the three major goddess cults which represented the dominant powers in Middle Eastern society are considered in this analysis. The representations of some goddesses, such as Astarte, could be sexually provocative in the extreme. For detailed discussions see sections 12 and 13 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>. Also Gilchrist, S. (2015): "*Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf> and section 3:1:7 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

⁸⁷ The existence of a duality within the Goddess Cults has long been known, and various reasons have been offered. Roller, for example, attributes this duality to the high propriety of the formal practices of the cults and the disruptive behaviour to the ecstatic behaviour within them. Bougeard implies that gender and sexually variant behaviour are intrinsically evil acts. For a full account see Sections 2:3:2 and 3 of: Gilchrist, S. 2013: "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.

⁸⁸ See sections 1:1:2 and 3:1:1 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

status. However those who instead adopt the path of transgression are very ruthlessly condemned for their acts.

7:0:3: Historical Effects

In the case of Christianity the condemnation and criminalisation of gender and sexually variant behaviour over the last two millennia has prevented any evidence of a moral duality being found. Little change could take place for as long as these attitudes continued, however the social and cultural transformations in Western societies over the last fifty years have exposed the presumptions upon which the traditional teaching of the Christian Church on gender and sexually variant behaviour has been based. Freedom of expression has again revealed the moral duality which is present in gender and sexually variant behaviour. Now people can find out for themselves what it involves. However, instead of exploring this new situation many Christians have taken refuge in the traditional doctrines of the Church. It is argued in this analysis that the authority and credibility of Christianity and the Church is today being destroyed by a fervent reliance on disproved traditional demands. The reasons which are given for maintaining the traditional viewpoints are founded on the "Godly Authority" of bible texts, and this is why a critical analysis of the texts which are used is required.

7:1 Power and Domination

.7:1:1 Clashing Cultures

There are large chasms between the cultural perceptions of the first century Jewish, Greek, Roman societies and between those of the first century and the present day. As if to complicate matters more the differences between first century Greek and Roman cultures have also to be considered. The Greeks were comfortable with the expression of same-sex love between two males⁸⁹, and this perhaps is as close as possible to what one can get to what is known as homosexuality at the present time. Attitudes to same-sex intercourse varied greatly across all first century societies and even within the Greek city states. In some it was barred, in others it was freely practiced. However, in order to maintain the power balances in gender and socially unequal societies it was largely expressed in relationships with pubescent or adolescent boys. This same-sex behaviour between the senior and junior partners is described as pederasty⁹⁰. Despite what may be thought about this today it has to be seen in ancient Greece as an accepted and regulated practice⁹¹. Apart from the issues concerned with of anal penetration, first century Jewish culture seems to have had closer links to that of Greece than that of Rome. It is shown that Judaism accepted expressions of love between two adult males as equals⁹², but absolutely abhorred pederasty and same-sex intercourse because of the humiliation and domination it encountered.

Domination in sexual matters was expected of a male Roman citizen. He was expected to take the active role. Roman society was uncomfortable with what today would be regarded as homosexual intercourse between two male Roman citizens because it saw this as an act of submission and

⁸⁹ Social concerns were also important and effeminacy was decried.

⁹⁰ Pederasty is, and was, a (usually erotic) same-sex relationship between an adult male and a pubescent or adolescent boy. The legal status of pederasty was determined by whether or not the boy had reached the local age of consent, and if such contact was considered abusive to the boy. In Ancient Greece the act had to be initiated by the boy. In such cases it was not considered humiliating. It could be seen as a rite and part of the educational process whereby manhood was reached.

⁹¹ The cultural differences and care to avoid issues of humiliation and domination distinguish it from what would be regarded as paedophilia in the present day. For a more complete discussions of the cultural changes, see: Gilchrist, S. (2015): "Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church":

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf>

⁹² See section 7:2 onwards in this document.

humiliation by the citizen who submitted to the penetrative act. A manly bearing was always required. If the penetrated partner was of lesser status, same-sex acts of penetration by heterosexual men were endorsed. However this was not approved of when the penetrated partner was a freeborn male Roman citizen of any age. Therefore pederasty in Rome became associated with abuse by the penetrator of slaves and people of lower status. This can be equated to same-sex rape. Symbols of penetration and the penis were widely and publically expressed in art, and the freedom with which this was done emphasised the sexual domination as a tool of oppression by the state⁹³. This blatant abuse of sex was violently condemned by the Christian Church. For about the first three hundred years of its existence the Christian condemnations of same-sex intercourse was primarily focussed on the subjection and domination involved in this act⁹⁴.

7:1:2 Disruptions

The first century was a time of religious disruption in Greco/Roman society⁹⁵. Many of the traditional Greco/Roman religions had lost much of their credibility⁹⁶. There was a search for new meanings, together with resurgence in the popularity of the Goddess cults. In addition to this, religion had a much broader remit at this time. There was no separation of the sacred from the secular. Some cults and religions promoted political or sectional interests, not all of them good. The myths associated with many of the Goddess cults were concerned with the exercise of gender transforming disruptions related to power rather than sex⁹⁷. Gender discrimination was great, but the ravages of war and the duties of governing an empire meant that these distinctions were increasingly being challenged. The reference which Paul made the unknown God in Athens (Acts 17:16-34) gives some measure of the uncertainties of the time. This was a time of change, and the demand for greater power and protection by women and those of lower status⁹⁸ meant that the male dominated patriarchal society was being strongly challenged by the Goddess cults. Christianity did not conform to the rules that were imposed on all accepted Greco/Roman religions, and waiting in the wings was the challenge of Christianity itself^{99 100 101}. Early evidence of that concern is found in

⁹³ Nevertheless the expression of same-sex relationships was sufficiently well known for the moral duality to be understood and the distinction was made on the basis of intention and maintaining the power balances in society, rather than condemnation of the act.

⁹⁴ See section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2011) "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

⁹⁵ See section 14:0 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): *Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

⁹⁶ Religion had become rather like a cafeteria style selection procedure. Emperor worship was demanded, together with the importation of many foreign cults.

⁹⁷ This examination of the cult of Cybele demonstrates that the political elements that were contained within it must not be ignored. Cybele was a Goddess associated with the power of wild nature and the myths that are connected with her are more about power and fertility. They are not particularly maternal in character. For a full account see: Gilchrist, S. (2015): "Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf> . Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*" and Gilchrist, S, (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm .

⁹⁸ Gender complementarity enforced a division of role. Very severe gender discrimination often did take place but a wide range of attitudes to women is encountered across ancient Middle Eastern societies. This discrimination and separation of role however broke down to a large extent in Greece around 400 BC, and again in Rome around 205 BC. Men had been called away to battle and to run the empire. War had decimated the male population, and women became even more essential for maintaining key functions of society. Within the marriage relationships, as well as in the occupations that men and women fulfilled in society, a full compatibility of intellect between men and women was expected. By the time of the first century many women had become well educated and they were making significant contributions to society. Despite these changes the authority of men remained absolute. Women were still denied all power and authority over their own lives, they were denied any form of public role, and this was a time when those women who could see power challenged the repression they faced. For the full account see sections: 1:1:2 and 3:1:2 to 3:1:3 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf> .

⁹⁹ Christian propaganda identifies the Goddess cults as hotbeds of illicit sex but, as is shown in this analysis, the major driving forces were the exercise of power. It was the abuse of this that gave permission for the abuse of sex. This is in strong contrast to the views which Christian propaganda has created. See for example Frymer-Kensky, Tikva: 1993: "*In the Wake of the Goddesses, Women, Culture and the Biblical Transformation of Pagan Myth*": Ballantine Books; 1992 The Free Press, a division of Macmillan, Inc

the correspondence between the Emperor Trajan and Pliny¹⁰². However the full impact of this was delayed by the rate of growth of Christianity, since Christians did not reach a majority in Roman Empire until after the fall of the Empire in the West.

The major challenge and achievement which was met by Christianity was its success in transferring the distinctive views of the minority Jewish religion into the dominant culture of the Roman state. That meant confronting the self-centred moralities of the culture and sexual values which were characteristic of Roman male dominated society. This additionally meant challenging and usurping the power structures which are formed inside these powerful and dominant societies by placing the concern for the victims and the suppressed first on the religious and the social agendas of those cultures, and by embracing an all-encompassing morality which is founded on compassion, nurturing and love. This is the cultural transformation that Christianity was challenged to make, and the strength of its challenge to the structures of society is expressed in the Gospel itself.

7:1;3 Gender and Sex

There are a large number of ways in which gender variant and sexually variant people are fellow travellers in their interactions with society, however the differences must be noted. There is only limited interaction between gender identity and sexual orientation. Each goes their different ways and as wide a range of sexually variance may be found amongst gender variant people as that in the general population, and the reverse also applies. Gender variant behaviour directly challenges the power and social structures of gender discriminatory societies. Sexually variant behaviour instead attacks these through the relationships it creates and this is why these two conditions are considered independently in this account.

7:1:4 Gender Confrontations

Unlike the gender discrimination which pervaded earthly society, full gender equality was accorded to the pantheon of gods and Goddesses in the Greco/Roman cults. On earth the ability to penetrate

¹⁰⁰ Roman rulers were always concerned that they could only hold on to power if they kept the population happy. The Goddess cults were popular with slaves and others who felt disadvantaged by Roman society. The assertions of female power and gender disruption permeate the myths of all of these Goddess cults, whose popularity was too great to suppress. The threats and the gender disruption that the cults forced on the first century male dominated, patriarchal Greco/Roman society attacked the security and stability of that society itself. By creating formal structures which fitted in with, and which managed their demands, the male dominated Greco/Roman society had to try to tame them instead. The result of that is seen in the great praise for the sexual purity of those who conformed to these formal structures and decrees, and the great attacks on the behaviour, including the sexual behaviour of those who did not. An "Archgallus" who was not castrated, and who was usually of high standing in Roman society, was appointed by the state to manage the cult of Cybele on its behalf. Despite a close commonality of purpose early in its history, Christianity later sided with the Greco/Roman authorities in its condemnations of the cults. For a full account see section 3:1:3 Gilchrist, S. (2013): "An Unfinished Reformation". Also sections 10 and 14 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm

¹⁰¹ It is shown that a major influence on this was the different sexual moralities adopted by subject and dominant societies. Therefore a clear distinction must be made between the licentious activities of the male fraternities of high ranking people in Greco/Roman society who were set up to honour the cult, and those which were embraced by many other followers of the cult, who were often women, non-citizens and slaves. See section 14 of: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf> for more details.

¹⁰² Christians were small in number and they remained a minority in the Western Empire until its collapse. However they came early to the attention of the authorities. Pliny the Younger, as governor of Nithynia in AD 111, was so exercised by the troubles with the Christians that he wrote to Trajan asking for guidance on how to deal with them. Trajan replied: 'The actions you have taken, my dear Pliny, in investigating the cases of those brought before you as Christians, are correct. It is impossible to lay down a general rule which can apply to particular cases. Do not go looking for Christians. If they are brought before you and the charge is proven, they must be punished, provided that if someone denies they are Christian and gives proof of it, by offering reverence to our gods, they shall be acquitted on the grounds of repentance even if they have previously incurred suspicion. Anonymous written accusations shall be disregarded as evidence. They set a bad example which is contrary to the spirit of our times.' The persecution of Christians was sporadic, but because they refused to worship the Emperor as a god they came under direct threat. See: Carrington, Philip. (2011): "The Early Christian Church Volume 1": Cambridge University Press page 429. ISBN 0521166411

gave men the dominant status. Women, by being penetrated, were allocated a submissive position. That could not be accepted as far as the Gods and Goddesses were concerned and this equality of status meant that about half of the Greek and Roman Goddesses, including Cybele, were virgins. Reproduction took place by miraculous means¹⁰³. A form of celibacy associated with their call of duty as representatives and as symbioses¹⁰⁴ of the Goddess was also expected of their self-castrated male priests¹⁰⁵. The cult of Cybele was the most relevant of these beliefs. Cybele's myths and doctrines embraced both sex and spirituality, they gave earlier cautions against lust and the other sins of excess, and they also demonstrated that sex and gender were less important to the soul than love. Contrary to the Christian condemnations, these included the activities of nurture, birthing^{106 107}, care, protection and responsible sex¹⁰⁸. Instead of condemning them, positive aspects of the cult were included in the Mariology of The Christian Church. When it is understood that these self-castrated priests, together with their counterparts, were itinerant missionary priests who moved widely through the Roman Empire, who were known within first century Palestine, and who were engaged in fortune telling, shamanic, and healing activities, then both the closeness and the contest between the Cult and Christianity can hardly be missed¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰³ Cybele and Anat were both virgin fertility Goddesses. The cult of Cybele was very strongly condemned by the early Church. Anat was a prominent figure in the Canaanite mythological texts, dating to c. 1400 BC, which were discovered at Ugarit in Syria. She was a maiden/warrior goddess, the sister or consort of the fertility and storm god Baal. She plays a major role in the Ugaritic myths, rescuing Baal from the underworld and defeating Mot, the god of death. For more detail see: Gilchrist, S. (2015): "Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church": Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf>

¹⁰⁴ The self-castrated priests of the Goddess Cybele were regarded as more than representatives and were somehow assimilated into the Goddess herself.

¹⁰⁵ About half of the Greek and Roman Goddesses, including Cybele, were virgins. Their authority could not be sullied or reduced by any act of male penetration, and this was one of the arguments for the castration of the male priests. Celibate eunuch priests could be given an even higher reverence that that given to any voluntary celibates, because of the sacrifice of their actions, and the knowledge that they could not stray from that path. They could however be anally penetrated but they could not climax, therefore all male rewards were removed. The issue of temple prostitution is a complex topic. Some may have taken advantage of their situation entirely for the misuse of sex, but there were other reasons for eunuch priests to offer themselves to men for anal penetration. This could be a method of transmitting the blessings of the virgin Goddess to laymen who were seeking fertility in their own reproductive lives. Within the moral values of Greco/Roman society this would be a positive act. For a full account see section 3:1:9 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "An Unfinished Reformation". Also sections 10 and 12 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm.

¹⁰⁶ In ancient Roman religion, the Nixae, were the specific birth deities. Juno Lucina represented the goddess Juno in her birth goddess guise. Eileithyia fulfilled the same specific role in Greek mythology. Both represented specific aspects of the primary Goddesses. Eileithyia, the daughter of Hera was closely associated with Artemis. Artemis was also identified with Cybele in Greek Mythology. Diana was the Roman goddess of the hunt, the moon and childbirth. She was eventually equated with the Greek goddess Artemis. Artemis is also described in the bible as Diana of the Ephesians. For a Christian encounter, see Acts Chapter 19.

¹⁰⁷ Childbirth was very dangerous and a variety of secondary Goddesses were called upon. The primary Goddesses had many other functions. These were inclusive and motherhood and protection at birth was included in their roles. The differences between the different Goddess fertility cults may be related to the social cultures they appealed to rather than the doctrines they present. However this is a contentious topic and a more complete discussion is given in Sections 3:1:7 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "An Unfinished Reformation" and Section 11 of: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm

¹⁰⁸ Christian propaganda always sought to condemn the cults. Instead of being solely the repository for promiscuity, prostitution, depravity and immoral acts, as they are represented in the Christian tradition, the Goddess Cults, and their gender and sexually variant self-castrated priests had a much broader social role. Some of this would become incorporated into the cult of the Virgin Mary in the Christian Church. For a full account see Gilchrist, S. (2013): "An Unfinished Reformation" and Sections 12-14 of: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm.

¹⁰⁹ In the terms of their own social messages, both Christianity and the Goddess cults shared some key elements in common. This was because they both represented minority groups inside the dominant societies. Like the Goddess cults early Christianity did not simply challenge gender inequality through its actions and the importance and esteem which it gave to women. It also challenged the moral precepts and the perceptions upon which the Greco/Roman patriarchal society was based. For a full account see Gilchrist, S. (2013): "An Unfinished Reformation". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.

The interaction between the Jesus movement and the Goddess cults was taken much further than this when, in Matthew 19:12, Jesus declared that those people who have voluntarily made themselves eunuchs for the “Kingdom of heaven’s sake” can also be accepted into the same fold. The passage reads: “For there are eunuchs, which were so born from their mother’s womb: and there are eunuchs, which were made eunuchs by men: and there are eunuchs, which made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven’s sake. He that is able to receive it let him receive it”¹¹⁰. The commanding form of expression which Jesus used in this statement implies that this is an active act¹¹¹. For the social culture of the time that statement was very direct. Those who opposed ritual castration had an uphill battle against them for there was little doubt about the authenticity of the text. This caused great difficulties for the early Church. It was not just Origen who took this statement of Jesus literally; there were thousands of others who did so too¹¹². Eunuchs who kept the Law were given a high place in Jewish society (see Isaiah 56:4-5). Others were condemned for their disreputable sexual behaviour, and in this New Testament passage Jesus was expanding on Old Testament texts. It was considered that Deuteronomy 22:5 only prohibited acts of cross dressing for unapproved purposes or for deceit and no exclusively literal interpretation was ever applied¹¹³.

In all of these cases distinction is made between good and bad on the basis of intention, rather than direct condemnation of the acts. Equivalent diversities existed in Greek and Roman society and the same dualities were also encountered. In Roman culture those people who castrated themselves for religious devotion often did so for the highest ideals and for the avoidance of the temptation of sex.

¹¹⁰ The close conjunction of the statements on marriage and eunuchs in Matthew 19: 3-12 further suggests that these two statements should be considered together. Both of them are included in the same sentence; the directly equivalent form of words is also used, and the Jewish Midrashim tradition of interpretation imposes a very careful structuring that demands a close reading of any biblical text. In regard to marriage, the usual interpretation states that Jesus considered that marriage should be treated as a “Second best” option and the same close textural relationships between these two statements additionally implies that the people “Who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven”, together with the coupling of: “He that is able to receive it let him receive it”, should be treated in the same way. It should be noted that close same-sex relationships were encountered in first century Jewish Rabbinic partnerships. (See section 7:3 of this document for details). However Jesus also included: “people who have voluntarily made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of heaven’s sake” in this statement. Therefore this extreme action of self-castration too should likewise be regarded as another “Second best” approach. That caused great problems for the early Church for many sought to take this literally. It was also a very challenging statement for a Jewish society where the act of castration by others, let alone by oneself, was abhorred. This interpretation is also discussed later in this paper. For a full account see Section 3:2 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm.

¹¹¹ The seriousness with which the Christian Church took this issue can also be seen by the prominence it is given through its listing as the first of the Canons (decrees) of the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325.

¹¹² Throughout Christian and European history there have been many who took and taught these statements literally. They include Valentinus (whose sect was declared heretical in the mid-second century), Julius Cassianus (declared heretical in the mid-second century), Basilides (also declared heretical in the early-second century), Leontios of Antiochia, (Bishop of Jerusalem, late-fourth century), Melito “the Eunuch” (ca. late-second century), Hilarion (mid-fourth century), Marcarius “the Egyptian (late 4th century) and Origen (also declared heretical in the early-third century). These people are among the most famous of thousands that chose ritual castration. This perception was not confined to the Gnostic or fringe movements, it became a major issue in the early church. The earliest report of the desire for castration among Christians comes from the second century writings of Justin. Self-castration was a widely practiced and it was an ancient expression of religious devotion throughout the Middle East. Several early Christian encratite and ascetic movements (centred mainly in Egypt) are known to have members who were eunuchs. The cloisters of Egypt and Syria were centres of self-castration, and Coptic monasteries continued to perform castration well into the Islamic period. Indeed, the criminalization of eunuchs in the church at the Council of Nicaea is testimony to the degree to which self-castration was practiced. For the full account see Gilchrist, S. (2013): “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹¹³ The Jewish concerns in Deuteronomy 22:5 are not about creating or reinforcing gender differences but in preventing the gender associations of clothing, or possibly body hair from being used to deceive others for purposes leading to sexual immorality, or to dishonest behaviour. Every interpretation condemns cross dressing for dishonest or destructive action or to condemn the practice in other cults. None of them prohibit it for just purpose. In the ancient world no literal interpretation has ever been applied to this passage and it is rightly put in the section of the Holiness Code in Leviticus which deals with deceit. For a full discussion and an account of the various interpretations see Gilchrist, S. (2015): “*Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church*”: Also Gilchrist, S. (2013): “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm.

Others were accused of sexual abuse. Many eunuchs who were castrated by others were given well deserved and severe defamatory reputations because of their licentiousness and misuse of sex¹¹⁴. Due to their incapability some eunuchs could reach to positions of high power, but their existence outside the normal boundaries of society could never exempt them from these scurrilous reputations, and praise was almost never given for what they did. Their metamorphoses did not encourage their loyalty to the social and gender frameworks of the dominant society, and this also made them a threat.

