Psychoanalysis and the History of the Individual

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sophical implications of psychoanalysis and its influence on modern life and contemporary sensibility.

Following a few more general observations, in the first two lectures I deal with some aspects of man as a moral agent and of man's love life. In the third lecture I discuss certain phases of religious experience that psychoanalytic psychology so far has considered only tangentially and with misgivings.

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I

Man as Moral Agent

These lectures are dedicated to the memory of Sigmund Freud. His work as a physician exploring and treating people's troubled minds, and as an innovator in the understanding of the mind, still inspires us today: not only those of us who have chosen psychoanalysis as a profession, a domain, and a method of psychological research, and not only psychiatrists and allied professionals, but also many scholars working in the area of the humanities. I hardly need to mention the pervasive influence Freud's discoveries and ideas continue to exert on the world at large.

According to a recent Program Announcement by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the humanities include the following fields: "history, philosophy, languages, linguistics, literature, archeology, jurisprudence, history and criticism of the arts, ethics, comparative religion, and those aspects of the social sciences employing historical and philosophical approaches." The following significant comment is added:

> Because man's experience has been principally preserved through books, art works, and other cultural

objects, the humanities are often defined in terms of specific academic disciplines. However, the concerns of the humanities extend, through the classroom, the library, and the media, to encompass a host of social, ethical, and cultural questions which all human beings confront throughout the course of their lives. The humanities thus comprise the family of knowledge that deals with what it has been—and is—to be human, to make value judgments, and to select the wiser course of action. This is achieved primarily through the examination of human experience and its implications for the present and the future.[1]

It may be permissible, even desirable, in speaking to an interdisciplinary audience, occasionally to move back and forth among several languages or terminologies, with the hope that words and concepts used in different disciplines thus may gain in meaning and illuminate each other. But I am aware of the risk that by doing so the phenomena at issue may appear more complex and ambiguous than when considered only from a single perspective.

I have given an indication of the range and scope of what are called "the humanities." Psychoanalysis may be described as a method of psychological investigation and treatment of the person and of personality disorders, as a body of knowledge and theory of the mind of the individual and its development, and as a unique

1. National Endowment for the Humanities, Program Announcement, 1975-1976, pp. 1 f. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1976.

process of human interaction. Psychoanalysis is centrally concerned with "what it has been and is to be human" and with "the examination of human experience and its implications for the present and the future." Since this is true, then psychoanalysis may be seen as belonging to the family of knowledge that deals with these questions, that is, to the humanities. But Freud and many of his followers also claim that it is a natural science. And it also is, by its origin and its specialized function in society, a medical or therapeutic art.

Let us admit that psychoanalysis, for the time being, is a rather untidy discipline, still feeling its way. In part this may be attributed to its youth—eighty-odd years is a short span in the life of a new discipline. But I believe that this untidiness, as compared with the more neatly defined areas and boundaries of other disciplines, is essentially a sign of the thrust of psychoanalysis in the direction of a new—and very old—unity of knowledge to which the most original minds in the sciences and other fields aspire today: an envisioned unity within multiplicity, whereby even such traditional dichotomies as those between theory and practice, between body and mind, between the natural and the mental sciences, are newly questioned.

The psychoanalytic process—advisedly I do not make a distinction here between investigation and treatment—and psychoanalytic findings and theory, are prominently concerned with man as a moral being. We only have to think of the role played in psychoanalysis by

such problems and concepts as inner conflict, anxiety, guilt and shame, the superego, and the antagonism between the exigencies of societal and instinctual life. At the same time psychoanalysis deals prominently with man's love life; think of its emphasis on sexuality and of the central importance of transference in its various meanings and ramifications. Religious life, although viewed by Freud from a narrow and biased standpoint, has been another important subject of psychoanalytic research. These themes show how wide a net psychoanalysis casts in its search for an understanding of human nature. It would be false to claim that it is a biological science in any traditional sense of the word "biology."

It is the scope of psychoanalysis to consider human nature in the fullness of the individual's concrete existence and covering the full range of human potentialities, with special attention given—for a variety of reasons—to its historicity. The dimension of time plays an ever-increasing part in man's attempts to organize, master, and understand reality—be it the material reality of physics, chemistry, astronomy, and geology, or biological reality, or the reality of human history, its civilizations and societies, or of the individual person. This trend is connected with a deep modern interest in the nature of reality as process—in contrast to a substantive, static view—and with a pervasive tendency to understand what appears permanent and definitively structured in terms of the dynamics of becoming, that is, to reconstruct structures.

Psychoanalysis deals with man within the full range of his human potential. As to the somatic events and levels of human functioning, traditionally considered the domain of biology and physiology, psychoanalysis attempts to deal with them from a different viewpoint or within a larger context or framework—as being integrants, constituents, of the psychological organization of human beings, and as such affected by that organization.

Freud, in one of his last attempts to formulate "Some Elementary Lessons in Psychoanalysis" (written in London in 1938), repeated that psychology is a natural science (*eine Naturwissenschaft*). What else could it be? he asks.[2] The form of the question is the same as that of another question he asked when discussing the issue of moral responsibility for the content of dreams. Of course, he says, one must hold oneself responsible for one's evil dream impulses—what else would one do with them? (1925).[3] He takes for granted, in both instances, that there are no alternatives. But if the psychology that Freud created is a natural science, then we are dealing with concepts of nature and science that include man's moral nature, no less than his biological functions and processes, as topics for the scientific study of "nature." We shall see later in what sense man may be said to be responsible for his unconscious

2. *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud* (hereafter cited as S.E.). London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 23:282.

