

RORSCHACH PATTERN IN DUODENAL ULCER.

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS study is part of an investigation into the physical and mental status of a small series of patients with duodenal ulcer undertaken at Guy's Hospital. Each patient in this series had a routine biophysical and biochemical investigation, a clinical interview and the Rorschach test. In addition, information about the patient was gained from other sources, such as his relatives and employer, and his behaviour while in hospital was kept under review. In a majority of the patients examined, phases of activity of the ulcer dyspepsia were correlated in time with crises in the patient's personal life. The Rorschach patterns from the records of these patients are presented here for comparison with those found in other disorders, and for the assessment of certain features common to this series.

In the Rorschach test, the stimulus material is relatively unstructured; the images which the patient produces in response to the test are in large measure a projection of his own mental content. The test is administered and scored, as far as possible, under standard conditions. The test result is thus an approach to an objective rating of personality, although complete objectivity, for many reasons, cannot be obtained. The chief value of the test in clinical practice lies in the capacity of the test material to evoke a certain sequence of reactions; from the configuration of these a skilled interpreter may derive a qualitative personality pattern. The value of the test is greatest when the record is taken as part of the body of clinical data, and interpreted with it. Although the aim of the test is to arrive at a qualitative assessment, some aspects of it can be expressed quantitatively; this study is confined to an appraisal of certain general features of the records and some of the quantitative relationships. For those acquainted with the Rorschach notation, a numerical summary of each record is given in the appendix.

MATERIAL.

Twenty consecutive cases of duodenal ulcer, admitted to the medical wards between November, 1947, and July, 1948. The reasons for admission to hospital were: in 14 cases, failure of the dyspepsia to respond to medical treatment; in four cases, haemorrhage from the ulcer; in two cases, associated or unrelated condition. The age range was 27-62; average 42. Half the patients were between 36 and 45.

The group in general is one of chronic duodenal ulcer ; the duration of illness ranged from three months to 20 years ; the average duration was 10 years. One patient (R.C.) presented a clinical picture different in kind from the remainder ; the condition in his case could be termed an acute ulcer.

In all cases in the series, the diagnosis of duodenal ulcer seemed to be reasonably certain.

RESULTS.

The number of women in the series is too low to allow of any assessment of sex differences. The records of the four female patients did not differ grossly from those of the males.

1. *Personality type.*

Two records with marked obsessional features were found (C. B., F. P.) and two with marked hysterical features (J. E., W. W.). The remainder showed a wide range of personality features in varying combination. No predominance of any one type was found.

2. *Anxiety.*

In five cases (C. G., H. B., R. B., L. T., A. F.), the record was abnormally short, with rejection or failure to respond to some of the cards ; as many as seven cards were rejected by one patient. This represents a failure to adapt to the test situation. In four of these cases (C. G., H. B., L. T., R. B.) the failure was an expression of marked anxiety ; in one (A. F.), besides anxiety, there was an element of contempt for the test. Three other patients rejected one card each. In the normal person, rejection of cards rarely occurs. In this series, the cards most frequently rejected were Cards VI and X. Because of its fragmented pattern, Card X is not easy to integrate into a whole response (W.), and because of its bright colours, it presents a strong emotional stimulus. Card VI, as is well known, is especially disturbing to those in conflict over sexual relationships.

In three other records, the presence of moderate or marked anxiety was shown by the shading responses (K, k) : S. J., F. R., C. C. It has to be recalled that in a group of patients of this kind, some degree of anxiety may well be due to the presence of a chronic painful illness which may threaten the patient's livelihood, as it did in these three men.

As an abnormally low productivity on the test may signify anxiety, so an abnormally high number of responses may represent a different reaction to the same internal state: compensatory over-activity as a reaction to internal unrest. An unusually high total of responses was found in two patients : C. B. (68) and F. P. (90). The latter would have given more, had he not been stopped on several cards.

3. *Emotional reactivity.*

The proportion of responses to the last three (coloured) cards gives some index of the subject's reaction to an emotional stimulus ; if this proportion is less than 30 per cent., the subject may be said to show failure to respond

adequately to emotional stimulation, either from a particular psychic orientation ("introversion") or because he fears his emotional life and cannot handle it. Ten of these twenty patients gave less than 30 per cent. of their responses to the last three cards. Only one of these (A. F.) showed a tendency to introversion, as judged by an excess of movement over colour responses; in the other nine, there seemed to be a morbid limitation of emotional reaction.