Christianity exposed itself to the same condemnations by choosing a eunuch to spread the Gospel message. In the New Testament account of the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts (Acts 8:26-40), the gender transgressive body of a eunuch has become the symbol of the Kingdom of God who has been charged with bringing its mission to the world. However the actions of the self-castrated male priests of the Goddess cults, who dressed as women, provided even greater threats to the gender-based foundations and institutions upon which the male dominated society was built¹¹⁵. These itinerant priests travelled widely through the Roman Empire. They would have been known in to Jesus and Eusebius reports that they had a shrine in Bethlehem itself¹¹⁶.

In Matthew 19:12, Jesus declared that those people who have voluntarily made themselves eunuchs for the "Kingdom of heaven's sake" can also be accepted into the same fold. By extending this welcome to all eunuchs, Jesus was doing more than just welcoming those who had castrated themselves for religious devotion. The same acceptance would also apply to the self-castrated priests of the Goddess cults who chose to follow his message. There is no suggestion that the Ethiopian eunuch was a transgender person. However, many of the Goddess priests would have been transgender people. Others may not. This passage caused great difficulty in the early Church because, in Matthew 19:12 Jesus accepted everybody alike¹¹⁷. Therefore this welcome by Jesus was given to all people who seek to live their lives in the light of the teaching of Jesus the New Covenant and in the love of Christ. In the same way as the Ethiopian eunuch it follows that all transgender people who use the breadth and range of their experiences to embrace and enrich the ideals of their own lives; and the lives of others may likewise minister to the Gospel message and they may also participate in this priestly act.

Without compromise Jesus had usurped the social and power structures upon which Jewish society was built. By stepping outside the boundaries of a gender unequal and dictatorial society, the disruptive behaviour of the Goddess cults attacked those power structures which were essential to maintain it. Attitudes to transgender issues were similarly dominated by the need to maintain the power structures in a male dominated society^{118 119 120}. These gender based challenges to the

¹¹⁴ Hester, J. David, (2005) "Eunuchs and the Postgender Jesus: Matthew 19:12 and Transgressive Sexualities" Journal for the Study of the New Testament September (2005) 28: 13-40, Interfakultäres Zentrum für Ethik in den Wissenschaften, Tübingen Centre for Hermeneutics and Rhetorics, California. Accessed at: www.spirituality.org.za/files/Eunuch.pdf 23 July 2012. For a full account see also section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

¹¹⁵ Self-castration by itself does not indicate any transgender desires, for the purpose may be the avoidance of the temptations of sex in religious devotion. However when self-castration is combined with the fact that the Goddess priests dressed as women, the opportunity for the expression of transgender feelings becomes available. For extended descriptions see: Gilchrist, S. (2015): "Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church"; and :Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

¹¹⁶ Kuefler, Mathew. (2001): "Eusebius, in his Life of Constantine. See in "The Manly Eunuch Masculinity, Gender Ambiguity, and Christian Ideology in Late Antiquity"" University of Chicago Press ISBN: 9780226457390

¹¹⁷ The implications of this are discussed in section 7:4:7 of this document.

¹¹⁸ Christian examples of male to female transgender people are hard to come by because any movement in that direction would become suppressed by the doctrines of male supremacy and the gender discrimination which was practiced by the later Church. However there is much more evidence of transgender behaviour in the female to male direction. One of the most famous woman leaders was expressed in the popular story of Thecla, a virgin-martyr who was converted by Paul. She cut her hair, donned men's clothing, and took up the duties of a missionary traveller. Threatened with rape, prostitution, and twice put in the ring as a martyr, she persevered in her faith and her chastity. Her lively and somewhat

power structures of Greco/Roman society came both from Christianity and from the Goddess cults. This analysis makes use of the work of René Girard who shows how a scapegoat can exert enormous power in religious belief. The differences and commonalities in the behaviour of the two traditions and the similarity in their application of the scapegoat mechanism, as described by Girard, are considered in detail elsewhere¹²¹. From all of these considerations the commonalities of purpose of the Gospel of Jesus and those of the positive elements of the Goddess cults can hardly be missed¹²².

7:1:5 Gender Fairness

The Gospel that Jesus preached was the same for everyone. Nobody is excluded for being true to who they are and for the honesty with which they live their lives. The equality of all men and women in the sight of God, and gender fairness were also key elements in his approach¹²³. In Galatians 3:28 Paul states that there shall be “no male and female... for all are one in Christ Jesus”. The same message is expressed in saying 22 of the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas. In addition to this, saying 114 in the same Gospel reads: “Simon Peter said to them, “Make Mary leave us, for females don't deserve life.” Jesus said, “Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of Heaven.” This viewpoint is strange to modern eyes, but it reflects first century thinking. That adopted a one sex model for gender, whereby the male and female reproductive organs were essentially the same as each other except that one set is turned inside out¹²⁴. The idea that a man can be turned into a woman by some malign act of a God or Goddess was not just an abstract thought. This viewpoint is representative of the attitudes to gender, and the one sex model, that first century people understood. Care should be applied when using apocryphal texts, but there is a case for rating the integrity of this Gospel above some of the other apocryphal texts. Many scholars now ascribe it to a very early date¹²⁵. If these passages are correct, they provide a further association with the outlook of the Goddess cults¹²⁶.

fabulous story is recorded in the second century Acts of Paul and Thecla, The importance of such stories lies in their high degree of acceptance and popularity, and not necessarily in their absolute truth. The text of the acts can be accessed at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/maps/primary/thecla.html>. See also Section 3:2:1 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): “An Unfinished Reformation”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>¹¹⁹ In the second and third centuries, gender discrimination continued to increase. In the fourth century it was considered that female mystics could only achieve salvation and redemption if they rejected every aspect of their femininity. Even if they did, redemption could only be gained in heaven and not on earth. Although male to female transgender behaviour would be considered abhorrent at this time, it was positively encouraged in the female to male direction. Thus for women gender reassignment for entry to heaven was an ideal, and also a requirement that had to be achieved. However in order to protect the authority of a male church hierarchy in a male dominated society, it could only come after death. For a full account see Gilchrist, S. 2013: “An Unfinished Reformation”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.

¹²⁰ This idea that women had to have an instant sex change when they die in order to enter heaven as men was commonly held in the Church. In the meantime on earth women could only redeem their lives through childbirth, obedience or by renouncing all aspects of their femininity. On earth they were told by the Church that they could only wait in penance for the sins of Eve until they entered heaven, when the day of gender reassignment or freedom from gender comes. For a full account see section 2:3:3 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): “An Unfinished Reformation”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.

¹²¹ See section 9 of this document.

¹²² See Section 13 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): “Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf> See also section 3:1:7: “Power and its Usurpation” of Gilchrist, S. (2013): “An Unfinished Reformation”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.

¹²³ The term gender fairness is used in instead of gender equality because of some of the 21st century presumptions that the latter term implies.

¹²⁴ This perception is reflected in saying 22 of the Gospel of Thomas. See section 2:3:4 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “An Unfinished Reformation”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹²⁵ Recent scholarship now tends to ascribe an early date to the apocryphal Gospel of Thomas and this is supported by this analysis. (For a full account see section 2:3:4 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “An Unfinished Reformation”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.) If that is the case the idea that women have to

7:1:6 Attitudes to Women

From the beginning, many Jewish women, which included Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Susanna, had accompanied Jesus during his ministry, and supported him out of their private means (Luke 8:1-3). However the most striking thing about the role of women in the life and teaching of Jesus is that they were always present. The continual testimony to the place of women amongst the followers of Jesus and his own serious teaching and treatment of them was a break with tradition which has been described as being without any previous precedent in first century Judaism¹²⁷. His interactions with them broke many of the taboos of purity and respectability which Judaism enforced. Christianity also created greater challenges for Greco/Roman society¹²⁸. Because of the gender stratification which was inevitably imposed by the Gods and Goddesses belonging to polytheistic society who were themselves gender defined, any struggles for the equality of status or for complete gender equality carried out by the cults could only be taken so far. Even though women had achieved considerable power inside their own domains, the divinely decreed orders of difference meant that these fundamental gender divisions could not be broken, and this created a glass ceiling which could never be crossed. What was required to make the breakthrough was a religion that worshipped a single gender transcendent God, and one which is shown in this analysis to have a social perspective which was close to the Goddess cults. Because of its agenda for women, together with the moral values of a subject society, Christianity could bridge that void. The ministry of women was welcomed by Jesus. These were the promises for women that the Gospel message of Jesus had brought¹²⁹. The promises were destroyed by the gender discrimination of the later Church¹³⁰.

It was not good enough for Jesus simply to express his care and concern for women, the transgender people; the poor the outcast and the dispossessed. Jesus identified himself with all of these people and he gave women the full ownership of his message. The Christian ideals on gender and sexuality are spelt out by Paul in Galatians 3:26-28. "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus". Like the self-castrated priests of the Goddess cults, this doctrine attacked the need for the preservation of status and structure inside a male dominated and a socially unequal world.

7:1:7 Sexual Moralities

With its challenges to the structure of Roman society, it is hardly surprising that Christianity was at first condemned by the authorities as a disreputable and disruptive sect. If Christianity was to make a continuing impact on the world it had to navigate a way through the cultural clashes between

have a sex change before they can enter heaven may be ascribed to an early date. For example saying 114 in the Gospel of Thomas reads: "Simon Peter said to them, "Make Mary leave us, for females don't deserve life." Jesus said, "Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of Heaven" (For texts see: <http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gosthom.html>). This is not quite as strange as it seems. The perceptions of sex and gender were very different from today: a "One Sex" model, where male and female were the extremes of one range, was prevalent and the fear of a man being turned into a woman because of some offence to the Gods or Goddesses occurred.

¹²⁶ An extended analysis of this is given in Section 3:1:7 of Gilchrist, S. .2013: "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf> .

¹²⁷ Saggs, H. W. F. (1987/1965): "*Religion: Everyday Life in Babylonia and Assyria*". Dorset Press. 1987, reprint of 1965 edition published by Batsford. p.196.

¹²⁸ See section 7:1:2 of this document.

¹²⁹ See: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*From Gender Transcendence to Gender Complementarity: the Development of Attitudes to Gender and Sexuality in the Early and the Modern Church*": Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/007B-FromGndrTranscToGndrComp.pdf>.

¹³⁰ See Section 18 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>. Also section 2:2:5 and 2:3:3 of Gilchrist, S. .2013: "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

Greek, Roman and Jewish societies, and it also had to make the transfer from a religion that belonged to a subjugated society to that of a dominant one. As well as the challenges imposed by the gender discrimination and the inequity of the power structures of the dominant society there were those of the abuse of sex. Therefore constant themes in the Epistles and Letters of Peter and Paul were those of maintaining the high moral values of the new religion, and obtaining respectability for the Christian Church. That meant conforming to the social divisions of Roman society, and in part this meant transferring the gender divisions which were already present in first century Jewish culture, into the Roman state. That compromised the radical teaching and example of Jesus on gender and sex, and this has had major consequences for the Church¹³¹

A key sexual challenge related to the practice of anal penetration¹³². The conflicts and the cultural clashes are clearly seen in the opposing attitudes to the act. In the case of same-sex intercourse between two male Roman citizens, it was the penetrated party who was condemned, because his submission had desecrated the status of citizenship. In subject societies it was the penetrator who was condemned because of the humiliation it brought¹³³. Roman citizens were expected to exercise responsibility. That created major implications which required high principles of conduct in society, but in principle, in sexual matters they could do as much to non-citizens as they liked^{134 135}. It has been shown that anal penetration was used as a weapon for imposing humiliation and domination by master culture on a subject one, much as it was for the physical gratifications of sex¹³⁶. In addition activities that were considered to be moral in one society could be horrific in another, and judgement on these has to be made on what each society expects¹³⁷.

¹³¹ See section 7:5 of this document

¹³² See section 7:2 of this document for the full discussion

¹³³ In Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, Judaism penalised both parties in equal measure, but the prohibition was directed firstly at the penetrator in the relationship. (See for example the story of Sodom and Gomorrah). For a full discussion see Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/217P-FoundationsSexGender.pdf>

¹³⁴ The Lex Scantinia was a law that penalized a sex crime against a freeborn male minor. The law may also have been used to prosecute adult male citizens who willingly took a passive role in having sex with other men. However it only protected Roman citizens. The Law is poorly documented but its effect was to give any male Roman citizen immunity from prosecution, but only if he took the dominant role in the same-sex rape of anyone else.

¹³⁵ The real limit was that of responsibility. (The author would like to use the word practicality). The exercise of responsibility by Roman citizens was essential if the empire was to work. These were multi-faceted societies where different laws were applied to Roman citizens and free citizens of occupied countries. That is seen in the Acts of the Apostles where Paul used the privileges of his Roman citizenship to good effect. Slaves did have some legal rights, for slavery in ancient Rome played an important role in society and the economy. As well as manual labour, slaves performed many domestic services, and might be employed at highly skilled jobs and professions. Teachers, accountants, and physicians were often slaves. Greek slaves in particular might be highly educated. Over time, many slaves gained increasing legal protection, including the right to file complaints against their masters. Several emperors began to grant increasing rights to slaves as the empire grew. Claudius announced that if a slave was abandoned by his master he became free. Nero granted slaves the right to complain against their masters in a court. Under Antoninus Pius, a master who killed a slave without just cause could be tried for homicide (Dillon, Matthew and Garland, Lynda. (2005): "*Ancient Rome: From the Early Republic to the Assassination of Julius Caesar*". Routledge, 2005: Pg 297). It also became common throughout the mid to late 2nd century CE to allow slaves to complain of cruel or unfair treatment by their owners (McGinn, Thomas. (2003): "*Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome*". Oxford University Press, 2003 Pg. 309). Rome differed from Greek city-states in allowing freed slaves to become citizens. After gaining their liberty a male slave who had belonged to a Roman citizen enjoyed active political freedom, including the right to vote: (Millar, Fergus. (2002): "*The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic*": University of Michigan, 1998, 2002, pp. 23, 209). There were different categories of slaves. Unskilled slaves and those sentenced to slavery as punishment, worked on farms, in mines, and as domestics. Their living conditions were brutal, and their lives were short. It is difficult to identify the degree of sexual abuse which slaves suffered. Those who gave the most value to society are likely to be well protected, but for all their masters had complete control over their lives. Although a Roman Citizen did have the freedom to do what he liked with his slaves, it was the exercise of responsibility, rather than legal prohibitions which restricted his acts.

¹³⁶ See section 7:12 of this document: Also: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹³⁷ See Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*": Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

The contrast could hardly be more complete. The Roman use of the penis as a plaything of art and fun, including the depictions of same-sex intercourse on vases, pictures and other artefacts, could serve to remind non-citizens of the powers which a dictatorial and dominant culture exerts¹³⁸. Amongst the Goddess cults, acts of same-sex intercourse, which would be seen by one society as exclusively acts of carnal prostitution, could be interpreted by the other as ways of bringing the fertility of the Goddess to men who sought it in their own lives¹³⁹. The horror of same-sex rape inflicted on the Israelites, which is a theme in the story of Sodom and Gomorrah¹⁴⁰, on the other hand resounds throughout the whole of Jewish history¹⁴¹. As well as these cultural differences there was a great deal of decadence inside first century Greco/Roman society. Same-sex intercourse lends itself particularly to this type of misuse because there are no reproductive consequences of such acts. Prostitution, degeneracy and sexual exploitation were rife. The money made from temple sex was a major resource for the Goddess cults. The condemnation of sexual misconduct by Peter and Paul and by the early Christian Church was more than deserved, and in the intensity of these condemnations it is not surprising that the consideration of any type of moral duality disappeared.

The First Century Christian censures of these culturally determined differences are absolutely understandable, and by today's standards most people, including the author, would consider that to be totally correct. If Christianity was going to integrate itself into Greco/Roman society it could not afford to directly attack these power structures. By endorsing the social structures of Greco/Roman society, and by ignoring the cultural differences, it was made easy for the Christian Church to treat Greco/Roman society and its cults exclusively as hotbeds for illicit and inappropriate sex.

7:2 Love and Sex

In socially and gender unequal societies, the acts of same-sex intercourse enforce the power differences between subject and dominant groups in ways which are not encountered by any other sexual acts. Its abuse for the exercise of power and sexual gratification in Roman society has already been discussed. Because of this uniqueness a clear distinction should be made between same-sex relationships which involved anal penetration and those which do not. More usually today the prohibition in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is taken as the prohibition of male same-sex intercourse. However the differences in cultural attitudes and many of the arguments presented in this document require a more specific approach. The interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, which declares that the prohibition is confined to male on male acts of anal penetration alone is more restricted than that which is usually encountered. Nevertheless this is in line with rabbinic interpretations. It is also well attested within first century Jewish sources that these prohibitions

¹³⁸ In a dominant society one way in which same-sex intercourse can be separated from the social consequences of citizenship is to provide a religious framework within which it can occur. This may be an excuse for the abusive same-sex acts and degenerate behaviour which took place during the excessively lavish banquets organised by the male fraternities, involving high ranking people in Greco/Roman society, which were set up to honour the cult of Cybele, and other Goddess cults. There is no record of any ordinary priests and others who did not conform to these supporting roles taking part in these events. See also footnote 99

¹³⁹ See Section 11 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>. Also sections 3:1:7 to 3:1:9 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹⁴⁰ Two similar stories, that of Lot (Genesis 19:1-11) and the unnamed Levite and his concubine (Judges 19), describe threatened same-sex rape. It is argued that these passages do not concern homosexuality but are about the abuse of hospitality through sexual violence. For a more detailed discussion of Old Testament attitudes see: Gilchrist, S. (2015): "*Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf>.

¹⁴¹ The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were also taken to represent every evil, not just or primarily aspects of sex. See Gilchrist, S. (2015): "*Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/217P-FoundationsSexGender.pdf>

apply to same-sex anal penetration by men alone and not to any other sexual acts^{142 143}. There is no corresponding condemnation of same-sex behaviour between women. It has been shown that the abuse of power was the primary reason for the prohibitions of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, rather than an intrinsic horror of the act, the cultural clashes have similarly been noted, and this prohibition is discussed in more detail elsewhere¹⁴⁴. Judaism applied the same penalties to both partners. However the dominant penetrator was named as the culprit for initiating the act¹⁴⁵. In Roman society it was only the penetrated submissive citizen who was condemned. That is the interpretation of Leviticus that Jesus, Paul and the other Apostles would have known, and it is this which is used in this account.

If there is to be true impartiality a distinction must be made between behaviour arising from the outpouring of love and that which driven by malevolent acts. The Roman abuse of same-sex intercourse as an expression of humiliation and domination has been described in the previous sections, but that must also be placed with the broader context of first century attitudes to gender and sex. A further distinction should be made between those which arise from the outpouring of love and those which exclusively pursue the pleasures of sex.

7:2:1 Greek and Roman Attitudes to Love and Sex

The ancient Greeks and Romans did not have the terms or employ concepts which correspond to the contemporary dichotomy of 'heterosexual' and 'homosexual'. Therefore there was no boundary which was placed between strong heterosexual friendships on the one hand and on relationships which resulted from homosexual attraction on the other. However this difference would be recognised in society and indeed the latter was preferred for the depth and the intensity of the commitments it provided. A host of writers demonstrate that this understanding was common not just to Athens but through the whole of the Greek and Mediterranean world. The Greeks and Romans used different words for different types of love. However morality and love were not decided in gendered terms¹⁴⁶. The Greeks positioned the boundaries which divided acceptable and unacceptable behaviour between actions which were carried out for the noble pursuit of love, and the actions that were engaged in for the carnal abuse of sex¹⁴⁷. These attitudes also demanded the exercise of full responsibility for all behaviour; but gross abuse and discrimination could still occur because the rules tended to be applied only to citizens of their own societies¹⁴⁸. The distinction between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour was made on the basis of intention and the

¹⁴² See section 3:6 of: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": Access at:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹⁴³ There is little controversy within the rabbinic tradition about the meaning of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13. These passages are translated in various ways but the basic meaning has always appeared to be quite clear: "And with a male you shall not lie the lyings of a woman, it is an abomination." A similar phrase, "The lying of a male", appears in Numbers 31:18 and this is understood to mean what women experience in intercourse, i.e. that of penile penetration. The lyings of a woman are plural because she may be penetrated vaginally or anally but a man, who does not have a vagina, is singly penetrable anally. This Midrashim interpretation makes it clear that the passages in Leviticus only prohibit the act of same sex anal intercourse. There is no condemnation of lesbian sex whatever since penile penetration is not possible. See Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf> and Gilchrist, S. (2011): "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁴⁴ Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf>

¹⁴⁵ See section 7:2:1 of this paper and Gilchrist, S. (2016): "*Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf>

¹⁴⁶ That must also be defined in terms of the first century understanding and not just that of the present day. See section 7:6 of this document

¹⁴⁷ See Gilchrist, S. (2013) *An Unfinished Reformation*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf> and Gilchrist, S. (2011) *Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁴⁸ These have to be interpreted according to their cultures. This does not condone the horrendous sexual treatment by Rome of people of lesser status and subject societies

disruption to social order rather than prohibition of any act. This means that today's attempts to use the present day descriptions of heterosexuality, homosexuality and bisexuality fail because the presumptions behind them cannot be applied. Greek men were expected to have both same-sex and heterosexual relationships at various times in their lives and in intimate Jewish Rabbinic Partnerships¹⁴⁹, the Rabbis also went home to their wives.

