

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE

Two lives into one

- The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde 19
- The presentation of the duality 21
- That man is not truly one, but truly two 23
- Mental illnesses and psychiatric classifications:
nuances and difficulties 28
- The relevance of the above discussion
for this book 33
- Exceptional creativity linked to sickness
or to health? 39

CHAPTER TWO

The ever-intriguing genius (Talleyrand)

- Politicians: the archetypal model
of unreliable duality 45
- The man who never wanted to be priest 46
- The visionary and gifted diplomat 58
- Charm, women, and good living 61
- The shit inside the silk stocking 63

CHAPTER THREE

Spin in art (Jacques-Louis David)

- The gathering of the clouds 83
- The turbulent life of a great artist 85
- Jean-Paul Marat: a very unusual
revolutionary 104
- Artistic freedom and the deformation
of truth: art as power 106
- The personal character of the genius 108

CHAPTER FOUR

The religious and the sensual (Gianlorenzo Bernini)

- Challenge, reaction, and decline 121
- The multi-faceted genius 125
- Bernini: busts and classical motifs 127
- Spirituality and calm versus sensuality
and movement 143
- The ambiguous masterpiece 145
- The shade behind the light 149
- Postscript 155

CHAPTER FIVE

Irrepressible by authority (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)

- A mild character with strong views and
a sense of his own importance 161
- Religion and Politics 167
- In the Service of the Church 171
- Father and son 173
- Psychological flaws and how they affected
Mozart's health, general comportment,
and work 174
- Preliminary remarks* 174
- General evidence* 175
- Is all this reflected in his work?*
One specific case study 185
- Sex? Too much of it! 189
- End or punishment? Supplementary
evidence in favour of the first option 191
- Sex as a way of riling the time during periods
of great physical hardship: a postscript 196
- The composer shaping the libretto 197
- The triumph of two Mozartian themes 198

CHAPTER SIX

Fragments of a Great Confession (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

- Introduction 211
From 'Enlightenment' to 'Storm and Impulse',
Romanticism, 'Weimarian classicism', and
world literature (*Weltliteratur*). 212
A life rich in achievements 215
The life: a sketch 215
Two historical plays 227
Polarity 229
The evocative poetry 231
A masterpiece as autobiography 235
The ambiguous sexuality of the Colossus 239
Are complex characters flawed characters? 242

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Olympian you would not wish to have as a friend (Oliver Wendell Holmes)

- A subject as complex as it was great 253
A long and rich life 253
The Olympian judge 255
The forming influences 261
Social elites and backgrounds 261
War traumas and the idealization of war 264
Searching for a role 266
Wife, women, and travel 268
Will there ever be a final judgment? 270
*The virtues: a sharp mind and a
protean prose of great elegance* 270
The flaws: A world without values 272
The spin doctor 277
*The ambitious, anti-feminist, racist, indifferent
to the rights of others Nietzschean* 278
Revising the image 279

CHAPTER EIGHT

A man for all seasons (Michael Psellos)

- The Birth of Byzantium 287
Grandeur, darkness, and decline 289
Psellos' life 294
Psellos' work and influence 300
Psellos and politics 300
The Church in politics 304
Psellos and learning 307
Psellos' gifts and character 310
The Byzantine legacy to the West 314

CHAPTER NINE

The price of Art (Henry Clay Frick)

- The making of American industrial might 321
The negative sides of greed 324
The rise in wealth and power 325
Strains on the Carnegie-Frick partnership 328
The Homestead strike and its
immediate aftermath 329
Triumph and separation 333
The (private) man 336
Collecting art to display in the
Frick houses 349
The Legacy of Frick 352

CHAPTER TEN

The Force of Circumstance

- Biography and psychobiography:
who should be doing what? 361
Preliminary observations 361
Putting this approach to practice 365
What nourishes or shapes the second self? 368
Preliminary observations 368
*Powerful personalities: attitudes
and life styles* 369
Being at the centre of things 376
The impact of (unstable) times 392
The 'love deficit' 396
Does the second self show in the life
and work of the great achiever? 399

EPILOGUE

Reasons for concealing or ignoring the duality of genius?

Introductory remarks 409

Reasons for missing (important) aspects
of an (important) life 411

Bias intended to mislead 413

Predisposition and cultural predilection
as deforming factors 414

Given the volume of historical material,
how does one decide where to lay the
emphasis? 417

Family motives 419

Official propaganda in protecting an
image 420

Preserving myths; the role of professionals
in maintaining the iconic stature 423

Different rules for great achievers? 426

Categories of excellence 426

Special treatment? 428

Bibliographical details 439

Photo acknowledgments 449

Index of Names 455

About the Author 469