The quality of this reaction may be estimated from the type of colour response: whether the reaction is under rational control (FC), or whether the subject is liable to be swept away by emotion and think or act impulsively (CF and C). Emotional liability (CF and C greater than FC) was found in eight patients.

4. *Signs of immaturity.*

An excess of animal movement responses (FM) over human (M) may be taken to mean either a failure to mature in spite of good potential capacity, or inability to mature owing to low intellectual level. No formal intelligence test was carried out on these patients; an approximate estimate of intelligence could be made from the clinical impression and from the vocational history. With one exception (R. C.) the level of intelligence was average or above. In nine of the patients, the ratio FM : M was greater than one. In one of these (S. R.) this may perhaps be interpreted as a regression, inasmuch as the patient was a man of 62, who had sustained a cerebral vascular accident, with concomitant reduction of his mental powers. In the other eight, its significance is that of a failure to develop, especially in inner reflective capacity.

In 12 patients, the proportion of responses with a content of animal form or movement (A) was more than 40 per cent. Animal responses are more common in children and dull adults; having regard to the general intellectual level of this group, this high proportion of animal responses may be regarded as pathological—a sign of immaturity, or of narrowing of the range of mental activity ("stereotypy").

The number of responses in which human figures were seen (H) was on the whole low. In card III, where human figures are almost universally seen by normal subjects, seven of the patients did not produce a human response. The poverty of such responses can be interpreted as a sign of failure to achieve satisfactory relationships with other people.

SUMMARY.

The Rorschach records of 20 patients with duodenal ulcer are reviewed. No predominance of a single personality type was found; the most conspicuous abnormal features were anxiety, emotional liability and immaturity.

APPENDIX.

Seven of these patients were tested by one of us (A. K.): 14-20; and the other 13 by O'N.: 1-13. The system of scoring was agreed upon so as to avoid discrepancies, and to render the two sets of records comparable.

1. F. M., male, 58.

Location.		Determinants.		Main categories of content.					
W	11	F	13	Fc	2	Total T	25	H	1
VX	3	M	2	FC	3	Total R.	25	(H)	3
D	9	FM	1	CF	1	W : M	11 : 2	Hd	1
d	1	k	1	C	1	M : sum C	2 : 4	A	8
S	1	Fk	1			(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	1 : 2	Anat	5
						Popular	2	Obj	3
						Original			
						Per cent. last	3 25		
						A per cent.	32		
						Rej.			

2. H. K., male, 42.

W	8	F	23	Fc	1	Total T	25	H	4
VX	2	M	3	FC	1	Total R	36	Hd	2
D	22	FM	1	CF	1	W : M	8 : 3	A	11
d	4	m	1	C	3	M : sum C	3 : 6	Ad	3
		k	1			(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	2 : 1	Anat	3
		Fk	1			Popular	5	Obj	7
						Original		Bot	3
						Per cent. last	3 37		
						A per cent.	40		
						Rej.			

3. H. J., female, 43.

W	7	F	9	Fc	2	Total T	25	H	2
VX	3	FM	3	C'	1	Total R	24	A	11
D	12	M	1	FC	3	W : M	7 : 1	Ad	2
d	1	FK	1	CF	3	M : sum C	1 : 4½	Anat	1
S	1	FK	1			(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	3 : 3	Obj	1
						Popular	4	Bot	4
						Original	1		
						Per cent. last	3 37		
						A per cent.	54		
						Rej.	1 (VI)		

4. S. J., male, 33.

W	9	F	6	Fc	3	Total T	22	Hd	1
VX	5	M	—	C'	1	Total R	17	A	7
D	2	FM	1	CF	1	W : M	9 : 0	Ad	3
d	1	K	2	C	1	M : sum C	0 : 2½	Anat	2
		Fk	2			(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	1 : 4		
						Popular	4		
						Original			
						Per cent. last	3 18		
						A per cent.	59		
						Rej.	1 (X)		