The same assessments should be made of other sexual acts. When oral sex (fellatio and cunnilingus) is considered the distinction between penetrator and penetrated is made in two Latin words for these acts: "irrumare" (to penetrate orally) and "fellare" (to be penetrated orally). In ancient Rome, fellatio was considered profoundly taboo. Sexual acts were generally observed through the viewpoint of submission and control. It was considered to be abhorrent for a male citizen to accept fellatio because that meant he was being humiliated by penetration whereas, orally penetrating a woman or another man of lower social status was not humiliating. The known recipients were supposed to have foul breath and were often made unwelcome as guests at a dinner table¹⁵⁰. Even by their own standards, sexual abuse was prominent in first century Roman society; but that cannot be separated from the enforcement of power and domination in all sexual acts.

7:2:2 Judean Attitudes to Love and Sex

In Judaism the situation was different. Gender discrimination and complementarity was practiced, but as a society which for most of its existence had lived under the conquering yokes of others, the attitudes to sexual behaviour and sexual relationships challenged their domineering acts. There is no ban on oral sex in the bible, and the prohibitions of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 were not considered to apply to it¹⁵¹. The medieval scholar, Maimonides¹⁵², who was usually quite conservative in sexual matters, took quite a liberal approach. He wrote: "A man's wife is permitted to him. Therefore a man may do whatever he wishes with his wife. He may have intercourse with her at any time he wishes and kiss her on whatever limb of her body he wants. He may have natural or un-natural relations, as long as he does not bring forth his seed in vain"¹⁵³. Same-sex intercourse

¹⁴⁹ See sections 7:3:2 to 7:3:3 of this paper

¹⁵⁰ See for example: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/priap/prp105.htm> : Smithers, Leonard C. (1890): "*Priapeia sive diversorum poetarum in Priapum lusus*" or "*Sportive Epigrams On Priapus by divers poets in English verse and prose translation*" Translated by Sir Richard Burton: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/priap/prpa.htm> .The Priapeia is a collection of short Latin poems in the shape of jocose epigrams affixed to the statues of the god Priapus. These were often rude carvings from a tree-trunk, human-shaped, with a huge phallus which could at need be used as a cudgel against robbers. They were placed in the gardens of wealthy Romans, for the twofold purpose of promoting fertility and for preventing depredations on the produce.

¹⁵¹ See Section 5:0 "Anal Penetration" of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

¹⁵² Concern may be expressed about using medieval sources to examine first century attitudes. However Maimonides (1135-1204) and others were analysing earlier texts. The approach in this document examines the issues using other contemporary sources as well as the bible, and this includes Jewish oral law. For those who are unfamiliar with these sources it may be useful to define a few terms. The Torah is the five biblical books of Moses. The Mitzvah lists the 613 commandments given in the Torah (plus seven additional rabbinic commandments) which a religious Jew is required to follow. The Torah and Mitzvah contain the entirety of Judaism's founding legal and ethical religious texts. The Talmud has two components which are the Mishnah and the Gemara. The Mishnah was the first written compendium of Judaism's oral law, it was compiled around 200 A.D. and it draws on sources which date from the time of the Exile onwards. The Gemara develops and expands on the Mishnah. Two versions of the Talmud are often referred to: the Jerusalem Talmud was put together around 350 A.D. and the Babylonian Talmud dates from around 500 A.D. The Babylonian Talmud is usually regarded as the definitive text. As with the Old Testament it contains a wide variety of documents, some contradictory, and also some unpalatable texts. Halakha is a term which is used to describe the whole corpus of Jewish oral and written law and traditions. In first century Judaism the oral law was at least as important as the written law. It is the interpretation of the oral law, given most particularly in the Mishnah, which Jesus and his disciples would have acted on and understood.

¹⁵³ Mishnah Torah Issurei Biah 21:9. Access at: http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/960647/jewish/Issurei-Biah-Chapter-One.htm

and masturbation were similarly considered to be acts of giving sperm in vain¹⁵⁴. However the Talmudic rabbis themselves made it clear that marriage was never meant to be solely a child-producing enterprise. Ejaculation was permitted where procreation was not in mind¹⁵⁵. Contraception by the use of absorbents was also allowed in particular circumstances¹⁵⁶. Sexual intercourse was also supported after a couple had passed the age where childbearing was possible for the purpose of maintaining conjugal relationships. Un-natural relations were defined as any sexual activity where ejaculation of sperm does not occur in the traditional place¹⁵⁷. These activities include oral sex, heterosexual anal sex, or activities which the rabbis called "threshing within and without" (meaning premature withdrawal). The Talmudic sources talk freely about such activity, permitting it under certain circumstances between husband and wife. Thus un-natural relationships are permissible when they are occasional and not exclusive, and if the intent is for mutual pleasure. There was no absolute prohibition of the act. In this context the condemnations of same-sex behaviour by Paul in Romans 1:26-27 should also be noted. Here Paul's denunciations are set in the context of sexual abuse. He draws on Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 for his condemnations and in the definitions he uses, the terms natural and un-natural relationships are employed¹⁵⁸.

The Song of Songs (Or the Song of Solomon) in the bible celebrates the expression of love between a man and a woman in the context of legitimate erotic sex. This story has been interpreted in many ways. One Christian interpretation celebrates as expression of the love between Christ and the Church. That reduces to the spiritual dimension, the reality of these physical acts¹⁵⁹. One of the most notable features about the relationship is that it is a fully consensual and equal relationship between a man and a woman, who engage with equal passion in the physical acts. Despite this, women remained totally subject to the authority of men; and that manifested itself through gross gender inequality and the division of public and private roles¹⁶⁰. However equality within the family is found elsewhere in the Bible. Jewishness is passed down through the mother. The Torah and Halacha demand that a husband must love his wife like himself, and honour her more than he does

¹⁵⁴ The scripture most frequently pointed to in regards to masturbation is the story of Onan in Genesis 38:9-10. Some interpret this passage as saying that "spilling your seed" on the ground is always a sin. However, that is not what the passage is saying. God condemned Onan not for "spilling his seed" but because Onan refused to fulfil his duty to provide an heir for his brother. See section 4:5 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>.

¹⁵⁵ The Talmudic rabbis make it clear that marriage was never meant to be solely a child-producing enterprise. Rabbi Tam, in the medieval period, speaks of the permissibility of intercourse with a barren woman for purposes of pleasure. In his 14th-century commentary on the prayer book, David Abudraham states that the reason no blessing is invoked for offspring at a wedding is because even couples incapable of procreation should have the full seven blessings of the traditional marriage ceremony.

¹⁵⁶ The Jewish oral law allowed women to use an absorbent as a contraceptive device in particular circumstances. These were in marital intercourse, if they were a minor, and as an expectant and a nursing mother. (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Niddah 45a). This contrasts with the present attitude of the Roman Catholic Church where only "natural" methods of contraception are allowed. Apart from anal penetration there is no prohibition in the bible of other methods of stimulation where ejaculation might occur. The encouragement to reproduce is well served by other commands both in the bible and by rabbinic instructions to "Settle the World" (BT Yevamot 62b). See Section 4:5 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷ Rashi on Yevamoth 34b: http://www.come-and-hear.com/yebamoth/yebamoth_34.html

¹⁵⁸ Romans 1:26-27: For this reason God gave them up to degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received in their own persons the due penalty for their error. (NRSVA)

¹⁵⁹ See Section 6:2 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁶⁰ See for example "The Torah's View of the Husband / Wife Relationship": at: <http://www.theyeshivaworld.com/coffeeroom/topic/the-torahs-view-of-the-husband-wife-relationship> and Lemos, T.M. (2017) "Weddings and Marriage Traditions in Ancient Israel" Online: <https://www.bibleodyssey.org:443/en/passages/related-articles/weddings-and-marriage-traditions-in-ancient-israel>

himself¹⁶¹. Thus love, continuity, property, and family unity were paramount and the authority given to men enforced on them an absolute obligation to their wives.

The cultural traditions of Judaism allowed public expressions of intimacy between men. In Chapter 8 of the Song of Songs the lover wishes she were his brother, so that they could kiss in public and nobody would notice. Jesus complained that, although the woman who was seeking forgiveness had kissed him; none of the men had done so at the time when he entered the house (Luke 7:36-49). John laid his head on the breast of Jesus at the Last Supper and Judas betrayed Jesus with a kiss. There are about 30 separate instances in the Bible where the kissing of men by men is recorded in a positive way.

This does not by itself make distinguish between these expressions of intimacy as acts of convention or of love. The biblical and first century Judean attitudes to same-sex love have been examined by Jennings¹⁶², Greenberg¹⁶³ and others, and it is considered by the author elsewhere¹⁶⁴. Same-sex intercourse was taboo. Short of same-sex intercourse all other behaviour was permitted¹⁶⁵. However anything which reduced the status of male citizen, such as effeminacy was decried¹⁶⁶. The expressions of same-sex love were only constrained by the preservation of public respectability and the prohibition of this penetrative act. As with other first century Middle Eastern societies it is shown that the distinctions between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour were made between actions which were carried out for the noble pursuit of love, and those that were engaged in for the carnal abuse of sex. Unlike present day theology which demands the removal of all sexual content, it is demonstrated that these same sex loving relationships were welcomed for the quality and the depth of commitment they brought¹⁶⁷.

The identification of the beloved disciple in the Gospel of John makes it clear that relationship between Jesus and John was distinguished from that of the other disciples by the special nature of their love. In Judaism there was no tradition of the ascetic celibacy practiced by Greek and Roman society, which repudiated all passions of sex¹⁶⁸. The celibacy advocated by Jesus was for the purpose of removing the distractions from spreading the Gospel message which could be caused by other commitments and the obligations of family life¹⁶⁹. It is perhaps significant that for about the first three hundred years of its existence the focus of the Christian Church was concentrated on the condemnation of same-sex intercourse for reasons of abuse, and no other types of same-sex acts¹⁷⁰. The changes in outlook towards the traditional understandings can be linked to the

¹⁶¹ Yevamot 62b: Access at http://halakhah.com/yebamoth/yebamoth_62.html

¹⁶² Jennings, Theodore. (2014): "The (Alleged) Rejection of Same-sex Love" Pp 207- 221. In "The Oxford Handbook of Theology, Sexuality, and Gender" Ed: Thatcher, Adrian. Oxford University Press, ISBN 0199664153, 9780199664153.

¹⁶³ For a full description of these relationships see Greenberg, Steven; (2004) "Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition" The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3.

¹⁶⁴ The topic is also covered in Gilchrist, S. 2011: "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>.

¹⁶⁵ See Section 6:3 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships":

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁶⁶ See for example Paul's condemnation of "Soft Men" and Clement's use of Deuteronomy 22:5 in section 7:5:1 of this document.

¹⁶⁷ See Section 6:2 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships":

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ For a description of different types of celibacy adopted by Greece, Rome and Judea, see Section 16 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

¹⁶⁹ For a description of the type of celibacy advocated by Jesus. See Section 16 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

¹⁷⁰ Gilchrist, S. 2011: "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships". Access at:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

asceticism of the Desert Fathers in the third century¹⁷¹ and the attitudes of Augustine and others which were expressed in the fourth century Church¹⁷².

7:3 Learning and Philosophy

7:3:1 Jewish Learning

In attitudes to learning and philosophy there were large differences in approach between the Jewish and Greco/Roman traditions. In classical Greek philosophy celibacy and asceticism was greatly valued as a way to promote the rationality of argument by avoiding the passions of sex. In place of the abstract discussion in Greek society, the Jews adopted a didactic approach to learning and study. The “Pairs”¹⁷³ or Zugot culture in Judaism also created a situation where close personal bonding could occur. Talmudic study in Judaism traditionally employed Chavruta partnerships, where pairs of scholars or students worked together to learn, discuss and to debate a shared text. The rabbis inside the academies repeatedly encouraged their students to adopt ever increasing degrees of intimacy, and no rules for first century Chavruta partnerships are found which establish any boundaries that approve of intense heterosexual friendships on the one hand, and disapprove of homosexual relationships on the other. Indeed these concepts would not have been understood. Judaism had dictated that there must be no anal penetration. However within these relationships all other types of sexual acts, together with their expressions of love and intimacy could be accepted. Thus anal penetration was the boundary that could not be crossed, and those people who offended against this could be harshly condemned for a “lack of respect”¹⁷⁴. No other physical sexual acts between two men are forbidden, either by Jewish law and its teachings or in the bible itself. The deeper the relationship the more valued the chavruta partnership became, and it is reported that the bonds between such same-sex partners could often be stronger than those in a heterosexual marriage¹⁷⁵.

7:3:2 Relationships in Rabbinic Partnerships

In Jewish history the Zugot¹⁷⁶ period lasted from about 515 BC to around 70 AD. This was a time when Jewish religious leadership was in the hands of successive pairs of male teachers, and deep male pair bonding could occur. There are many instances of close rabbinic relationships in Jewish history to which the present day definitions of heterosexuality, bisexuality or homosexuality cannot be applied¹⁷⁷. Perhaps the most notable of the later relationships is that between Resh Lakesh

¹⁷¹ See Section 6 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): “*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*”:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

¹⁷² See section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2011) “*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*”:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁷³ See section 7:3:2 of this document: Also Section 3:2:3 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>.

¹⁷⁴ The word chavruta, like marriage, came to be used in the singular to describe two people in a relationship. The Talmud (Yevamot 62b) states that 12,000 pairs (sic) of students of Rabbi Akiva ben Joseph (ca.50–ca.135 AD) died of plague between Passover and Shavuot, “because they did not treat one another with respect”. The context of the passage indicates that each pair of students formed a chavruta. The text also implies that this plague was diphtheria, but this may be a disguise for sexual misbehaviour, and for the massacres that took place after the Jewish Revolt in 70 A.D. See section 3:2:3 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹⁷⁵ For a full account see section 2:5 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf> .

¹⁷⁶ The term Zugot simply refers to pairs.

¹⁷⁷ For a full description of these relationships see Greenberg, Steven; (2004) “*Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition*” The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3. The topic is also covered in Gilchrist, S. 2011. “*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf> .

(Rashi) and Rabbi Yonathan. However these expressions of intense same-sex affection were very familiar to the rabbis at the time of Jesus and in the early Christian era. Jesus is described as a rabbi in John 3:2. In a separate second century quotation, John is also described as a priest¹⁷⁸. A point of key interest is that of knowing how these traditions applied to Jesus himself, There was a major rabbinic centre of learning at Sepphoris; about four miles from Nazareth, and the way in which Jesus impressed the priests in the temple in Jerusalem at the age of 12 years suggest that he was well versed in such didactic techniques (Luke 2:41-52).

This study shows that the relationship between Jesus and John had many of the characteristics of a first century rabbinic partnership¹⁷⁹. The obvious question then to be asked is who any Chavruta partner of Jesus was? While the answer must be supposition, the most obvious candidate is that of the Apostle John. Throughout John's Gospel, he is given special status as the disciple who Jesus loved. Any thought or idea of this love being anything more than just an ascetic friendship is vehemently denied by the present day Christian Church^{180 181}. However a re-examination of the key text (John 21:15-17) using the results of this neurophysiological and psychological study, challenges that assumption. When this text is considered together with the historic changes in the interpretation of the word "Agape", a rather different conclusion is found^{182 183 184}. This result

¹⁷⁸ The idea that John was a rabbi or priest is supported by a second-century quote of Polycrates of Ephesus (c. 130-196) which is recorded by Eusebius in his Church History: "John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord, and, being a priest, wore the sacerdotal plate. He fell asleep at Ephesus". (Eusebius. (260/265 – 339/340): "Church History". Book V, Chapter 24:2)

¹⁷⁹ For more details of this from the Jewish perspective, see: Greenberg, Steven; (2004): *Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition*: The University of Wisconsin Press, ISBN 10: 0-299-19094-3

¹⁸⁰ In John 21:15-17 Jesus uses the word Agápē on the first two occasions when he asks Peter if he loves him, to which he receives an affirmative but uncommitted response. Peter uses the word Phileo when he replies both times. However on the third occasion Peter's response becomes enthusiastic when Jesus reframes his question by using the word Phileo instead. The present day Church interpretation defines the word Agápē as the spiritual self-sacrificing ascetic and non-sexual love through which Jesus calls Peter to love His Church. It is shown in the following footnotes that this was not the first century understanding.

¹⁸¹ The current Roman Catholic Teaching as affirmed by Pope Benedict in his encyclical letter *Deus Caritas Est* (2005) argues that the difference in meaning between these two verbs for "love" signifies that when Jesus uses the word Agápē he is calling Peter to the higher form of love for the Church. However Peter is not yet ready to commit himself to the kind of self-sacrificing ascetic type of love for the Church that the present day definition of Agápē represents. In English both of Phileo and Agápē are translated in the same way as "love" and the real meaning of this passage is hidden in translation. Some scholars contend that the use of the two words, Phileo and Agápē for "love" means nothing significant. However it is also known that John never uses double words or double-meaning words without some hidden significance, and Jesus indeed plays on the differences in meaning between the two words in this passage. First century readers of the Greek Septuagint would also read these as separate words and thus would understand the word play involved in this passage. See Section 6:2 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁸² The interpretations of Agápē which are used in the present day describe it as the type of spiritual self-sacrificing ascetic and ascending love for people and for the Church. This specifically excludes the expression of any form of sexual passion. However the arguments for this modern ascetic interpretation are not borne out in the Old Testament texts. The word Agápē (which is a direct transliteration of the equivalent Jewish word *ahabà*) is used in passages such as Genesis 34:1-4, Judges 16:4:15, Jeremiah 2:20-25, Jeremiah 2:33, Hosea 4:18 and Hosea 9:1, to describe acts of non-marital sexual love. Passages such as Genesis 24:67, Judges 14:16, 1 Samuel 18:20-21, and 1 Kings 11:1-3 deal with married sexual love. Genesis 29, Deuteronomy 21:15, 1 Samuel 1:4-5, 2 Chronicles 11:21 use the word to describe acts of sexual attraction. The Song of Solomon uses it to describe the outpouring of love in a sexual context. The same word is also used to describe the relationship between David and Jonathan, (see for example 1 Samuel 18), and between Jesus and the beloved disciple in the Gospel of John. In the original Hebrew bible and in the Greek Septuagint the word Agápē and its equivalent it is used to describe committed and faithful love which can find its fulfilment in sex. That is in marked contrast the current Christian definition of the word. Agápē therefore means more than friendship for it allows the expression of responsible sexual affection as well.

¹⁸³ In addition to the Jewish interpretation, the Greek writers, at the time of Plato and other ancient authors, used forms of this word to denote love of a spouse or family, or affection for a particular activity, and employed it either to contrast with, or to give it a totally separate meaning from, *Philia* (an affection that could denote either brotherhood or generally non-sexual affection) and *Eros* (an affection of a sexual nature, usually between two unequal partners). Agápē and its relatives are also used by Xenophon to describe the affection of soldiers in the Theban "Army of Lovers" for their younger partners (Davidson, James. (2009); "*The Greeks and Greek Love: A Bold New Exploration of the Ancient World*": Random House.

suggests that something stronger than friendship did exist¹⁸⁵. There are other indications which point to the nature of their relationship. Neither Jesus nor John married, which was unusual for the time. Another is the representation of John as the beardless disciple. Christian teaching reasons that the absence of a beard was because John was so young, however in Greek society the maximum age at which pederasty could be practiced was set by the age at which the junior partner in this sexual relationship was first able to grow a beard. There is no suggestion that Jesus and John ever practiced this: John is described as a virgin by Tertullian¹⁸⁶, also in the Pistis Sophia¹⁸⁷ and in other early texts. That is almost certainly correct¹⁸⁸. The Greek practice of pederasty was anathema to Jewish Society. The Jewish condemnations of pederasty were vitriolic¹⁸⁹. Their attacks on of same-sex intercourse could be extreme and for Christianity to gain the respectability it sought in Roman society, even the slightest suggestion of this had to be vigorously denied¹⁹⁰. The Christian Church regarded the beardlessness of John to be a symbol of his virginity, this is discussed more fully in section 7:15 of this document; however the allusion to pederasty would also be understood¹⁹¹.

7:3:3 Christian Equivalent

The early Christians considered themselves to be Jews. They did not see themselves as a separate sect, and the early Christian Church continued to support the Jewish attitudes to gender and sex. An almost exact parallel to the relationships found in rabbinic partnerships occurs in the services of

ISBN-10: 0375505164. ISBN-13: 978-0375505164). Dover also writes that: "The abstract noun corresponding to 'agapan', was later appropriated by Christian writers for love from which sexuality is absent, but in (an illustration) a half-naked woman on a bed bears the name 'Agápē', and in the classical language there is no word for 'love' which precludes sexuality in cases where a sexual element in a relationship is socially acceptable". Dover also rejects the Christian interpretation. (Dover, K.J. (1978: 1989): "*Greek Homosexuality*": Updated and with a new Postscript. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts 1978: ISBN 0-674-36261-6 ISBN 0-674-36270-5).

¹⁸⁴ Phileo is the love of friendship family and home. However the opening up of the definition of the word Agápē to include a sexual content immediately gives possible new meanings to the word-play which was used by Jesus in John 21:15-17. This affirms that Jesus and John both loved Jesus, but that they did so in different ways. It also confirms that and in the relationship between Jesus and John there was a special intimacy, with some sort of sexual element involved. The structure of this passage also provides a deeper meaning, for it clearly positions the relationships between the two disciples by affirming the supremacy of Peter and the Church in Rome, while at the same time authenticating the use of the term "The disciple who Jesus loved" in John's Gospel. It demonstrates the unique nature of this Gospel and it also shows why, and in what way, the Gospel of John should be regarded as complementary to the Synoptic texts. If John's Gospel is indeed the product of such a relationship then, as shown later in this account, it is a unique and intimate account of the ministry of Jesus, which has a depth which reaches far beyond that which any other relationship could bring. So instead of reacting with a condemnation or a disapproval of the possibility of any form of same-sex intimacy, perhaps an offer of thanks for the understanding this brings is more appropriate response.

¹⁸⁵ The full reasons for these changes are discussed in Gilchrist, S. (2014): "*Christianity and Crisis: An Overview of Gender and Sexual Difference in the Early and Modern Christian Church*". Access at:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/017B-ChristianityAndCrisisOverview.pdf>; Gilchrist, S. (2011) "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same Sex Relationships*". Also: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>.

And: Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹⁸⁶ In the "Acts of John" it is said that John was called by Jesus as a young man and his virginity was repeatedly emphasised. This was probably written not later than 150 AD. (Lalleman, Pieter J. (1998): "*The Acts of John: A Two-stage Initiation Into Johannine Gnosticism*": Peeters Publishers, 1998: ISBN 9042905735, 9789042905733. Tertullian (c.155 – c.240) was also probably among the first to commit to writing the identification of John as a virgin. See "*The history of John, the son of Zebedee The apostle and evangelist*".

http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/apocryphal_acts_02_john_history.htm

¹⁸⁷ Pistis Sophia. (200-255): Translated with Commentary by G. R. S. Mead. London: J. M. Watkins: Revised Second Edition. Access at: <http://gnosis.org/library/psoph.htm>

¹⁸⁸ See section 7:5:2 of this document for more details.

¹⁸⁹ For the condemnation of pederasty by Philo of Alexandria in his Special Laws Book III 37-39, 137-139, see: Yonge, C. D. (1993). "*The works of Philo: Complete and unabridged*": Hendrickson Publishers (August 1, 1993): ISBN-10: 0943575931 ISBN-13: 978-0943575933

¹⁹⁰ See Section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*".

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

¹⁹¹ See section 7:5:2 of this document.

Adelphopoiesis or “Brother Making” which took place in the Christian Church. Anecdotal evidence for these is available from the fourth century, but liturgies from the later centuries do survive. These ceremonies contained many elements that were common to a marriage ceremony but they were not marriages¹⁹². Unlike the contractual relationships of first century heterosexual marriages, they had to be seen as a relationship between two equals. Anal penetration was totally prohibited, but all other intimacies were allowed. Nevertheless it is noted in this analysis that the bonds could be as strong as those in a marriage. The paradox is that these relationships had more in common with present day attitudes to marriage than any first century heterosexual marriages could permit¹⁹³.

7:4 Teaching and Relationships

7:4:1 Cross-Cultural Challenges

One of the strengths of Christianity is that it has always sought to adapt to its surroundings to accommodate the cultural traditions that exist. In the first century that involved the creation of a path through the cultural clashes between Greek, Roman and Jewish societies. Thus an important area to consider is the attitude to cultural transformations that was taken by Jesus himself. A further key issue that must be addressed is to ask what the attitude to anal penetration should be if the power structures of gender unequal and despotic societies are rendered ineffective or if they disappear.

Both of these questions appear to be covered in the story of the Centurion and the slave which is given in Luke, Chapter 7:1-10 and Matthew, Chapter 8:5-13. Centurions had servants or slaves to satisfy their personal needs¹⁹⁴. To avoid compromising relationships in occupied countries these provided services of sexual satisfaction¹⁹⁵. The Greek word “pais” was often used by first century

¹⁹² For a full account see section 3:2:5 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: “*An Unfinished Reformation*”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

¹⁹³ For a full discussion of this, and of its implications see Gilchrist, S. (2013): “*Reform and the Christian Church*”. Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/008B-ReformChristianChurchArticle.pdf>

¹⁹⁴ That included sex. The ideal recruit into the Roman army was about 17 or 18 in age, and had to be unmarried. Most civilians in the Empire usually married between the ages of 15 and 20, so all young recruits into the legions would have not have had any serious relationship commitments at home. A “concupinus” was a young male slave who was sexually exploited by his unmarried master as a sexual partner. These relationships could easily translate into army life. (See section 7:7 of this document for the Roman attitude to slavery). Marriage was prohibited to anyone of the rank of Centurion and below. However many, if not most of the soldiers had common-law wives. These women were variously free-born Roman women, slave girls, or civilians who had been taken on campaign. Soldiers made wide use of female slaves and prisoners, who were used as sexual partners and companions. There were official military prostitutes. Little is known about these prostitutes, except that their quality of life must have been horrific. Most were probably captives taken from conquered and depopulated areas. Being added to a military brothel was, much like service in the mines for male captives - effectively a death-sentence. That could satisfy the appetites of ordinary soldiers. However there had to be differences between officers and other ranks. In occupied countries which were at peace, Centurions also exercised significant governing powers over freeborn members of those societies. Like any free and respectable Roman male of status, the Roman soldier was expected to show the same self-discipline in matters of sex. However Centurions were not allowed to marry. For them the demand for responsibility meant that opportunities for sexual exploitation were more limited than they were for any foot soldier, and here the “concupinus” or the “pais” could play an important role. Military officers on campaign might also be accompanied by a male concubinus. See for example: Caesar, Julius? (100-44 BC): “*The Spanish War*”: Paragraph 33: http://juliuscaesar.altervista.org/en/spawar_book.html.

¹⁹⁵ The Emperor Augustus, who reigned from 27 BC-14 AD, prohibited soldiers from marrying, and this prohibition remained in force in the Imperial army for nearly two centuries. Same-sex relationships among fellow soldiers in the Roman army violated the Roman decorum against intercourse with other freeborn males and it was punishable by clubbing to death. This was unlike Greece where same-sex relationships between soldiers were strongly encouraged, See Williams, C.A. (1995): “*Greek Love at Rome*”: *Classical Quarterly* 45 (ii). Pp 517-539: <http://www.centenary.edu/academics/religion/dotto/rel332/greek%20love%20at%20rome%20article.pdf>. For more background information on the role of the military see: Phang, Sara Elise (2001): “*The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 B.C.–A.D. 235): Law and Family in the Imperial Army*” Brill ISBN: 90 0412155 2 also: Phang, Sara Elise: (2008): “*Roman Military Service. Ideologies of Discipline in the Late Republic and Early Principate*” Cambridge University Press: ISBN 9780521882699.

non-Christian Greek writers to describe a junior partner in a pederastic relationship. The use of this word for the servant or slave in this bible passage strongly suggests that a physical relationship was expected, though not specifically by these two people themselves¹⁹⁶. In these particular passages Jesus is reaching out across the cultural boundaries and the impact of the cultural clashes encountered in this passage must be carefully considered in terms of what is regarded as acceptable behaviour and how the word "pais" is defined^{197 198}.

¹⁹⁶ Pederasty was practiced in Greek society. To understand why these cultural clashes are important, it is necessary to look at the original Greek word for slave used by the writers of both gospels. Both Matthew and Luke use the Greek word pais to describe the Centurion's relationship with his orderly or slave. Pais and paidika were used by non-Christian writers in New Testament times to refer to the younger partner in a same-sex pederastic relationship. It has been noted that because of the responsibility that was expected, a Centurion in occupied countries was discouraged or prevented from having unrestrained sexual relationships with the local population. Providing sexual satisfaction was an accepted duty of a Roman slave, and any first century Jew, Greek or Roman who heard the word pais in this context would know precisely what the Gospel writers meant. The role of the Centurion in peacetime was to provide civil governance and authority; and the civil duties of this centurion are fully expressed in the bible story. The role of a male slave as a concubinus for a single man was an established one in Roman society, and this is the same role which the Centurion's slave might expect. Nevertheless it is important to note that the story as it is presented in the bible does not demand that this particular Centurion and his slave engaged in these acts. There were other words that could have been used if the condemnation of same-sex intercourse was intended. However in today's biblical Greek lexicons, pais just means "manservant, son, young man or maid". For these reasons the different Greek and Jewish uses of the word "pais" must be more fully considered. The word is frequently employed elsewhere in the New Testament, (Matthew 2:16; Matthew 12:18; Matthew 14:2; Matthew 17:18; Matthew 21:15; Luke 1:54; Luke 1:69; Luke 2:43; Luke 7:7; Luke 8:51; Luke 8:54; Luke 9:42; Luke 12:45; Luke 15:26; John 4:51; Acts 3:13; Acts 3:26; Acts 4:25; Acts 4:27; Acts 4:30; Acts 20:12), but in all of these passages it is used in the Jewish context to describe a boy, youth, girl, maiden, servant, slave, attendant or minister. However, in this passage Jesus was crossing the cultural boundaries between Jewish and Greco/Roman societies. Same-sex intercourse could be regarded as acceptable in a dominant society but this became the horror of same-sex rape in a subject one. Pais is a Greek word and when it is seen from the Greek perspective, a different meaning is applied.

¹⁹⁷ Pederasty was commonly practiced in Greco/Roman society but it was absolutely abhorred in Judaism. When this word "pais" is used in the Jewish context, or to describe the actions of any Jew, no allusions to the practice of pederasty could ever be allowed. That restriction did not apply to Greco/Roman society and these cultural differences are extremely important in determining the correct interpretation of the word. It has already been noted that in Greco/Roman society the word pais was applied to the junior partner in a pederastic relationship. Neill for example indicates that, the Greek term "pais" used for the servant almost always had this sexual connotation (Neill, James (2008): *The Origins and Role of Same-Sex Relations in Human Societies*: McFarland, ISBN 0786452471, 9780786452477: Pages 216, 197, 180-181. See also: Sergent, Bernard. (1986): *Homosexuality in Greek Myth* Beacon Press, Boston, ISBN 10: 0807057002 / ISBN 13: 9780807057001). Dover additionally supports this viewpoint. In addition he indicates that the word pais is often linked to situations where the Greek noun erastes, 'lover', for the senior partner is used (Dover, K.J. (1978): *Greek Homosexuality*: Harvard University Press, Cambridge, page 16, 85-86, 165. A copy of this may be downloaded at: <https://tajakramberger.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/k-j-dover-greek-homosexuality-updated-and-witbookfi-org.pdf>). Mader additionally gives a thorough discussion on how the terms pais and entimos doulos are employed (Mader, Donald: (1998): *The Entimos Pais of Matthew 8:5-13 and Luke 7:1-10* in: *Homosexuality and Religion and Philosophy*, Harland Publishing, Inc. New York, 1998 pp 223-235. This may be downloaded at: http://www.williamapercy.com/wiki/images/The_entimos_pais_of_matthew_studies_of_homosexuality_volume_12.pdf). The Gospel writers were writing in Greek for Greek and Roman societies. To apply the restrictions of Judaism to the use of the word pais without explanation in the societies would not be understood, and it is therefore argued that the Greek definition must be used.

¹⁹⁸ There were significant differences between Greek and Roman society. In Archaic and classical Greece, pederasty had been a formal social relationship between freeborn males. Rules and regulations set according to the values of that society were introduced to prevent misuse, but the need to maintain the authority of male citizenship meant that the upper age limit for the junior partner was fixed by the age when he first became able to grow a beard. Same-sex relationships in Rome were acceptable only within an inherently unequal relationship where male domination by a Roman citizen was expected. Therefore in Roman society any pederast relationship with a freeborn male of any age was frowned upon. Male Roman citizens retained their masculinity as long as they took the active, penetrating role, and the appropriate male sexual partner was a prostitute, concubinus, or slave. This use of slaves defined Roman pederasty. Sexual practices were "somehow 'Greek'" when they were directed at "freeborn boys openly courted in accordance with the Hellenic traditions of pederasty". This and similar practices were described as the "Greek Vice". Pederasty came to express roles based on domination and exploitation. It was utterly abhorred in Judaism, it increasingly came to be rejected in Roman society, and these practices should rightly be condemned with the same intensity as paedophilia is today. The use of the word pais by both Matthew and Luke in this passage is both challenging and problematic unless the moral duality predicted by the neurophysiological study is recognised, and the distinction is made between same-sex relationships given in love and commitment and those pursued for abusive sex.

In this story the importance of love and care is emphasized. Jesus would have known that acts of same-sex intercourse would be expected by society, and he neither makes reference to, nor does he demand the prohibition of any sexual act¹⁹⁹. This interpretation is challenged by others in society²⁰⁰ but is also entirely in line with the teaching of Jesus on the New Covenant, where the Jewish doctrines based on the letter of the law are now to be interpreted in the light of love and the intention of the acts. The Jewish Midrashim traditions likewise apply two meanings to any text. One of these is what it meant in the original context and the other is what it means at the relevant time.

7:4:2 Marriage and Same-sex Relationships

¹⁹⁹ Matthew and Luke were also writing in Greek for a mainly Gentile audience and they were already playing with the meanings of the Greek words entimos, doulos and pais to make their points. Luke uses several Greek words to describe the sick person. He says this pais was the centurion's entimos doulos. The word doulos is a generic term for slave, and was never used in ancient Greek to describe a son/boy. Thus, Luke's account rules out any possibility the sick person could be the centurion's son. However, Luke also takes care to indicate this was no ordinary slave. The word entimos means "honoured." This was an "honoured slave" (entimos doulos) who was also his master's "pais". In Matthew's account, when the Centurion is speaking of his other slaves, he uses the word doulos. But when he talks about the slave he is asking Jesus to heal, he uses only "pais". Again, the clear implication is that the sick man was no ordinary slave, and the question is one of interpretation and status. In these particular passages Jesus is reaching out across these cultural boundaries. As if to emphasise that point in verse 10 of Matthew's account, he says of the Centurion; "I have not found faith this great anywhere in Israel." Matthew and Luke were also writing for a society in which the Greco/Roman understanding would be expected. How these passages are interpreted goes to the heart of what was permissible in terms of same-sex relationships. If Matthew and Luke had wanted the more restricted Jewish interpretation of the word pais to be used they would have had to specify that restriction. They did not do so and their limitations are carefully defined within the story itself. Symbolism is also important. The story can also be read in two ways, either as an account of a particular incident or in symbolic terms where the Centurion stands as representation of the Greco/Roman culture values. It is the consequences of the abuses of power which are challenged in this story. In it the importance of love and care is emphasized. The dynamics of power are absent and it is significant to note that the Centurion is said to love the Jewish nation; not just the Jews. Matthew and Luke are at pains to point out that this slave is singled out as an honoured slave, who is loved by his master, and it would appear that a loving same-sex relationship existed, within which same-sex intercourse could (but not necessarily did) take place. A conclusion of the neurophysiological and psychological part of this analysis is that in loving and faithful relationships in circumstances where the influences of power are absent there should be no automatic condemnation of any heterosexual or same-sex act of sex. Jesus does not condemn or criticise their relationship, nor is there any hint of condemnation by both Matthew and Luke. Such a condemnation would be needed if this is not correct.

²⁰⁰ Other biblical scholars dismiss any suggestions of a homosexual theme as deliberately distorted interpretations of the text. See: (Gagnon, Robert A. J. (2005) "*Why the Disagreement over the Biblical Witness on Homosexual Practice? A Response to David G. Myers and Letha Dawson Scanzoni, What God Has Joined Together?*" *Reformed Review* 59.1 (Autumn 2005): 19-130, 56. Available online at: <http://www.robagnon.net/articles/ReformedReviewArticleWhyTheDisagreement.pdf>. Marston argues that in line with the weight of other scriptural evidence, Jesus would not have condoned any homosexual relationship, (Marston, P. (1995): "*Dear Peter Tatchell*": *The Independent*, Tuesday 21 March); while others suggest that even if the relationship had been homosexual, his lack of condemnation does not necessarily equate to his approval of them. Another approach is cited in a blog where it is alleged that a much better way to understand the centurion's servant is that he was perhaps an adopted or secret son. There is some credence to this argument as Centurions were not permitted to marry. The Centurion's "pais" could be his son born to him by a female slave, which he could not acknowledge. However the difficulty with this argument is that the passage itself only deals with these Centurion and slave relationships in general terms. Matthew and Luke would have had to impose more restrictions on their accounts if that is what was meant. A further explanation offered is that this was the Centurion's adopted son. See for example: <http://hipandthigh.blogspot.co.uk/2007/02/centurions-servant.html>. However again there are difficulties with the words that are used. It is worth noting that similar explanations of adoption are offered to explain away any possibility of condoning same-sex relationships in the Christian ceremonies of Adelphopoiesis, or "Brother Making" which were conducted during the first millennium and after by the Christian Church. Proving something by silence is always more difficult than when a direct statement is made. However other evidence may also be used. The separate analyses on the prohibitions of Leviticus, Paul's condemnations of same-sex activities, the declaration of Jesus on marriage and eunuchs in Matthew 19:12 and the use of the word Agápē in the first century Christian context, all lead to the same result. In all cases this shows that Paul's statement in Galatians 3:28, which states that: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus", applies without qualification to everybody, including to all gender and sexually variant people who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves, and who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ. There is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act. All sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention and there is total condemnation of all forms of abusive sex.

Almost all of the passages related to sex in the New Testament exalt faithfulness in marriage and condemn fornication and abusive sex. The Council of Jerusalem (or Apostolic Conference) held in Jerusalem around the year 50 AD decided that Gentile converts to Christianity were not required to keep most of the Law of Moses. However it affirmed the prohibitions on fornication and idolatry, eating blood, meat containing blood, and meat of animals not properly slain; (Acts; Chapter 15). The attitude of Jesus to heterosexual relationships²⁰¹ is also quite clear, and passages such as those in Genesis 1:27 Genesis 5:2 and Genesis 2:22-24 are used to argue that the separation of male from female is divinely ordained. In Matthew 19:4-6, Jesus states: "Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate." Mark repeats this in equivalent terms; (Mark 10:6-9). When challenged on divorce, Jesus replied in Matthew 19:8, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning". Matthew 5:31-32 states: "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (NRSV). Equivalent statements are made in Matthew 19:9, Mark 10:11-12, and Luke 16:18. For Jesus the ideal was to remain unmarried, on the grounds that the distractions of marriage and family life impede the ability to spread the Gospel message²⁰². This is different from the traditions of celibacy argued for in the later Christian Church. That sought to avoid the passions of sex²⁰³ However, in Matthew 5:27-28, Jesus condemns feelings of lust experienced by a man towards a woman. Here Jesus is recorded as saying: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart." John 8:1-11 records a meeting between Jesus, doctors of the Law, Pharisees, and a woman who has been caught in adultery. The Mosaic Law, (Leviticus 20:10, and Deuteronomy 22:22) required that she must be executed by stoning. The passage in Deuteronomy is quite definite: "both the man...and the woman must die. You must purge the evil from Israel." They asked Jesus what should be done with the woman. He recommended that the thrower of the first stone be required to be without sin. Since no individual is without sin, his suggestion is equivalent to pardoning the woman. The religious leaders depart, leaving Jesus and the woman in the midst of the crowd. Jesus then asks the woman if anyone has condemned her. When she answers that no one has condemned her, Jesus says that he, too, does not condemn her, and in this story he tells her to go and sin no more.