5. C. G., male, 27.

Location.	Determinants.	Main categories of content.
W 1 F 3	Total T 13	A 2
VX 1	Total R 3	Anat 1
D 1	W : M	
	M : sum C	
	(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	
	Popular 3	
	Original	
	Per cent. last 3	
	A per cent.	
	Rej. 7. (II. III. IV. VI. VII. IX. X)	

6. R. C., male, 39.

W 2 F 21 FC 1	Total T 13	(H) 1
VX 4 M — C 2	Total R 26	Hd 1
D 15 K 1	W : M 2 : 0	A 8
d 5 k 1	M : sum C 0 : 3½	Ad 1
	(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	Anat 1
	Popular 1	Bot 4
	Original	Obj 2
	Per cent. last 3 40	
	A per cent. 35	
	Rej.	

7. C. B., male, 43.

W 3 F 51 C' 1	Total T 50	H 17
VX 3 FM 3	Total R 68	(H) 2
D 22 M 10	W : M 3 : 10	Hd 20
d 24 m 1	M : sum C 10 : 0	A 14
dd 16 k 2	(FM, m) (Fc, c, C') 4 : 1	Ad 5
	Popular 5	Obj 6
	Original	
	Per cent. last 3 50	
	A per cent. 28	
	Rej.	

8. J. B., male, 42.

W 15 F 21 Fc 4	Total T 42	H 2
VX 3 M 1 C' 1	Total R 39	Hd 1
D 17 FK 2 FC 2	W : M 15 : 1	A 9
d 2 Fk 1 CF 4	M : sum C 1 : 9½	Ad 1
S 2 C 2	(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	Obj 5
	Popular 3	
	Original	
	Per cent. last 3 25	
	A per cent. 25	
	Rej.	

9. H. B., male, 47.

Location.		Determinants.			Main categories of content.		
				Total T	21	A	7
W	1	F	5	Total R	9	Ad	1
D	8	FK	1	FC	3	Ld	1
				W : M			
				M : sum C	0 : 1½		
				(Fm, M) (Fc, c, C')			
				Popular	2		
				Original			
				Per cent. last	3 20		
				A per cent.	90		
				Rej.	5. (V. VI. VII. IX. X)		

10. L. T., female, 50.

W	1	F	8	C	1	Total T	19	H	1
D	8	M	1			Total R	11	Hd	2
d	2	k	1			W : M		A	1
						M : sum C	1 : 1½	Ad	5
						(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')		Anat	1
						Popular	1		
						Original			
						Per cent. last	3 10		
						A per cent.	55		
						Rej.	3. (VII. VIII. IX)		

11. R. B., female, 30.

D	3	F	9			Total T	35	Hd	5
d	6					Total R	9	Anat	4
						W : M			
						M : sum C			
						(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')			
						Popular			
						Original			
						Per cent. last	3 45		
						A per cent.			
						Rej.	4. (III. V. VI. X)		

12. F. P., male, 43.

W	23	F	47	Fc	7	Total T	45	H	10
'AX	7	m	1	C'	5	Total R	90*	(H)	4
D	34	FM	5	FC	7	W : M	23 : 9.	Hd	6
d	20	M	9	CF	6	M : sum C	9 : 11	A	20
S	6	FK	1	Cm	1	(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')	6 : 12	Ad	9
		Fk	1			Popular	7	Anat	2
						Original	5	Obj	22
						Per cent. last	3 30*		
						A per cent.	32		
						Rej.			

* This patient was stopped after 10 responses on several cards.

13. F. R., male, 33.

Location.	Determinants.				Main categories of content.	
W 17	F 16	Fc 2	Total T 22	H	5	
W X 4	FM 4	C' 4	Total R 46	(H)	3	
D 21	M 6	FC 6	W : M 17 : 6	A	17	
d 4	K 1		M : sum C 6 : 3	Ad	5	
	k 2		(FM, m) (Fc, c., C') 5 : 6	Map	4	
	Fk 2		Popular 6	Obj	4	
	Fm 1		Original			
	kF 1		Per cent. last 3 31			
	KF 1		A per cent. 48			
			Rej.			