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 7:1-16, Colossians 3:18-19 and Ephesians 5:22-33, models the Christian married life. That approach is also endorsed in 1 Peter 3:1-6 and Hebrews 13:4-7. These are strong statements and given the traditional teaching of the Christian Church, some sort of similar statement on gender and sexually variant behaviour might also be expected. Today the presumption is made that an absolute condemnation is applied²⁰⁴. However a complete silence in the teaching of Jesus seems to reign and those who wish to condemn gender and sexually variant behaviour to be invariably sinful have to rely on the traditions of the Church, Paul's comments and the prohibitions of

²⁰¹ The word marriage is not used here because that had a different meaning in first century society from what is understood today. It was essentially a civil contract binding both parties. No priestly presence or religious affirmation was required until after the Council of Trent in. Betrothal was more significant in this context since it was from that time onwards that sexual fidelity was demanded.

²⁰² Traditions of celibacy in Judaism: See Section 16 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

²⁰³ Traditions of celibacy in Greece and Rome: See Section 16 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

²⁰⁴ It is of interest to hypothesise. According to the traditional understanding it could be presumed that Jesus would have asked those engaging in gender and sexually variant behaviour if anyone has condemned them. When they too answer that no one has condemned them, Jesus would then be presumed to say that he does not condemn them, and he tells them to go and sin no more. The actions of Jesus contradict this presumed expectation. There is no corresponding condemnation of same-sex acts.

Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 instead. That silence is challenged in this analysis. Up to two thousand years of this presumption have reinforced that condemnation and in this analysis it is shown that changes in word meaning, translation drift and re-interpretation have had the effect of limiting the relevance of certain texts.

7:4:3 Challenging the Silence

It may be surprising to some that the analysis presented in this document supports the traditional theological arguments which are given in the section above. However it also supports the results of the neurophysiological and psychological analysis. This shows that a moral duality exists, whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways which conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies can be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships are to be very severely condemned for their acts. In this analysis it is demonstrated that this contradiction does not occur either because the theology or the neuroscience is wrong, but because of the ways in which the silence is interpreted. At present this silence is assumed to indicate the total abhorrence of all cross-gender behaviour and all types of same-sex acts of sex. That is entirely understandable because of the gross abuse of same-sex acts of sex within first century society: particularly in Roman society. However it is not the whole story.

The prohibitions of Leviticus have been discussed in section 7:2 of this document. It is shown that they relate to the abuses of power in relationships between people and between societies. It is these abuses of power which give permission for the abuse of sex. Sexual abuse was rife, but the prohibitions were not driven by an intrinsic horror of the act. It is further shown that these prohibitions refer only to anal penetration and no other same-sex act of sex. Paul sets his condemnations in Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10, in the context of sexual abuse, and he refers his reader to Leviticus as the foundation for his arguments. Therefore Paul's own condemnations are bounded by these same conditions²⁰⁵. Rather than being defined on a gendered basis, sexual morality was judged on disruptions to the social order and on the purpose of the acts. For this reason it is shown in section 7:2:1, that the present day labels of heterosexuality and homosexuality cannot be applied. These concerns about how Christianity and the Christian Church managed its relationships with the society around it are discussed in detail in a further article in this series²⁰⁶. However it is necessary to return to the teaching and example of Jesus himself.

Three main aspects of the teaching of Jesus have been considered. The first relates to the attitude of Jesus to eunuchs, both in Judaism and to the self-castrated Roman priests, as is described in Matthew 19:12. Most present day interpretations regard this passage as an exhortation to celibacy

²⁰⁵ See Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church": Also in Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church": Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>. Paul's main condemnations are contained in Romans 1:18-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9, and 1 Timothy 1:10. In these passages Paul refers back to the Jewish interpretation of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to give authority to his teaching. Therefore the extent of these condemnations is limited to what the prohibition contained in Leviticus meant to first century society. It is shown in this analysis that this prohibition related to anal penetration alone (by extension same-sex intercourse), and to no other same-sex act. Same-sex love could be expressed freely in these relationships provided that act was avoided. It is additionally shown that the reasons for the prohibitions in Leviticus were because of the abuses of power in individual relationships and also between subject and dominant societies. Paul also set his condemnations in the context of abuse. It is further shown that this is identical to the teaching of Jesus. However these matters are of strong contention amongst biblical scholars and more complete descriptions are given in other documents. See Gilchrist, S. (2013): "An Unfinished Reformation" for a more complete account.

²⁰⁶ Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church" in Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church": Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

²⁰⁶ See Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church" in Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Foundations of Science, Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church": Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>.

in pursuit of the Gospel message²⁰⁷. However it is necessary to get back to the relationships between power and sex that a first century reader would have understood. Thus in section 7:1:4 of this document it is shown that all people who seek to follow the teaching of Jesus must be accepted alike: and this is without regard to their gender identities, self-castration and other physical transformations that they make. In section 7:3:2 it is pointed out that, in the Gospel of John, the special nature of the love of John by Jesus, and the intimacies of their relationship are feely expressed. In addition it is demonstrated that the understanding of this has been distorted in Christian interpretation by the way in which translation drift and re-interpretation has enabled the definition of the word Agápē to be changed; from that which is used in the original Hebrew bible and the Greek Septuagint, where it describes a committed and faithful love that can find its fulfilment in sex, into the present day definition of a spiritual and non-sexual type of higher love, which denies all passions of sex²⁰⁸. The same type of translation drift and re-interpretation²⁰⁹ has enabled the original specific condemnation of anal penetration in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13²¹⁰ where, in the first century same-sex intercourse was the only prohibited act²¹¹ into today's condemnations of all gender variant and same-sex relationships and acts.

In section 7:3:3 it is further demonstrated that the relationships between Jesus and John displayed many of the characteristics of a first century Jewish Rabbinic partnership, and that relationships similar to these partnerships were later solemnised in services of Adelphopoiesis inside the Christian Church. In these cases, same-sex love could be expressed between two men as equals, effeminacy was disparaged, but the only prohibition was anal penetrative sex²¹². Other restrictions on this do not seem to have had a serious effect until the asceticism of the Desert Fathers and the censures applied to all sex by the fourth century Church. In section 7:4:1 it is further shown in the story of the Centurion and the slave that in loving and committed relationships where the dynamics of power are absent there should be no automatic prohibition of any same-sex act²¹³. That includes anal penetrative sex.

These are challenging views, but they support the results of the neurophysiological and psychological study. It is shown that the prohibition of same-sex intercourse arose from the abuses of power in and between gender unequal and discriminatory societies, and when that is absent these cease to have effect. Therefore from a theological as well as a social and psychological point of view it is demonstrated that a moral duality exists whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways which conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies can be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships can be very severely condemned for their acts.

7:4:4 Second Best Choice

²⁰⁷ See for example: <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/19-12.htm>

²⁰⁸ See Section 6:2 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

²⁰⁹ See section 3:2:1 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

²¹⁰ Which Jesus and Paul would have known.

²¹¹ Translation drift and reinterpretation in bible passages has occurred from the outset. This applies to Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, the most obvious passage in the bible which, in present day understanding, appear to condemn all types of same-sex relationships. For example, in the Living Bible this is translated as "Homosexuality is absolutely forbidden, for it is an enormous sin". The King James Bible instead translates Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 as "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." The first century interpretation, which Jesus John and Paul would have known apply the condemnation exclusively to anal penetration in the context of sexual abuse, and to no other same-sex act of sex.

²¹² See Section 6 of Gilchrist, S: (2013): "*Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church*":

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

²¹³ Section 7:4:1 of this document

There is a further challenge in these passages²¹⁴. The close conjunction of the statements on marriage and eunuchs in Matthew 19:10-12 suggests that these two statements should be considered together. Both of them are included in the same sentence; the directly equivalent form of words is also used, and the Jewish Midrashim tradition of interpretation imposes a very careful structuring that demands a close reading of any biblical text. In regard to marriage, the usual interpretation which is given to this passage states that Jesus considered that marriage should be treated as a "Second best" option. However when they are interpreted under the Midrashim traditions, the closely linked nature of the textural relationships between the two statements additionally implies that the people "Who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven", together with the coupling of: "He that is able to receive it let him receive it", should be treated in the same way²¹⁵. Therefore this extreme action of self-castration should not be condemned outright, but be treated like another kind of "Second best" approach²¹⁶. By the same token all gender and sexually variant people who seek to live lives that are true to themselves and to the Gospel message are fully accepted in the Love of Christ.

7:4:5 Jesus and the New Covenant

In Matthew 5:17 it is stated that Jesus Christ came to fulfil the Law of Moses and create a New Covenant between God and his people. The old covenant was written in stone, but the new covenant is written on our hearts, made possible only by faith in Christ, who shed His own blood to atone for the sins of the world, (Luke 22:20). In the teaching of Jesus the Jewish doctrines based on the letter of the law are now to be interpreted in the light of love and the intention of the acts. This essence of Christian doctrine is summed up by Paul in Galatians 3: 26-28 where he states: "So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus". No qualification is imposed in this statement.

In this analysis the prohibitions of Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, Deuteronomy 22:5 and the statements by Paul have been examined from the perspectives of the teaching of Jesus, the neurophysiological and psychological study, the doctrines of the New Covenant and the Jewish Midrashim traditions. It is shown that the reason for the prohibition of anal penetration arose because of the abuses of power between subject and dominant societies, and this gave permission for the abuse of sex. When these abuses of power are absent the prohibitions cease to have effect.

This is a wide ranging analysis which has looked at Church history and theology from different perspectives. All of these support the conclusions that all transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be

²¹⁴ See also section 7:1:4 of this document.

²¹⁵ Judaism has always forbidden all forms of castration. Among the nations of antiquity, the Jews alone imposed a religious prohibition on the emasculation of men and even animals. The Bible directly refers to the ban on castration by excluding castrated animals from serving as sacrifices on the altar (Lev. 22:24), also by banning a descendant of Aaron "who has his stones crushed" from the priestly service (Lev. 21:20), and a man "that is crushed or maimed in his privy parts" from entering into "the assembly of the Lord" (Deut. 23:2). In the Talmud (Shab. 110b–111a) and codes (e.g., Sh. Ar. EH 5:11–14), the biblical interdict is widely extended to cover any deliberate impairment of the male reproductive organs in domestic animals, beasts, birds, and man, including the castration of a person who is already impotent or genitally maimed (Encyclopaedia Judaica. 2008 , Gale Group. ISBN 13: 9780028659282. ISBN 10: 0028659287). However the need to accommodate people who had been castrated was important since the practice was widespread across the Middle East. The Bible and the Talmud carefully defines how such people were to be treated.

²¹⁶ Close same-sex unions are also encountered in Jewish Rabbinic partnerships. In these it has been shown that all same-sex acts given in love were permitted except that of anal penetrative sex. The extension of this to self-castration was a very challenging statement for a Jewish society where the act of castration by others, let alone by oneself, was abhorred. For a full account see Section 3:2 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: "An Unfinished Reformation". Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm.

accepted alike. All sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention and there is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act.

7:5 Adaptations

The results of this analysis have shown that the teaching of Jesus conforms to what is determined by the scientific study. This means that the source of this contradiction must come from changes in the theology of the Church. The following sections summarise some of the material contained in: Gilchrist, S. (2016): *"Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church"*²¹⁷.

7:5:1 Social Challenges and Respect

Obtaining respect and integration within Greco/Roman society was always going to be a major challenge for a religion where its founder was put to death because he confronted the authority of the institutions of his own society. Without compromise Jesus usurped the power structures on which that society was built. From his own identification with the poor, women, the rejected and the outcast Jesus likewise turned the demands of authority completely on its head. His rejection of all worldly power led to his sacrifice and death as a scapegoat on the Cross and the emphasis in Christianity has always been on the power and the significance of this redemptive act. However the message Jesus gave in the Gospels was to work within society to transform it. That gave Peter, Paul and the early Church a difficult choice. This did not stop the early Church from attacking without compromise, the abuses and inequities within Roman society²¹⁸ but it meant that it had to work within the framework which that society set²¹⁹.

For the early Church the Parousia, or the second coming, with the end of the world, was expected to occur very soon after the death of Jesus. Therefore at first there was no need to conform to the social demands of society, and Paul's statement in Galatians 3:25 states in full the hopes and the beliefs which the teaching of Jesus had brought. However the first written records now available are those of Paul²²⁰ and these were written some nineteen years after Jesus had died. By this time the practical needs of Christianity also had to be satisfied. In order to spread the Gospel message as quickly and effectively as possible, this meant minimising disruption to the framework of Roman society. It also meant obtaining that society's respect. It is often considered that the compromises that were made were those which were needed to meet the needs of Roman society. It is instead argued in this analysis that the Christian Church made use of the attitudes to gender complementarity that were already present inside Jewish society as the model to base the doctrines it sought to adopt.

This Jewish approach considered men and women to be different in essence, but equal in value²²¹. That distinction framed the gender differentiation and discrimination which occurred in Judaism²²². What the Christian ideal of gender complementarity meant is described by Peter in 1 Peter 3:1-16.

²¹⁷ Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf>

²¹⁸ For Paul the power of the Gospel message to attack the abuses of the authorities was greater than that of any insurrection

²¹⁹ See for example Romans 13:1-7

²²⁰ First and Second Thessalonians 52 AD

²²¹ Gilchrist, S. (2015): *"Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church"*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf>. In a voluntary capacity this form of gender complementarity may work satisfactorily. Indeed it may be entirely appropriate for everyday use, but when it is compulsorily enforced, severe gender discrimination against women almost inevitably occurs.

²²² Gilchrist, S. (2015): *"Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church"*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/022B-Deuteronomy22-5.pdf>. Also Gilchrist, S. (2011): *"Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships"*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

There was a parallel in Roman society. In Rome, the Gods and Goddesses had equal status, but on earth great gender discrimination took place. The issue for the Church was not to challenge the gender complementarity that already existed, but to find ways to express it in the true vision of the Gospel of Christian Love. It is seen from the letter to Philemon that the initial aim of the early Church was to seek to fulfil the true message of the Gospel inside it, (as Paul expressed it in Galatians 3:28), while conforming to the social requirements of society outside the Church.

This was not just Peter and Paul's initiative. By taking this approach, Peter and Paul were following the advice given by Jeremiah to the Israelites at the time of the exile: (Jeremiah 29:7). "But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare". Jeremiah also had something to say about the compromises that were required: (Jeremiah 21:8-9): "This is what the Lord says: See; I am setting before you the way of life and the way of death. Whoever stays in the city will die by the sword, famine or plague. But whoever goes out and surrenders to the Babylonians who are besieging you will live; they will escape with their lives". Jeremiah had asked the Israelites to choose between two evils. Peter and Paul adopted a pragmatic policy in their attempts to gain the respectability that was needed to spread the Gospel message to the world. This compromise of gender complementarity sacrificed the radical teaching of Jesus on gender and sexuality for the respectability of the Church.

Adopting these models of gender complementarity meant that the submission of women to men in public life was expected. This is explicitly set out in words which are attributed to Paul and Peter in the New Testament²²³. Paul's condemnation of "Soft men" should likewise be noted²²⁴ and the use of Deuteronomy 22:5 by Clement of Alexandria reinforces the principle that in order for Christianity to gain respect in the patristic Roman Empire, a complete endorsement of masculinity in clothes, behaviour and manner by its male followers was required²²⁵.

If one priority was establishing this type of respectability in a male dominated society, a second was dealing with the abuses of sex. Sexual abuse, which included the abuse of same-sex intercourse for the enforcement of power and domination, were of great concern to Judaism and the Christian Church. All abuses were violently condemned, although in respect of same-sex intercourse, the early Church did make distinctions between the dominant and subservient partners²²⁶. That was of particular importance when the sexual abuse of slaves and people of lesser status was an accepted practice in Roman society.

7:5:2 Moral Duality

The moral duality which has been shown to be present in the teaching of Jesus and in the neurophysiological and psychological study gave rise to further concerns. The consequence of accepting the existence this moral duality is that it turns the acts of same-sex intercourse into something that Jesus did not do, instead of something that he could not do. The slightest suggestion any act of same-sex intercourse took place between Jesus and John would also have

²²³ See section 3:5: "Understanding, Discipline and Doctrine": of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

²²⁴ See section 3:1:2: "First Century Greek and Roman Attitudes" of Gilchrist, S. (2013): "*An Unfinished Reformation*": Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

²²⁵ Around AD 195 Clement of Alexandria wrote: "What is the purpose in the Law's prohibition against a man wearing woman's clothing? Is it not that the Law would have us to be masculine and not to be effeminate in either person or actions - or in thought and word? Rather, it would have the man who devotes himself to the truth to be masculine both in acts of endurance and patience - in life, conduct, word, and discipline". Clement of Alexandria (ca 195): "The Paedagogus: The Instructor (Book III)". Translated by William Wilson: From Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 2: Edited by Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe: Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885: Also available [27 November 2012] at: <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/02093.htm>

²²⁶ See Section 8 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): "*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>. Also section 3:1:9 of Gilchrist, S. 2013: "*An Unfinished Reformation*". Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/016B-UnfinishedReformationArticle.pdf>

defined their relationship as one between a subject and dominant sexual partner. Under Judean traditions both partners, (particularly the dominant partner) would be condemned, and with Roman expectations; the submissive partner alone would have been exclusively condemned for this act. The lifelong celibacy which was understood to be practiced, not just by Jesus but also by John²²⁷, was bound to raise further suspicions²²⁸, particularly since this was applied to them alone²²⁹. The enforcement of celibacy on the priests and the condemnation of same-sex intercourse, whatever the purpose, became a dominant feature in the doctrines of the Church. As a consequence of these concerns; and because of the abuses of sex in socially unequal societies, any sense of the moral duality that is present in same-sex relationships came to be strongly denied.

The thesis presented in this analysis states that it is these abuses of power which give permission for the abuses of sex. Most notably in this context, same-sex acts of sex. That is why this analysis focusses most strongly on the relationships between power and sex. By siding with the Roman establishment in its search for respectability and by adopting for itself a corresponding structure, the Christian Church was no longer able to attack the power structures which led to that abuse, but it could still continue its aggressive attack on the abuse itself²³⁰. That has had major consequences for present day understanding since almost all evidence of these power struggles has disappeared from the present day theology of the Christian Church. In the traditional teaching of today's Church all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour, irrespective of their purposes, are considered immoral and pursued exclusively for lust and the gratifications of sex. In particular the practice of same-sex intercourse for any purpose is defined as a heinous and mortally sinful act.

²²⁷ Butler, A. (1864): "St John, apostle and evangelist: Feast: December 27": Vol. IV of *"The Lives or the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints"*: The 1864 edition was published by D. & J. Sadlier, & Company: Extract: *If we inquire into the causes of this particular love of Christ towards him, which was not blind or unreasonable, the first was doubtless, as St. Austin observes, the love which this disciple bore him; secondly, his meekness and peaceable disposition by which he was extremely like Christ himself; thirdly, his virginal purity. For St. Austin tells us that, "The singular privilege of his chastity rendered him worthy of the more particular love of Christ, because being chosen by him a virgin, he always remained such."* St. Jerome sticks pot [sic] to call all his other privileges and graces the recompense of his chastity, especially that which our Lord did him by recommending in his last moments his virgin mother to the care of this virgin disciple. St. Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, St. Epiphanius, and other fathers frequently make the same reflection. Christ was pleased to choose a virgin for his mother, a virgin for his precursor, and a virgin for his favourite disciple; and his church suffers only those who live perfectly chaste to serve him in his priesthood, where they daily touch and offer his virginal flesh on his holy altar. In heaven virgins follow the spotless Lamb wherever he goes. Who then can doubt but purity is the darling virtue of Jesus? "who feeds among the lilies" of untarnished chastity. For "he who loves purity of heart will have the king his friend." Access at: <http://www.ewtn.com/library/mary/johnevan.htm>

²²⁸ The issue of affirming John's virginity is of considerable concern In Christian tradition, John the Apostle is consistently described in the early literature as John the Virgin ("Parthenos"). In the Pistis Sophia this point is made. (*Pistis Sophia*: Translated with Commentary by G. R. S. Mead. London: J. M. Watkins. Revised Second Edition: 192:1: <http://gnosis.org/library/psoph.htm>). Also in the "Acts of John" it is said that John was called by Jesus as a young man and his virginity was repeatedly emphasised. This document was probably written not later than 150 AD. (See: Lalleman, Pieter J. (1998): *"The Acts of John: A Two-stage Initiation Into Johannine Gnosticism"*: Peeters Publishers, 1998: ISBN 9042905735, 9789042905733). Further to this, Tertullian (c.155 – c.240) was probably among the firsts to commit to writing the identification of John as a virgin. See *"The history of John, the son of Zebedee The apostle and evangelist"*. http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/apocryphal_acts_02_john_history.htm. Particular emphasis to John's virginity is still given today in the Orthodox Churches. For example see: www.copticchurch.net/synaxarium/5_4.html http://www.traditioninaction.org/SOD/j160sd_StJohnEvangelist_12-27.shtml

²²⁹ The apostles Peter and Philip were married and also had children. Clement also reported that Peter's wife was martyred before him, and that the apostle had encouraged her as she was led to her death. Eusebius further describes the relationship between Peter and his wife using these words, "Such as the marriage of these blessed ones, and such was their perfect affection" The early church leaders spoke out against those who preached against marriage, and there is an underlying presumption that all of the Apostles, except John were married. Clement of Alexandria further criticized those celibates in the church "Who say that they are "imitating the Lord" who never married, nor had any possessions in the world, and who boast that they understand the gospel better than anyone else." A similar criticism of this form of celibacy is given by Paul. In his attempts to deal with these serious contradictions Augustine was to assert that: "Those who marry only for procreation now - to perpetuate the human race - are not comparable to the holy fathers, who had children in a prophetic manner, for Christ's sake, for the race from which he was to be born"..... which seems to be no answer at all. See section 3:3:1 "Changes in the Church" of Gilchrist, S. (2013): *"An Unfinished Reformation"*. Access via: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm>

²³⁰ It would seem that the same problem exists in the present day Church.

7:5:3 He who is able to receive this, let him receive it.

The statement in Matthew 19:12²³¹ is the only place where Jesus, or the Gospel writer, qualified his teaching. This means that the teaching of Jesus can be taken in different ways. In Matthew 19:12 Jesus was discussing issues of marriage, celibacy and love²³². It is shown earlier in this account that this passage was particularly challenging to the early Church because it defined the attitudes of Jesus to gender and sex. Although eunuchs could be given high status in Jewish society there was a horror in Judaism about the act of castration itself. In all probability this is a consequence of the experience of the Jews at the time of the exile. If castration by others was regarded with horror, the act of self-castration by the priests of the Goddess cults would be considered a disgrace. There is no suggestion whatever that Jesus advocated self-castration²³³, but the difficulty in accepting the idea that he did not condemn it could be a reason behind the qualification that is made.

The Gospel writers had two principal aims. The first was to affirm and preserve the Gospel message. The second was to do this in a manner which people they were writing for could accept. These were mainly in the Jewish and the Greek and Roman worlds. This analysis has shown that the driving forces of power, subjection and domination between the different societies were responsible for much of what happened. However little of that appears in the New Testament itself, and references to potentially challenging teachings are described in actions rather than words. Even Paul's condemnations are based on sexual propriety and his comments on the struggles for power are encoded in the need to seek respectability for the Church²³⁴.

In section 7:5:1 of this document has been shown that, in order to become accepted Christianity had to conform to the social divisions of Roman society. However that did not stop it setting an example of good practice and attacking the moral abuses which occurred. Nevertheless, in its pursuit of respectability Christianity also had to distance itself as quickly as possible from the continuing gender disruptive behaviour of the Goddess Cults²³⁵. In its search for conformity this in part this meant transferring the gender divisions which were already present in first century Jewish culture, into the Roman state²³⁶. These demands compromised the radical teaching and example of Jesus on gender and sex, and this has had major consequences for the Church. This radical teaching is spread throughout the Gospels but some of the most challenging elements to first century society are presented in Matthew 19:12. The statement: "He who is able to receive this, let him receive it" could have been a direct comment on the abhorrence of self-castration in Jewish society, or it could have meant that Jesus was aware of the difficulties that would later be likely to occur, or it could have been added later to deal with the changes that were required. Whatever way it is taken, it allowed the Church to move forward and gain acceptance in the Roman world.

²³¹ The disciples said to him, "If such is the case of a man with his wife, it is not expedient to marry." 11 But he said to them, "Not all men can receive this saying, but only those to whom it is given. 12 For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it."

²³² Celibacy was advocated by Jesus on the grounds of a single minded devotion to the gospel message, but the discipline of celibacy can be applied equally to heterosexual and same-sex relationships. Jesus did not condemn either of these relationships outright but considered them to be second best choices. That includes same sex-relationships, where all acts inside them are the products of the outpouring of love. It is notable that what is being described here is a form of relationship which was acceptable, and was expected, inside first century Jewish Rabbinic partnerships. These relationships were recognised in the services of Adelpoiesis, which were carried over into the Christian Church.

²³³ Despite this, many did take it literally. See section 7:1:4 of this account.

²³⁴ For a detailed consideration of these power struggles it is necessary to look outside the bible and the early history of the Church. That is done in the fourth paper in this series Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church" Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf>

²³⁵ See section 12:0 "Cultural Differences and Morality" of Gilchrist, S. (2013g): "Gender, Sexuality and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/015B-GenderSexualityChurch.pdf>

²³⁶ Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation in the History and Traditions of the Christian Church" Access at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/220P-InfluencesChurch.pdf>

One of the strengths of Christianity is that it has always sought to adapt to its surroundings. This passage: "He who is able to receive this, let him receive it", brings out that point. Had Christianity continued to act in full on the radical teaching of Jesus on gender and sex it might have been unlikely to survive the confrontations it created. By taking the pragmatic approach described by Jeremiah and in section 7:5:1 of this paper, Christianity has been able to bring the Gospel message to the world. That endorsement of conformity and its compromise could be why Christianity still exists in the present day.

Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

Susan Gilchrist

Section 8:0: Cultural Implications and the Present Day Church

The results of this analysis have demonstrated that the knowledge and acceptance of this moral duality in gender and sexually variant behaviour is present in the ministry of Jesus, and that it was also understood by first century society. In this investigation it is also shown how and why this awareness has been lost, and how subsequent centuries of criminalisation and condemnation have prevented any awareness of this moral duality being restored.

Little change could take place for as long as these attitudes continued, however the social and cultural transformations in Western societies over the last fifty years have demolished the presumptions upon which the traditional teaching of the Christian Church on gender and sexually variant behaviour has been based. Freedom of expression has again revealed the moral duality which is inherent in gender and sexually variant behaviour and people can now find out for themselves what this involves. Nevertheless in gender discriminatory societies of the present day these condemnations can still have considerable force. Instead of exploring this new situation many Christians have taken refuge in the traditional doctrines of the Church. It is argued in this analysis that the authority and credibility of Christianity and the Church is today being destroyed by a fervent reliance on disproved traditional demands. The reasons that are given for maintaining the traditional viewpoints are founded on the “Godly Authority” of bible texts, and this is why a critical analysis of these texts has been made.

8:1 Conflict and Dissention

There are many people in the world today who are honestly, faithfully and assiduously following from different viewpoints what they believe to be the correct Christian teaching, who all are concerned about what is happening in the Christian Church. Evidence for that concern is seen in the establishment of the “Shared Conversations” process in the Church of England²³⁷ and in the “Synod on the Family”²³⁸ called by Pope Francis in 2014. However preconditions were set by the Church hierarchies²³⁹. These preconditions, which still apply, demand that there must be no change to the traditional teaching of the Church. If any discussions are to succeed; that is a great hurdle which has still to be overcome. The long history of opposition to the possibility of change has been documented by the author elsewhere²⁴⁰; and the continued refusal is considered to be destroying the credibility, not just of the Churches, but of all Christian belief.

²³⁷ Shared Conversations: See: Church of England (2015) Grace and Disagreement article: Grace and Disagreement Shared Conversations on Scripture, Mission and Human Sexuality: [Accessed 15/10/2015]: <https://churchofengland.org/media/2165248/grace2.pdf> . Also: Church of England (2015) Shared Conversations Website: [Online]. [Accessed 15/10/2015]: <http://www.sharedconversations.org/>

Gilchrist, S. (2014) *Controversy and Challenge: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in the Present Day Christian Church*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/018B-ControversoryAndCrisis.pdf>

²³⁸ Vatican (2013): Synod on the Family: Preparatory Document: *Pastoral Challenges To The Family In The Context Of Evangelization*

²³⁹ The Pilling Report did leave open the door to the possibility of a change, but urged great caution

²⁴⁰ Gilchrist, S. (2014) *Controversy and Challenge: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in the Present Day Christian Church*: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/018B-ControversoryAndCrisis.pdf>

Nevertheless some positive changes have occurred. In the “Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Synod on the Family” released in 2016 by Pope Francis²⁴¹, the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church on homosexuality and same-sex relationships is reaffirmed. However there are no condemnations, no use of the language of “intrinsic disorder”, there is also a nuance applied to use of language like same-sex attraction, and an actual recognition of homosexual orientation, which is very significant in a document of this type²⁴².

8:2: Resistance and Condemnation

There is much to be welcomed in the increasing pastoral concern being expressed for gender and sexually variant people. However that is not enough. In those societies which have outlawed gender discrimination the continued pursuit of these traditional doctrines will increasingly undermine the credibility and the moral authority of the Church. In societies which institutionalise the division in gender role, the continuing pursuit of these doctrines will result in its collusion with society to scapegoat all gender and sexually variant people as purveyors of abusive sex. That is at the heart of the present schism in the Anglican Communion where some provinces are trying to find ways to endorse same-sex marriages while other provinces are supporting long prison sentences for all people who engage in any form of same-sex act of sex. Death sentences or life imprisonment are being proposed in some countries²⁴³. In the United States, the legalisation of same-sex marriage by the Federal Government has resulted in a rash of mainly Southern states seeking to scapegoat transsexual people by legally enforcing them only to use toilets and bathroom facilities which correspond to the genitalia they were born with. This is irrespective of their gender identities and the transformations that they make. That position was supported by Cardinal Robert Sarah, Archbishop emeritus of Conakry (Guinea) and Prefect of the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in the Catholic Church, during the address he gave to the, 12th Annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast held on Tuesday, May 17th, 2016 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Washington DC. The Cardinal’s address can be seen on the link provided²⁴⁴. Not only did the Cardinal support the movement to impose the bathroom ban, he also declared that gender identity and sexual orientation are defined by the biology of sex. That not only contradicts the results of this investigation, it contradicts much of the current medical and psychological understanding, and it disregards the physiological fact that external appearance is only one of the many factors which are involved in determining an individual’s biological sex²⁴⁵.

²⁴¹ Pope Francis. (2016): “*Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia Of The Holy Father Francis To Bishops, Priests And Deacons Consecrated Persons Christian Married Couples And All The Lay Faithful On Love In The Family*”: [Accessed: 18 April 2016] https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf

²⁴² Cornwell, Megan (2016): “Amoris Laetitia: Reaction From The Catholic Community”; The Tablet 08 April 2016: <http://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/5397/0/amoris-laetitia-reaction-from-the-catholic-community>

²⁴³ In Mauritania, Sudan and northern Nigeria, homosexuality is punishable by death. In Uganda, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone, offenders can receive life imprisonment for homosexual acts. In addition to criminalizing homosexuality, Nigeria has enacted legislation that would make it illegal for straight family members, allies and friends of the LGBT to be supportive. According to Nigerian law, a straight ally “who administers, witnesses, abets or aids” any form of gender non-conforming and homosexual activity could receive a 10-year jail sentence. South Africa has the most liberal attitudes toward gays and lesbians, with a constitution which guarantees gay and lesbian rights and legal same-sex marriage (Wikipedia).

²⁴⁴ Address given by Cardinal Robert Sarah, Archbishop emeritus of Conakry (Guinea) and Prefect of the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in the Catholic Church to the 12th Annual National Catholic Prayer Breakfast Tuesday, May 17th, 2016 at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Washington DC. [accessed 14 June 2016]: <https://catholicprayerbreakfast.com/2016-video/>

²⁴⁵ Biological sex markers See: Ainsworth, Claire. (2015): “Sex redefined” The idea of two sexes is simplistic. Biologists now think there is a wider spectrum than that”: *Nature* 518, 288–291:19 February 2015 doi:10.1038/518288a <http://www.nature.com/news/sex-redefined-1.16943>. Also: Gooren, Louis. (2006): “The biology of human psychosexual differentiation”. *Hormones and Behavior* 50 (2006) 589–601. [Accessed 21 June 2016] <http://www.eulabs.eu/Downloads/gooren06.pdf>

From a pastoral point of view there are changes which can be strongly welcomed²⁴⁶. However there is still the refusal to consider any changes in the doctrines of the Church. In Paragraph 251 of the “Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Synod on the Family”; the Synod Fathers observed that, “as for proposals to place unions between homosexual persons on the same level as marriage, there are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God’s plan for marriage and family”. The continued refusal to make any change in the traditional Church doctrines was again confirmed, although the statement that homosexuality is intrinsically disordered no longer appears²⁴⁷.

In the Anglican Communion, the Primates meeting in January 2016 in Canterbury censured The Episcopal Church of America for proceeding without authority on the issue of same-sex marriage²⁴⁸. However it managed to avoid a complete schism in the Communion. A period of grace of three years for further study was allowed, but there was little coming together of minds. This was followed by a meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Lusaka, Zambia between 8-19th of April 2016. After that meeting, the Primates Council of GAFCON (the “Global Anglican Future Conference”, representing the conservative elements in the Church) met in Kenya on the 22nd of April and issued a Communique²⁴⁹. It contained the attached appendix referring to the recent meeting of the Consultative Council²⁵⁰. From this appendix, it is clear that their condemnation of the other churches in the Anglican Communion is based entirely on the authority of scripture as they traditionally

²⁴⁶ In the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Synod on the Family, Pope Francis urged the church to “reaffirm that every person, regardless of sexual orientation, ought to be respected in his or her dignity and treated with consideration”, while “every sign of unjust discrimination” is to be carefully avoided, particularly any form of aggression or violence. But the pope stopped short of pushing for a change in church doctrine. “De facto or same-sex unions, for example, may not simply be equated with marriage”. However the church’s traditional definition of same-sex relationships as “intrinsically disordered” is notably absent from the exhortation. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/08/pope-francis-urges-compassion-for-all-in-landmark-statement-on-family-values-catholic-church>

²⁴⁷ Pope Francis. (2016): “Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Lætitia* Of The Holy Father Francis To Bishops, Priests And Deacons Consecrated Persons Christian Married Couples And All The Lay Faithful On Love In The Family”: Paragraph 251: “In discussing the dignity and mission of the family, the Synod Fathers observed that, “as for proposals to place unions between homosexual persons on the same level as marriage, there are absolutely no grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God’s plan for marriage and family”. It is unacceptable “that local Churches should be subjected to pressure in this matter and that international bodies should make” financial aid to poor countries dependent on the introduction of laws to establish ‘marriage’ between persons of the same sex”. [Accessed: 18 April 2016]

https://w2.vatican.va/content/dam/francesco/pdf/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione_ap_20160319_amoris-laetitia_en.pdf

²⁴⁸ Anglican Communion: (2016) Communique from the Primates of the Anglican Communion: 15 Jan 2016: “Walking Together in the Service of God in the World” <http://www.primates2016.org/articles/2016/01/15/communique-primates/>

²⁴⁹ GAFCON Nairobi Communique 2016: <http://gafcon.org/2016/04/22/nairobi-communique-2016/>

²⁵⁰ Appendix to the GAFCON Nairobi Communique 2016 : *From Canterbury to Lusaka*

“Last January, we spent time together at the Primates Gathering contending for a restoration of godly order within the Anglican Communion. The sanctions passed at that meeting were not in themselves capable of restoring order, but they were a potential first step. At that meeting, we acknowledged the reality of the “significant distance” between us and “expressed a desire to walk together” if possible. This distance was created when The Episcopal Church walked away from the Anglican Communion’s doctrine on sexuality and the plain teaching of Scripture. Within hours of the meeting’s end the public responses from many bishops, clergy, and lay people of The Episcopal Church made it clear that they did not desire to share the same journey. The biblical call to repentance is a call to make a 180 degree turn. It grieves us that many in The Episcopal Church have again rejected this call. While we desire to walk together, until there is true repentance, the reality is that they are deliberately walking away from the Anglican Communion and the authority of Scripture at a distance that continues to increase. The recent meeting of the Anglican Consultative Council in Lusaka, Zambia has again highlighted the inability of the current instruments to uphold godly order within the Communion. Delegates from the Episcopal Church, by their own admission, voted on matters that pertained to polity and doctrine, in defiance of the Primates. This action has damaged the standing of the Anglican Consultative Council as an instrument of unity, increased levels of distrust, and further torn the fabric of the Communion. Nonetheless, we give thanks that these events have brought further clarity, and drawn GAFCON closer together in the mission of the Gospel. We are of one mind that the future of the Anglican Communion does not lie with manipulations, compromises, legal loopholes, or the presentation of half-truths; the future of our Communion lies in humble obedience to the truth of the Word of God written. What others have failed to do, GAFCON is doing: enabling global fellowship and godly order, united by biblical faithfulness. This unity has provided us with great energy to continue to work for the renewal of the Anglican Communion”.

interpret it and upon the “Godly Order” expected within the Church: their demand is for the repentance of the rest of the Church. What that means is challenged by this analysis. If this “Godly Order” means an absolute return to the traditional teaching of the Church, then it means a return to the compromised teaching of the 11th Century Church. The question is who should repent? Is it those who enforce this traditional Church teaching? Or is it those who seek to recover the radical teaching of Jesus himself?

Some years previously the Church of England report of the House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality, or the Pilling Report²⁵¹, which was commissioned in January 2012, acknowledged that there could be the possibility of change in the traditional teaching of the Church on gender and sexual variation, but it urged that great caution be exercised before adopting it. The recent pronouncements by GAFCON and others deny even the possibility of such change. That resistance is not new and there is a long history behind it. That is discussed in the fifth paper in this series and it has also been documented by the author elsewhere²⁵². The refusal to engage in these issues still continues. The condemnations by Cardinal Robert Sarah, the bathroom ban in the southern United States, the activities of GAFCON, the support by the Church for criminalisation of homosexual behaviour and its endorsement of the extreme penalties that are imposed in some countries demonstrate that the scapegoating of gender and sexually variant people remains alive and well in the Christian Church.

Despite all of the evidence that is available many Christian Churches, continue to stick rigidly to the traditional doctrines. That rigidity is shown the Apostolic Exhortation released by Pope Francis in 2016, where the total refusal to consider homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God’s plan for marriage and family denies the moral duality that is shown by the analysis: it discounts the nature of first century Jewish relationships and it ignores the social changes in societies which demonstrate that in some respects the relationships of Adelpopoiesis had more in common with the present day understanding of marriage than any first century understanding of marriage could present²⁵³. The traditional Church teaching defines marriage as a: “Lifelong union between a man and a woman”. The author would have no problem with this if corresponding same-sex unions were fully recognised with a different word. However that has not happened. In the eyes of society outside it, and in the view of the author, this continuing intransigence is destroying the moral authority of the Church. It is now society which is determining what the word marriage means: it is not the Church.

The public attitudes to the same-sex behaviour which is openly experienced in many societies at the present time would also have been known to Jesus, John, Paul, and to all others in a first century society where these same-sex relationships were widely expressed. By condemning all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour the traditional teaching of the Church has diverted its concerns away from the real issues of the practice by all men of illicit, abusive and promiscuous sex. That universal condemnation has enabled the Church to make all gender and sexually variant people the scapegoats for abusive sex, and the present day changes in society have exposed the failures of the Church. Today it is the clashes between what is seen by society as the common sense values, and the fervent reliance by the Church on its traditional doctrines, which is destroying the credibility of Christianity in the eyes of the world. Change is urgently required, but it is not change which departs from the Gospel message, it is change which returns to the Gospel texts.

²⁵¹ Report of the House of Bishops Working Group on Human Sexuality (The Pilling Report) Published: 28/11/2013: Church House Publishing ISBN-13: 9780715144374 ISBN-10: 0715144375

http://www.churchofengland.org/media/1891063/pilling_report_gs_1929_web.pdf

²⁵² Gilchrist, S. (2014): “*Controversy and Challenge: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in the Present Day Christian Church*”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/018B-ControversoryAndCrisis.pdf>

²⁵³ Gilchrist, S. (2013): “*Reform and the Christian Church*”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/008B-ReformChristianChurchArticle.pdf>. Also Section 10 of Gilchrist, S. (2011): “*Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships*”: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

8:3 Christian Responses

There are two elements to this analysis. One is the neurophysiological and psychological investigation into the formation of personality and self-identity in early life. The second is a theological investigation which uses the results of the scientific study to conduct a critique of the Christian Church. It is concluded that there is a contradiction between the results of the scientific investigation and the current theological approach. Social attitudes and Christian theology have largely hidden this contradiction. Because of this great harm has been done, and is still being done, by the medical misdiagnoses that are made.