14. A. C., male, 38.

W 8	F 4	Fc 1	Total T 14	H	4
W X 4	FM 4	C' 1	Total R 18	A	5
D 6	M 3	FC 1	W : M 8 : 3	Ad	1
	K 1	CF 1	M : sum C 3 : 1½	Ld	2
	Fk 2		(FM, m) (Fc, c, C') 4 : 2		
			Popular 5		
			Original 1		
			Per cent. last 3 44		
			A per cent. 36		
			Rej.		

15. C. C., male, 29.

W 8	F 11	Fc 1	Total T 7	H	1
W X 2	FM 5	CF 3	Total R 31	A	11
D 21	M 1	C 3	W : M 8 : 1	Ad	4
	K 2		M : sum C 1 : 7½	Anat	2
	FK 1		(FM, m) (Fc, c, C') 6 : 1	Cloud	2
	Fm 1		Popular 5		
	Fk 2		Original		
	KF 1		Per cent. last 3 19		
			A per cent. 48		
			Rej.		

16. J. E., Female, 37.

W 5	F 9	Fc 2	Total T 19	Hd	2
W X 2	FM 5	c 1	Total R 24	A	6
D 13	Fm 1	FC 1	W : M	Ad	3
d 3	FK 1	CF 2	M : sum C 0 : 4	Obj	4
S 1	Fk 1	C 1	(FM, m) (Fc, c, C') 6 : 3		
			Popular 5		
			Original		
			Per cent. last 3 29		
			A per cent. 38		
			Rej.		

17. W. W., male, 45.

Location.		Determinants.			Main categories of content.		
W	6	F	5	Fc 2	Total T 14	H	1
WX	3	mF	1	FC 3	Total R 25	Hd	2
D	14	Fm	1	CF 1	W : M 6 : 2	A	6
dd	1	FM	5	C 2	M : sum C 2 : 5½	Ad	2
S	1	M	2		(FM, m) (Fc, c, C') 7 : 2	Obj	2
		Fk	2		Popular 5		
		KF	1		Original		
					Per cent. last 3 15		
					A per cent. 32		
					Rej.		

18. S.R. male, 62.

W	3	F	2	CF 2	Total T 21	H	1
WX	2	Fm	1	C 1	Total R 11	A	5
D	5	FM	4		W : M 3 : 1	Obj	2
S	1	M	1		M : sum C 1 : 3½	Bot	3
					(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')		
					Popular 4		
					Original 1		
					Per cent. last 3 36		
					A per cent. 45		
					Rej.		

19. A. F., male, 39.

W	2	F	2		Total T 7	H	1
WX	2	FM	2		Total R 5	A	4
D	1	M	1		W : M 2 : 1		
					M : sum C 1 : 0		
					(FM, m) (Fc, c, C')		
					Popular 3		
					Original		
					Per cent. last 3 20		
					A per cent. 80		
					Rej. 5. (II. IV. VI. IX. X)		

20. E. C., male, 49.

W	4	F	6	Fc 2	Total T 21	(H)	2
WX	6	FM	3	CF 4	Total R 17	Hd	1
D	6	M	1		W : M 4 : 1	A	7
S	1	Fk	1		M : sum C 1 : 4	Obj	3
					(FM, m) (Fc, c, C') 3 : 2		
					Popular 6		
					Original		
					Per cent. last 3 29		
					A per cent. 41		
					Rej. 1. (VII)		

SUMMARY OF MAIN FEATURES.

Rejections.—Eight patients rejected cards; the number rejected varied from one to seven. There were no rejections of Card I; four patients rejected Card VII, and four Card IX; five rejected Card VI, and five Card X.

Responses to last three cards.—(Case F. P. excluded.) Only six patients are within the range 30–40 per cent. Ten are below this range, and three above. Considerable discrepancy is often shown between the M : sum C ratio and the proportion of responses to the last three cards; the patients are sensitive to emotional stimulation but are unable to handle their reactions to it.

Variety.—In general, fair or good.

Fc responses.—Present in 12 cases, up to four responses.

FC responses.—Present in 11 cases, up to three responses.

CF responses.—Present in 12 cases.

C responses.—Present in 10 cases.

H and Hd responses.—Two patients saw no H at all, three saw only Hd. Seven patients did not see the human figures on Card III; 13 did not see them on Card VII.