The purpose of the theological analysis is to find out why this contradiction occurs. An extended theological analysis has been conducted which examines the cultural values of the surrounding first century and earlier societies; and compares these with the teaching of the Church. From all of these standpoints it is demonstrated that a moral duality is encountered in gender and sexually variant behaviour is encountered, which demands the welcome of cross-gender activities and same-sex relationships which are the outpourings of love and faithfulness, while condemning those that are pursued for abusive and illicit sex. It is also established that identical criteria in relation to use and abuse should be applied to heterosexual and same-sex acts of sex. There is no diminution of moral standards and no condonation of abusive sex.

It is shown that this contradiction is absent in the Gospel message, and that the teaching of Jesus agrees with the conclusions of the neurophysiological and physiological study. Paul summarises that teaching in Galatians 3:26-28 when he states: *“So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus”*. It is demonstrated that all transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be accepted in their own right. All sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention and there is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act.

That contradicts what today is regarded as the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church on homosexual practices, and by implication on all gender and sexual variant behaviour. This teaching decrees that without exception, all gender and sexually variant behaviour is disordered, it is always in pursuit of lust, it denies the gift of life and it concentrates entirely on the sexual act. It also considered to be a lifestyle choice in which any form of expression of this behaviour is a mortally sinful act. The changes in doctrine and in society are examined in this investigation. It is concluded that what today is considered to be the traditional doctrines of the Christian Church on sexual and gender variance rest on a false foundation. They come from the need to gain respectability in Roman society. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus himself. For its survival and to enable it to take the Gospel message to the world, Christianity adopted a form of gender complementarity which was amenable to Roman culture. The failures of this would lead to major misuses in the later Church²⁵⁴.

It is shown that these transformations in outlook occurred as the Church moved from being a minority and suppressed group in society to an organisation which became the dispenser of power and authority. Instead of its earlier stance which had focussed on condemning the abuses of sexual power and behaviour by dominant peoples inside gender and socially unequal societies; it now dismissed these power elements in the doctrines it created²⁵⁵. With this denial the purpose of all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour could only be deemed to be in pursuit of the lust for sex. Any possibility of recognising love in relationships and the moral duality that is present in the

²⁵⁴ See section 2:2:5 of Gilchrist, S. (2013): *An Unfinished Reformation*

²⁵⁵ The doctrines of the infallibility of the Church stopped it from acknowledging its own abuses of power in society.

teaching of Jesus was lost. The universal nature of this condemnation has allowed sections of the Church to collude with the scapegoating of all gender and sexually variant people by secular society and to endorse the criminalisation of their acts. With the support of the Christian Church extreme penalties are today being applied for engagement in gender and sexually variant behaviour in many parts of the world.

It is therefore concluded that an urgent priority must be that of bringing back the radical teaching of Jesus on gender and sex to the Christian Church. That can be achieved by changing the boundary between unacceptable and acceptable behaviour from the traditional condemnation of all gender and sexually variant behaviour into one which expresses the moral duality which has been identified in the teaching of Jesus, and discovered in the neurophysiological and psychological study. From all of these standpoints this investigation demonstrates that identical criteria in relation to use and abuse should be applied to all forms of gender and sexual behaviour, including all heterosexual and same-sex acts of sex. In line with the teaching which Jesus presents in the New Covenant, all moral decisions should only be made on the pureness of the love, responsibility and intentions that are involved in these acts. Changing the boundary also exposes the true challenges that should be faced. The fundamental need is for the Church to tackle the major issues of promiscuity, prostitution, sexual slavery and abuse which are endemic in many areas of the world, irrespective of sexual orientation, gender differences, and how these arise. Instead of centuries of making homosexuality the scapegoat for sexual abuse, the real issue is one of combatting all forms of abusive sex. That is an issue which everyone should be able to agree on, churches in Africa, liberal and conservative churches in the West, Orthodox Churches and many gender and sexually variant people themselves.

The early Christian Church described the moral duality which is identified in this analysis in terms of "The Way of Darkness" and "The Way of Light". The same early Church set out to be a beacon of light, shining out to the hostile and discriminatory society around it. However the Gospel message which demanded true equality and fairness for all people did not last. One might argue that this light began to be extinguished for sexually and gender variant people by the transformation of the Gospel message into doctrines which looked for respectability, authority and continuity inside the gender discriminatory and socially unequal societies that surrounded the Church. In a Christian Church which lives true to the vision of the New Covenant; all behaviour should be governed by purity of intention, and all people must be accepted in their own right. This analysis does not diminish in any form the rightful condemnation of the way of darkness. There is no condonation of abusive acts. Instead it identifies the way of light for all gender and sexually variant people who seek to live their lives in ways that are true to their own identities in the Love of Christ. That light will shine most strongly in places where there are discriminatory societies around it. Whatever the cost to the organisation may be, surely the mission of every Church today must be to rekindle this beacon of light.

Despite the urgency of these matters the unwillingness to change and engage seriously in these discussions still continues. Opportunities for discussion and resolution were made available during the Anglican Primates meeting in January 2016 and at a later Anglican Consultative Council meeting. However subsequent statements have emphasised the divisions that exist. The "Shared Conversations" discussions in the Church of England were intended to promote a process of reconciliation. The stated objective of these is to obtain "Good Disagreement". The results of the "Shared Conversations" process are due to be discussed in the Church of England General Synod in July 2016, but a recent statement made by David Porter, the Archbishop of Canterbury's Chief of Staff, and formerly Director of Reconciliation, indicates that he expects that schism may be unavoidable²⁵⁶. The tensions between GAFCON and the more liberal wings of the Anglican

²⁵⁶ Farley, Harry. (2016): "Church of England split over gay marriage may be unavoidable, admits Welby's chief of staff": Christian Today 7 June 2016 [accessed 20 June 2016]

Communion are increasing. This investigation uses the results of a scientific investigation to conduct a critique of the Christian Church. These arguments are not just about theology. Regrettably the use of theology in defiance of science is not a new feature in the history of the Church.

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/church.of.england.split.over.gay.marriage.may.be.unavoidable.admits.welbys.chief.of.staff/88625.htm>

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Personality Development and Gender: Why We Should Re-think the Process

Susan Gilchrist

Section Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church: Is it Not Time to Consider the Science?": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/226P-ConsiderScience.pdf>

: Discussion and Conclusions

This analysis adopts a dual approach to the development of atypical gender and sexual identities in humans. The scientific approach explains the origins and reasons for these conditions. The theological analysis discusses what human beings have done with the results. How these interact is crucial for human development. It is shown that scientific advances have been impeded by the theological presumptions and that great social and medical harm has been done because of the misdiagnoses that have been made.

Any analysis cannot address these issues by considering only the scientific or the theological issues on their own: this is why both are considered; and an extended theological analysis is given in this account. The theological analysis is carried out using scientific principles. That is its sole purpose and it is important to emphasise that this investigation makes no presumptions about the truth or otherwise of any religious belief.

However the value of religion and theology in creating a moral, just and loving society should not be underestimated. The reasons for the contradictions between the science and theology are examined. It is shown that this was a consequence of the supreme efforts of the Christian Church to combat the abuses of sex. These moral standards are upheld in this analysis and there is no toleration whatever of abusive sex.

9:1: Physiological Development

9:1:1: Stages in development

A fresh approach to advancing the understanding of personality formation is adopted in this study by first examining the internally driven forces of possessive imitation, resonance and empathy which empower early learning and development, and secondly by investigating the later cognitively driven externally focussed forces of reason, perception, intuition, desire and reward.

Three key stages are considered. The first of these takes place from birth up to about two years. With no overall neural co-ordination being present during this period, development takes place in a fragmented way. The strength and contagion of the internal driving forces ensure that maximum amount of poorly co-ordinated data is obtained. A rapid transformation in neural capability takes place at around the age of two years. This is the time when the brain begins to function as a single cognitive unit. From this time onwards the feedback and controlling forces arising from the development of the cognitive capabilities can start to make sense of what has already been created.

Present approaches attribute the formation of atypical gender identities to the influence of pre-natal hormones which shape the brain into male or female forms. This shaping takes place before birth. Contrary to the present approaches, it is shown that the major physical influences on gender identity development arises from the major structural changes in the brain, and the re-shaping of the neural pathways which takes place during the rapid period of neural advancement occurring at around the age of two years.

It is shown that during this period of transformation the core senses of gender and personality are formed. It is also demonstrated that the physiology of brain plasticity and synaptic pruning, which follows from between the age of two and three years, permanently locks these core elements in place. It is additionally established that the physiological, neurological and psychological aspects of brain development together form a finely tuned system in which the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence and inquisitiveness, together with the minimum degree of energy expenditure is created. The development of personality, individuality and identity is driven by contagious self-reinforcing physiological forces, and wide variations in outcomes are found. By using the experiences of gender dysphoria to link these processes, a pattern of continuous development can be traced from infancy to adult life.

It is also demonstrated that the conflicts which are associated with gender identity must be seen as the outcome of the failure to build a coherent sense of self identity, rather than the cause. This means that for everyone the development of their own gender identity, atypical or not, proceeds in the same way. Transsexuals develop a gender allegiance and identity²⁵⁷ which is contrary to their biological sex, but this is at least as firmly held as those for whom their gender identity and allegiance follow a normal path, indeed it may be argued that the gender allegiance and identity which is felt by transsexuals should be even stronger because it has had to be fought for all along the way.

By about the age of three years, brain plasticity has locked the core sense of gender identity in place. However children do not become aware of any inconsistencies in the development of gender identity before the age of around four years. Because of this delay the way in which some transsexuals describe their situation "As being born into the wrong body" can be understood. Although the results of this case study are reported in relation to the development of gender identity, the same processes are also involved in creating the other core aspects of personality and identity. Therefore this result has direct application to the full range of personality and identity that is formed.

At birth the pre-frontal cortex of the brain, which is the area responsible for intuition, perception and organised thought, is still in a primitive state. It is shown in this analysis that the physical maturation of the pre-frontal cortex of the brain is closely linked to the development of learning capabilities during the first two years. With no overall neural co-ordination being present during this early period, learning processes are driven by the rejection of what is wrong, goals cannot be set and concepts of identity which are imposed by the expectations of rearing are not absorbed. Inter-personal experiences cannot be separated from inter-personal ones. However tribal identities which identify the place of a child in society can begin to develop²⁵⁸, and pre-disposing behavioural factors, which may lead to the creation of atypical gender identities are shown to be present from birth.

General concepts can only form after the required overall neural co-ordination has come into effect. It is the momentum which is created by the contagious, internally driven physiological forces eventually transforms these tribal associations into the core senses of personality and identity. It is shown that quorum sensing methods are involved. Thus the identity created comes from the results of this momentum; instead of the product of any rational thought. From this time onwards a cognitive continuum can exist whereby the initial, intense physiologically formed and internal learning forces, which have first created the core senses of personality and identity, become overlaid by the cognitively driven and externally focussed learning processes, which make use of the capabilities of reason, perception, intuition, desire and reward.

²⁵⁷ Identity relates to the raw components which the conflict creates. Allegiance develops through trying to make sense of the disparities which occur.

²⁵⁸ Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Science and Belief. A New Approach to Identity and Personality Formation in Early Life": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/218P-PaperPersonality.pdf>

The significance of this is that the mechanisms espoused by the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories can play little part in the initial formation of the core elements of personality and gender identity. That additionally means that these traditional theories can only act as overlays on what has already been formed.

9:1:2: Developmental Omissions

A major problem with the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories is that they rely on the presence of a cognitive continuum to enable them to work. This is relied on to predict their results. Because of this, the incorrect presumption is made that a cognitive continuum delivers all learning processes at all stages of life. The absence of the neural co-ordination needed for this continuum led Freud, Piaget and others to presume that development in early years is focussed on the growth of motor functions and some basic responses, with not much else taking place. This means that instead of children very actively contributing to their own development, these social learning and psychodynamic theories predict only a limited and passive response.

These conclusions are comprehensively contradicted by the results of the more recent neurophysiologically based studies which show that early learning and personality development is driven by physiologically driven, intense, contagious and self-reinforcing forces arising of neural resonance, empathy and possessive imitation. During this first period the foremost challenge to be explained is not one of how learning develops, but about how the observer can inhibit these physiological processes so that he or she does not respond by actually engaging in the same process or act.

The presumption of the traditional theories which believe that a cognitive continuum always exists and that this governs the learning processes at all times of life means that the existence of this earlier type of conflict is denied. Today a great deal of research is still being carried out, and literature is currently being written, within which these assumptions continue to be made.

This inability to recognise the existence of the physiologically driven learning processes, and the often intense inputs that they provide, is a major shortcoming of the psychodynamic and social learning theories. Their attempts to explain the development of the core senses of identity and personality fail because the absence of a cognitive continuum means that they cannot apply²⁵⁹. Conflicts which develop from sources which are present before this transformation have different characteristics from those which come after it. Therefore two processes of identification and two types of conflict are found.

9:1:3: Conflict Types

The physiological marker which differentiates the types of learning and development that can take place is provided by the rapid transformation in children's abilities at around the age of two years. It is shown that conflicts which trace their origins from the period before the transformation are identity driven. These arise because of discordances in the sense of identity that has been created, and the resolution which is sought is one that enables people to be true to themselves. They include those of sexual and gender variance. With these conflicts, behaviour is not the focus and as wide a range on moral attitudes, beliefs, inclinations and responsibilities are found in these groups as that which occur within the population at large. These are driven by drives for possession and the rejection of what is wrong. There is no cognition to search for reward.

²⁵⁹ For additional information see: Gilchrist, S. (2013). *"Personality Development and LGB&T People: A New Approach"*; and Gilchrist, S. (2013). *"A Reassessment of the Traditional Christian Teaching on Homosexuality, Transsexuality and on Gender and Sexual Variation Using a New Neurophysiological and Psychological Approach"*. Access at: www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/index.htm

Reward driven conflicts develop after a cognitive continuum has been created. These do structurally relate behaviour to desire and reward. The presence of the two different types of conflict means that from the physiological and psychological point of view a moral duality must exist, whereby those who seek to fulfil the highest standards of society in ways that are true to themselves and to their own identities can be commended for their acts, while, while those who do the reverse should be severely condemned for the abuse they create.

There is currently intense discussion about the relative importance of nature versus nurture and the extent to which genetic influences are involved. This analysis allows for this, but it does not require it. In regard to autism for example, genetic influences may be very important, in the case of gender dysphoria it is most likely that only a pre-disposition is created and with tribal identity there may be none.

9:1:4: Bipolarity

Classic diagnoses of bipolarity can be associated with identity driven conflicts. However negative and positive outcomes are also found. Negative outcomes lead towards oblivion and death but positive outcomes lead to productivity, inspiration and the greatest achievements of humankind²⁶⁰. Cognitive continuums extend across function as well as time. Given the fragmentary nature of early development no cross-functional continuums can be expected to exist. Where disturbances to identity do occur, the disturbance caused is likely to be specific to that area. This result is in contrast to the reasoning of the social learning and psychodynamic theories where some form of continuum is expected.

This examination has already indicated that the conflicts associated with gender identity and gender dysphoria are also bipolar in nature. Their formation is described in section 4 of this document, their manifestations in section 5 and their management in section 6. Attempting to fight these conflicts does not work because the battle is against the contradictions of identity and personality which the synaptic pruning has physically and permanently locked in place. Instead of fighting and trying to suppress these conflicts, the correct management methods should seek acceptance and ways to transcend the divisions that occur.

A further feature of these conflicts comes from the indirect relationships between the goal that is pursued, the intensity of the demands and the objectives that are required. Often gender reassignment is obsessively sought, but this is the passport which allows people to achieve their true goal, which is to find peace in their lives. After transition many merge invisibly into society in their new roles. Achieving this goal also resolves the conflict at source, so gender reassignment if required should never be denied. Giving gender motivated transvestites outlets and permission to treat their cross-dressing as a hobby manages a conflict which is far deeper than the modesty of their demands. Restoring the ability to distinguish between proper and improper sex in same-sex relationships provides the resolution that is required. These bipolar conflicts can all be classed as conflicts of libido since their search is for fulfilment of life.

For these types of identity driven conflicts their outcomes should be cherished and used. The management methods that are needed for these should govern their excess. However there are also many types of identity driven conflicts where the expression of their outlets can never be socially acceptable, and are extremely destructive in their effects. In this account these are classified as conflicts of mortido. Management methods for these must always recognise the worth of the individual while detesting any despicable or harmful acts. Although these acts must absolutely be avoided, self-worth also needs to be created and responsibility accepted. The avoidance methods which are used must be appropriate to the nature of the disturbance. However there are two issues to consider, one is about how to deal with the acts themselves, and the second is about

²⁶⁰ In this analysis the terms “Conflicts of mortido” and “Conflicts of libido” are used to separate the two types.

how to manage the dynamics which create the explosion of demand. The management methods which are described in this account aim to control such a runaway drive. It is shown in this analysis that finding ways to understand the nature of these conflicts and to manage their dynamics are key features in maintaining the control that is required.

Little of this examination would have been possible without challenging the presumption that cognitive continuums govern the learning processes at all times of life. This analysis has used the understanding of gender dysphoria and the experience of transgender people to test and validate these results. It is now for others to examine the correctness of the arguments that have been presented.

9:2: Theological Perspectives

9:2:1: Influences of Gender and Sexual Variation on the History and Traditions of the Christian Church.

In the teaching on gender and sexual variation the existence of the moral duality that is predicted by the neurophysiological and psychological study is denied by the Christian Church. This denial is encapsulated in paragraph 2357 of the catechism of the Roman Catholic Church which declares that: "Tradition has always declared that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered. They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life"²⁶¹. It has been shown in this account that great harm has been done by this denial, not just to Christianity, Islam and the Judeo-Christian tradition, but across societies, empires, religions and cultures, which have also felt its effect. The conclusions of this study confirm on theological grounds as well as social and scientific grounds that the traditional teaching of the Christian Church on gender and sexuality cannot be correct.

The detailed theological analysis is given in section 7 of this document. It is shown that these doctrines do not just defy the results of this scientific analysis, historically they have provided the justification for making homosexuality, and by implication all other forms of gender and sexual variant behaviour, the scapegoat for abusive sex. Additionally they identify all forms of gender and sexually variant behaviour with reward driven conflicts. It is also demonstrated in this account that the correct methods of managing reward driven conflicts and identity driven conflicts are almost opposite to each other. Not only is that identification shown to be wrong in this analysis, even the best intentioned attempts to manage identity driven conflicts as though they are reward driven conflicts can often create severe counterproductive effects.

Those opposed to any change to the traditional doctrines of the Christian Church often base their arguments on the "Godly authority of Bible texts". This is why an important element of this study is that of finding out how these particular Church doctrines came about. It should be emphasised that in this analysis a clear distinction is made between same sex and cross-gender behaviour which is engaged in for the highest of motives, and that pursued for illicit or immoral purposes. This is the basis for the moral duality which is here considered. There is no toleration of improper or immoral sex.

²⁶¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraph 2357. The Second Edition English Translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church with corrections promulgated by Pope John Paul II on 8 September 1997: "Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, Tradition has always declared that "Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They choose the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved."

The rejection of the moral duality revealed by the neurophysiological and psychological study is a particular feature of Christianity and the Christian Church. The assessment of gender and sexual difference in the early and modern Christian Church is therefore examined using the results of this neurophysiological and psychological research. This takes the form of a critique of the teaching of the Church. By removing the veil of the theological presumptions on gender and sexuality, which dominated both Church and society for the last two thousand years, new insights are gained which include previously barred interpretations of biblical texts. This has enormous social and cultural implications for the societies to which it is applied.

9:2:2 Power and Sex

An important element in this analysis is that of determining the correct relationships between power and sex. The attacks which Jesus made upon the Jewish authorities were without compromise. This led to his death on the cross, and the radical nature of this teaching meant that Jesus and the early Church were disrupters of the accepted values of society. Jesus accepted people as themselves and he applied exactly the same standards of acceptance to everyone. Instead of simply seeking gender neutrality the Christian Gospel at first provided major roles for women and it is not surprising that women figured prominently in the early Church²⁶². However the message of Jesus given in the Gospels was to work within society to transform and not to destroy it. That gave Peter, Paul and the early Church a difficult choice. Christianity could either remain a minority and peripheral sect by continuing its disruptive and challenging role, or it could seek a degree of accommodation with Greco/Roman society which would allow it to take its message to the wider world.

In place of continuing with the challenges and the social disruption of following the doctrine of complete gender transcendence and freedom that Jesus preached, the early Church sought to moderate original Gospel message in order to gain the respectability within Greco/Roman society. In marked contrast to the absence in the Gospel message of any compromise which Jesus was prepared to make with the Jewish authorities, a constant theme within the Pauline epistles and Peter's letters was that of establishing the respectability of the Church. That meant conforming to the social divisions of Roman society, and in part this meant transferring the gender divisions which were already present in first century Jewish culture, into the Roman state. That compromised the radical teaching and example of Jesus on gender and sex, and this has had major consequences for the Church²⁶³

Despite these transformations an even greater reversal was required, because if Christianity was to succeed in obtaining respectability in Greco/Roman society, it quickly had to separate itself from the still continuing social and gender disrupting behaviour of the Goddess cults. This meant that instead of just adopting the social structures and gender complementarity which provided a cornerstone of the gender unequal Greco/Roman society, Christianity had to be seen to take a proactive role in its enforcement of them, and it is shown that this pursuit of respectability has led to the imposition of a strong heterosexual, gender defined and exclusive orthodoxy in which all types of expression of gender and sexually variant behaviour is automatically considered to be a mortal sin and an immoral act. This has also led to the great severity of the Christian condemnations of all gender and sexually variant behaviour as being second only to bestiality in the heinousness of these acts.

Peter and Paul had adopted a pragmatic policy in their attempts to gain the respectability that was needed to spread the Gospel message. This meant that Christianity could no longer challenge the power structures of the dominant society but it could divert its attention to the abuses of sex. Paul's

²⁶² Even though these important functions at first were given to women, the social constraints that were imposed through gender complementarity meant that the public spokespeople for this new religion could only be men. Therefore the theological justifications that in the present day are used to validate the presumptions for a male leadership, together with its male prerogatives, and its arguments for an exclusively male priesthood are also founded on these subsequent traditions. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus and the Gospel Church.

²⁶³ This is more fully discussed in section 7 of this document

own attitude to women was exemplary for the time, but the teaching of Peter and Paul, which placed women in submission to men, both inside and outside the Church, reflected the departure that was needed from the Gospel message and the limitations imposed by this approach²⁶⁴. These and the subsequent failures in pursuing the doctrines of gender complementarity would eventually lead to the horrendous gender discrimination and the sexual repressions of the fourth Century Church.

9:2:3 Cultural Clashes

The major challenge and achievement which was met by Christianity was its success in transferring the distinctive views of the minority Jewish religion into the dominant culture of the Roman state. One of the largest cultural clashes related to same-sex acts of sex. Roman society saw sexual behaviour from the perspective of power and domination. The use of this power by Rome gave permission for the abuse of sex. Male roman citizens could engage in same-sex intercourse provided he was the penetrator and the penetrated partner was of lesser status. However this was not approved of when the penetrated partner was a freeborn male Roman citizen of any age. This can be equated to same-sex rape. Symbols of penetration and the penis were widely and publically expressed in art, and the freedom with which this was done emphasised the sexual domination as a tool of oppression by the state²⁶⁵. In Judaism, as a subject society, the horror over these practices was strongly expressed. This blatant abuse of sex was violently condemned by the Christian Church. For about the first three hundred years of its existence the Christian condemnations of same-sex intercourse was primarily focussed on the subjection and domination involved in this act²⁶⁶. By far the biggest challenge for the Christian Church was that of dealing with these abuses of same-sex acts. Together with the need to seek respectability in Roman society and the continued adherence to the types of gender complementarity that were practiced in the Judean and Greco/Roman world it is not surprising that all sense of the moral duality that was present in the teaching of Jesus was lost.

9:2:4 Same-Sex Relationships

The prohibitions of Leviticus have been discussed in section 7:2 of this document. It is shown that they relate to the abuses of power in relationships between people and between societies. It is these abuses power which give permission for the abuse of sex. The prohibitions were not driven by an intrinsic horror of the act and there was no other restriction place on the expression of love between two people as equals who were of the same sex. In section 7 of this document it is shown that this leads to the conclusion which states that what today are considered to be the traditional doctrines of the Christian Church on gender equality, and sexual and gender variant behaviour are built on a false foundation. They come from the need to obtain respectability in Greco/Roman society. They do not come from the teaching of Jesus himself.

²⁶⁴ Perhaps the more telling way to assess these arguments is to examine the authority which the New Testament invokes. In 1 Corinthians 14:34, Paul was urging Christian women to keep silent in Church because that would be a disgrace to society, and there is no direct reference to Christ. For Peter likewise (1 Peter 3:1-16) the need for women's submission was because the esteem of the Church must be nurtured within society at large. Paul's comment in Ephesians 5:22-24 again refers to the absolute authority and control exercised by the "Pater familias" in Greco/Roman society. All of these statements reflect the need for the Church to gain respect in that society and this provided a model for the Church. None of them attempt to derive their authority from the teaching of Christ. There is a good precedent which urges the Apostles and the early Church to follow the rules of the secular society. In Mark 12:17 Jesus said to his questioners, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." In Romans 13 Paul declares that Christians are obliged to obey all earthly authorities, stating that because they were introduced by God, a disobedience to them equates to disobedience to God.

²⁶⁵ Nevertheless the expression of same-sex relationships was sufficiently well known for the moral duality to be understood and the distinction was made on the basis of intention and maintaining the power balances in society, rather than condemnation of the act.

²⁶⁶ See Gilchrist, S. (2011) "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf>

It is shown that the teaching of Jesus on gender equality and gender and sexual variance would be completely accepted in the present day, and that all transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be accepted alike. Perhaps the most challenging outcome of this study comes from the conclusion that all sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention and there is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act.

9:2:5 Concerns

There is little doubt that this analysis, if it is correct, will cause significant concern to the Christian Church. For 2000 years it has used its theology to argue that all homosexual acts and by implication all gender and sexually variant behaviour is intrinsically disordered and always in pursuit of illicit sex. That conclusion is challenged by this analysis which uses recent scientific research to demonstrate that for many, these activities are driven by the need to fulfil an identity and not for the purpose of sex. It shows that gender and sexually variant people can live lives which are both true to their own identities, and which also conform to the highest moral standards that society expects.

For as long as the Christian Church was able to dominate the social structures and the moral values of society these doctrines could not be challenged. The changes in present day society mean that this control has now been broken. The de-criminalisation of homosexuality in the 1960s and the subsequent anti-discrimination legislation means that for the first time in at least 1000 years people are able to see the full range of experience that exists, and the awareness of the moral duality in attitudes to same-sex behaviour in Judean society, and which Jesus, John and the early Christians encountered is once again exposed to view.

It is the clashes between what is perceived today as the common sense values, and the fervent reliance on the traditional doctrines is destroying the credibility of Christianity in the eyes of the world. It is easy for an unbiased observer to distinguish between a same-sex relationship given in faithfulness, love and lifetime commitment from a strong heterosexual friendship, just as it is to distinguish between loving and illicit same-sex acts.

This message and that of the Gospel is that all people must be identically cherished and loved. This means that all people, including transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people, who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be accepted alike. All behaviour is governed by the purity of intention and there is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act. Instead of setting labels that are heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people or transsexual the only thing that any label should do is to separate responsible from illicit sex. That too returns to the first century attitude which defined the same differences in terms of the noble pursuit of love and the carnal abuse of sex.

However it is not all one-sided. The universal condemnation and criminalisation of all forms of gender and sexual behaviour has given little incentive, when everyone is condemned, to behave in a way that those who condemn them would expect. That history has prevented stable relationships being maintained. The opposite reaction to this is often found because all of those people who are condemned are more likely to band together under a single banner for their defence. Anger is created and a siege mentality can be formed where support for each other is the overriding demand. The stereotypes this creates can prevent reconciliation taking place. This investigation exposes the need of gender and sexually variant people themselves to recognise that the same moral duality exists inside their own communities as well as outside them: and to act on this. That may be as big a challenge for these people it is for everyone else.

9:2:6 Christian Scapegoating

A dominating feature of gender complementarity comes from the way it divides the male and female roles. Any form of gender or gender or sexually variant behaviour, for any purpose whatever attacks the divisions that gender complementarity creates. The more gender unequal a society is the greater these threats become. In this process all awareness of moral duality which is inherent in gender and sexually variant behaviour becomes lost. Any expression of gender and sexually variant behaviour is deemed to be always in pursuit of immoral and illicit sex, and this is reflected in the present day catechism of the Roman Catholic Church.

Acts of same-sex intercourse are always going to be problematic in gender unequal societies, and where gender complementarity is enforced. Conforming to male or female stereotypes is required and this means that the issue of scapegoating is not just confined to matters of doctrine or religious belief. Because gender and sexually variant people do not quite conform to the standard expectations of a these societies it can be easy to use them as the scapegoats to which blame can be transferred for illicit sex. Thus innocent gender and sexually variant people, who aim to live according to the highest standards of society, become the scapegoats who are forced to take the blame for the failures that occur.

The same people can also be used as scapegoats by heterosexual people who engage in sexual abuse. Transferring their blame to the scapegoat that would otherwise have been put on them diverts attention away from their acts. The scapegoat must not be sufficiently powerful to countermand these demands and a common scapegoat is found, against whom both sides can mount an attack. The damage that is caused by this scapegoating is greatly increased by the collusion of the Christian Church.

This scapegoating is as real today in Africa and in countries like Russia where a reassertion or reinforcement of traditional male and female roles is taking place. The more strongly the two sides fight each other the more they come to mirror each other through the rivalry they create and the greater the penalties which they impose become. Currently in Africa some Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops support life or long term prison sentences for people who engage in homosexual acts²⁶⁷. In the Church more generally, there has been a long history of making homosexuality the scapegoat for abusive clerical sex²⁶⁸.

Girard shows that paradoxically a scapegoat can gain enormous strength because of the symbolism it possesses, and also because its destruction or ejection can be a harbinger of peace²⁶⁹. If the scapegoat can be destroyed or expelled calm is restored and the sense of relief is enormous. A transformation takes place. Instead of seeing only the differences between them, both sides can now see the common elements that their rivalry had created. Until that happens, tensions will continue to increase, and the issues over homosexuality have now reached obsession levels in the Church. It is shown that a way to defeat the harm that these dynamics create is to understand their mechanism and to uncover how a particular scapegoat works.

The power of this particular scapegoat can be destroyed by exposing the falsity of the Christian condemnations of those gender and sexually variant people who seek to live to the highest ideals of society. Removing the scapegoat means that instead of the attention of the Church being diverted toward an incorrect issue, it can focus on the true issue instead. This real issue is that of combatting

²⁶⁷ Gilchrist, S. (2013): "Reform and the Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/008B-ReformChristianChurchArticle.pdf>. Gilchrist, S. (2014): "Controversy and Challenge: Issues of Gender and Sexuality in the Present Day Christian Church": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/018B-ControversyAndCrisis.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church: Is it Not Time to Consider the Science?": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/226P-ConsiderScience.pdf>

²⁶⁸ Gilchrist, S. (2011): "Issues on the Sanctity of Same-Sex Relationships": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/014B-IssuesOnTheSanctityOfSame-SexRelationships.pdf> Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Sex and Gender Variation in the Christian Church: Is it Not Time to Consider the Science?": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/226P-ConsiderScience.pdf>

²⁶⁹ See sections 2 to 5 of this account

all forms of abusive sex. It is an issue which everyone should be able to agree on, churches in Africa, liberal and conservative churches in the West, Orthodox Churches and many gender and sexually variant people themselves.

9:2:7: Current Challenges

Social and political histories are significant. The number of people who have been persecuted and killed for who they are, and not just for what they do, is too great to count. The exportation of these dogmas into other religions and the influence of empires have had a worldwide effect. Many histories, cultures and traditions are still an impediment to change. This is notably the situation when gender and sexual variation is found. Much of the information used in the neurophysiological and psychological analysis has been available for a considerable time. Numerous books and treatises are still being produced on the presumption that early development is determined exclusively by the action of the cognitive learning and development processes that are embodied in the long standing theories. There are various reasons for this delay, some of which may relate to a resistance to change. Others may reflect a culture which is less geared to the disciplines required for the application of new knowledge and research. Opportunities for change have been present, but familiarity with the traditional theories and the social and structural values of a society which have been determined by the doctrines of the Christian Church for the last 2000 years raise significant barriers to adopting the paradigm shift that is required.

There has been a history of missed opportunities. Homosexuality was first defined in 1869 as a description of identity or orientation only, but the definition soon came to include the behaviour and the relationships between two people who were driven by the desire for sexual relationships with other people of the same sex²⁷⁰. The pressure of history and culture continues to enforce the view that this is a reward driven behaviour in pursuit of sexual desire, which continues to be strongly endorsed by the Christian Church. Implicit in this, but not necessarily obvious is the presumption that a cognitive continuum drives the processes of learning and development at all times of life. Personal experience has led the author to challenge this presumption, and to conduct a neurophysiological and psychological analysis²⁷¹. Its results challenge many of the traditional doctrines which the Church has adopted on gender and sexual variance, roles of women, and on gender complementarity in the present day world.

Same-sex and gender variant behaviour is presented as Christian doctrine, but in the absence of these declarations within the teaching of Jesus, it should be regarded instead as a discipline of the Church. This means that it is the responsibility of Christianity and of the Christian Churches within every generation to work out anew what all of these relationships should be. Those relationships change with time and in present day society, where complete gender equality is now determined by the belief in universal human rights instead of the compulsory gender complementarity which maximised the perceived usefulness of men and women in society; a totally different approach is

²⁷⁰ The first appearance of the word homosexual in a printed document is found in an 1869 German pamphlet by the Austrian-born novelist Karl-Maria Kertbeny, which was published anonymously. In 1879, Gustav Jäger used Kertbeny's description in his book, *Discovery of the Soul* (1880). However "homosexuality" as originally defined by Kertbeny simply meant a sexual drive directed toward persons of the same sex. In 1886, Richard von Krafft-Ebing used the terms and distinguished between homosexual and heterosexual in his book *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886). Krafft-Ebing's book was so popular among both layman and doctors that the terms "heterosexual" and "homosexual" became the most widely accepted terms for sexual orientation. Krafft-Ebing considered procreation the purpose of sexual desire and that any form of recreational sex was a perversion of the sexual drive. He presented four categories of what he called "cerebral neuroses" in *Psychopathia Sexualis*. The consequence of this was to expand the definition of homosexuality in popular perception from a term which originally was used to describe identity only, to one which included the desire for and the practice of sexual relationships between two people of the same sex. Freud appears to have been undecided whether or not homosexuality was pathological, expressing different views on this issue at different times and places in his work. The transfer of definition from orientation to relationships is clearly evident in the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church.

²⁷¹ A biography of the author is available on <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/SusanBiographyPicture.pdf>

urgently required. These are not changes which diminish the Gospel message; they are changes which return to the Gospel texts

9:2:8: Resistance

There are multitudes of people in the world today who are honestly, faithfully and assiduously following from different viewpoints what they believe to be the correct Christian teaching, who all are concerned about what is happening in the Christian Church. Evidence for that is seen in the establishment of the “Shared Conversations” process in the Church of England and in the “Synod on the Family” called by Pope Francis in 2015. What is not up for change are in the preconditions set by the Church hierarchies for these activities. These demand that there will be no change to the traditional teaching of the Church. This unwillingness to change has been documented by the author elsewhere, and it is this refusal which is destroying the credibility, not just of the Churches, but of all Christian belief.

9:3 Conclusions

At birth the pre-frontal cortex of the brain is very poorly developed. A rapid transformation which involves a major advancement in neural capabilities occurs at some point between the ages of between one and a half to three years. From this time onwards the pre-frontal cortex of the brain starts to function as a co-ordinated unit. Before this period it is shown that internally driven and contagious physiological development processes described by Gallese, Dawkins, Girard and others take the dominant role. These internally focussed forces are contrasted and compared with the externally directed cognitively driven traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories, which only come into effect after transformation occurs. Development is characterised by the continuing struggle between these internal, contagious, feed-forward and physiologically driven forces, which are active from birth against the controlling, feed-back and externally moderated processes of cognitive development in later life. Gender dysphoria is used as a case study to link the two processes. It is demonstrated that brain plasticity (which is the ability of the brain to physically reshape itself), is structured to maximise the amount of information that can be collected during the period before the neural transformation, when it is most needed, and later to ensure that constancy and stability occurs. It is demonstrated that the physiological, neurological and psychological aspects of brain development act together to form a finely tuned system in which the maximum amount of individuality, possessiveness, intelligence and inquisitiveness, together with the minimum degree of energy expenditure is generated.

It is concluded that there are two distinct and differently directed processes which are involved in the creation of a gender identity. When these two processes are in harmony no conscious awareness of the two types will exist. However when they contradict each other strong trauma can be involved. It is shown that core elements of personality, including basic concepts of gender and sexual identity form before or during the neural transformation period. It is established that brain plasticity and the “domestication of the brain” lock the core senses of identity and personality permanently in place before the age of three years, so that a constancy of personality is created. Different behaviour and types of conflict are encountered and the impact of these is assessed. Characteristics and conflicts which have origins from before the transformation period are found to concern identity alone. Characteristics which originate after the transformation have behavioural features which cognitively link desire to reward. This means that a moral duality must exist, whereby gender and sexually variant people who express their true attractions and identities in ways that conform to the highest moral standards of their own societies are to be highly regarded, while those who misuse these relationships should be severely condemned for their acts. This conclusion denies the validity of the traditional teaching of the Christian Church: which condemns without exception every sexual and gender variant act.

It is demonstrated that the teaching of Jesus conforms to the scientific study; therefore these contradictions come from changes in the theology of the Church. Cultural clashes are examined and it is shown that the abuses of power by Roman society gave permission for abuses of sex. The adaptations which Peter, Paul and the early Church had to make to survive and to take the Gospel message to the world are considered. It is demonstrated that the need for these is recognised by Jesus himself. However, instead of following this teaching of Jesus by restoring in full his radical teaching on gender and sex after it had the power to do so, the Church used the supremacy it possessed to reinforce the authority of the institutions it had created. That failure to follow the Gospel message is shown to be the source of the contradictions that occur. Dogmas of necessity became doctrines of certainty and it is demonstrated that what is today regarded as the traditional teaching on gender and sexuality is based on the compromised Christianity of the 13th century Church. Instead of challenging it, this change has enabled some sections of the Christian Church to collude with the secular scapegoating of gender and sexually variant people. Great harm has been done by the medical misdiagnoses that have been made. Claiming the authority of scripture without recognising the impact of these adaptations only justifies the compromised Christianity presented by the 13th century Church and it is shown that the authority of scripture is enhanced when the correct boundary is applied. This demands that the same criteria of use and abuse must be applied to all aspects of gender and sex. As with Paul's statement in Galatians 3:28, this requires that all transgender people, transsexual lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people who attempt to live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ, and who seek to express their own identities in roles that are true to themselves; must be accepted in their own right. All sexual behaviour is governed by the purity of intention. When the influences of power and abuse are absent there is no automatic condemnation of any same-sex act of sex. There is no toleration of abusive sex.

There are a number of consequences which arise from this analysis. The first is the need to revise the understanding of early development to take account of both of the development processes that are involved, and the nature of the transition between them. The second is to make use of the traditional psychodynamic and social learning theories in ways which recognise that these are overlays on what has already been formed, instead of being complete on their own. The third is to acknowledge the distinctions between reward driven and identity driven conflicts, including the differences in the behaviour that is found. The fourth is to ensure that the correct medical diagnoses are made and that the correct management methods are provided. The fifth is to recognise the duality in gender and sexually variant behaviour, and to make society aware of its existence. The sixth is to challenge the misuse the denial of it creates through the scapegoating of all gender and sexually variant people by secular society and by the Christian Church.

This investigation began as part of a collaborative study on the development of self and tribal identities in societies where communal tribal violence occurs. It illuminates rather than rejects the psychodynamic theories of Girard, Freud and others. There is continuity in this analysis between the contagious development theories of Girard, Dawkins, Gallese and others, which are effective from birth, and the ways in which the psychodynamic theories of Girard Freud and others can be applied to later life. The results of this neurophysiological and psychological study are compared to the traditional teaching of the Christian Church and it is shown that the same moral standards should be applied to all sexual and cross-gender behaviour, irrespective of the orientations involved. It is also noted that gender dysphoria is only a specific example of a generally applicable process. Many other characteristics of personality and identity can be formed in a similar way. Studies on the later development are beyond the scope of this article; however the linkages that are here provided give reason for concluding that it is now possible to trace a continuous process of identity and personality development which extends from infancy through adult life.

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Notes for this paper are posted on: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/notes209P>