3. *S.E.*, 19:133.

impulses; but in any case the psychoanalytic concept of moral responsibility appears to be different from the traditional one which is based on the consciousness of one's acts, thoughts, and intentions.

As to science, Freud wishes to emphasize that it is both possible and necessary to observe and investigate (with the same attitude of detached objectivity and unprejudiced wonderment used in physics) those phenomena of human life that we call man's higher functions, such as his moral or spiritual life. These functions and behaviors were traditionally regarded as too exalted or profound for scientific study, even as they appear to separate man from animal life. It is this specifically unprejudiced, objective attitude that for Freud characterizes the scientific spirit and method of approach, and not experiments and measurements in themselves. This method of approach can and must be used in the study of man's moral or love life, for example, no less than in the study of physiological processes, if the particular object of psychoanalysis, the human individual, is to be studied scientifically.

For Freud psychoanalysis was a natural science, first and foremost insofar as mental life is grounded in the physiological-biological reality of the human body. Instincts, *Triebe,* he tended to see as biological forces, but he also described them as mental representatives of such forces. The ontological status of mental representatives, of course, has remained unclear.

Freud hesitated to attribute reality to the mind and

contented himself with calling the psychical a "particular form of existence" (*eine besondere Existenzform*), not to be confused with material or "factual" reality. He admitted that he did not further pursue the question of psychic reality.[4] What in his view tends to confer a reality-like character on psychic life is the undeniable fact of the power of the unconscious.

Here he also speaks of the question of responsibility. This responsibility is not tied to the idea of good and evil, to moral values, but to the fact that the power of the unconscious or id is part of myself, and neither is of divine origin nor comes from alien spirits. Nevertheless, there is something daemonic about the id, something about the dynamic unconscious that is, as in the Greek idea of *daimon,* neither attributable to the power of a personal god, nor a powerful force of the person *qua* individual or conscious being, but something in between, having an impersonal character. The dynamic unconscious, for Freud the true psychic reality, is prior to conscious mentation and transcends the conscious personality. It not only engenders the formation of conscious mentation, but also determines conscious aspects of the life course, actions, and thoughts of the adult person.

The concept of science in its modern sense seems to be complementary to the concept of nature as objectified, distanced reality. Insofar as man can stand at a distance from himself, can objectively study not only

4. *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900). *S.E.,* 5:620.

his own conscious actions and processes but the underlying unconscious processes that somehow lead to and determine conscious life—to that extent psychoanalysis can be a natural science. At the same time, the closeness of instinctual life to biological life was for Freud a powerful argument in favor of seeing psychoanalysis as a natural science, even when it came to investigate the most distant derivatives of unconscious mentation, as in ego-psychology.

From such a viewpoint, unconscious processes are comparable to the atomic and subatomic processes that underlie and compose the manifest structures and processes of the physical world, or to the biochemical and biophysical processes underlying the biological world. Indeed, the knowledge of unconscious processes and forces appears to have a simultaneously destructive and creative potential similar to that of atomic physics, or of biochemistry. On the other hand, as will become more apparent (and again comparable perhaps to problems in modern physics), increased understanding of unconscious mentation raises complex problems about the idea of objectivity itself. It is as though the idea and possibility of objective distance, of scientific objectivity, is inextricably interwoven with, or based on, conscious mental processes.

I shall now proceed to consider the problem of responsibility for one's unconscious and what I call the moral implications of psychoanalysis. My main concern is with what psychoanalysis, to my understanding, implies about man's moral nature, and not with what psychoanalysis has contributed to the understanding of the origin of moral standards, the superego, guilt, and so forth. But a clear distinction between these issues is not always possible.

Freud has provided us with two formulations that indicate, from somewhat different angles, the direction and aim of psychoanalytic treatment: to make the unconscious conscious, and, "where id was ego shall come into being." Thus, the psychoanalytic process implies a conception of man's moral nature. Promoting the individual's consciousness, fostering his ego development, means—whatever else is conveyed by the terms consciousness and ego—promoting his taking responsibility for himself. The movement from unconscious to conscious experience, from the instinctual life of the id to the reflective, purposeful life of the ego, means taking responsibility for one's own history, the history that has been lived and the history in the making. In psychoanalysis, however, the emphasis is not only or primarily on the person's past history insofar as he consciously remembers it or can be told about by his elders. Psychoanalysis prominently is concerned with unconscious history. By this I mean not only the events of childhood and later life that have been forgotten. I mean that mass of past living and experiencing, which took place without self-awareness, and often—and this is more important—without the ego's mediation. The organizing activity of the ego is not necessarily

in conscious awareness; in fact, it operates much of the time outside conscious awareness. It integrates raw experience, making it into a differentiated element of our psychic life, bringing it into a meaningful context. The idea of responsibility, in its most basic sense, then refers to that inner responsiveness to raw experience which is the hallmark of the ego and transposes raw experience onto a different plane.

Repression is a throwback to that older plane of experiencing: undesirable or unacceptable memories, thoughts, fantasies, by being excluded from ego organization, sink back to that raw form of mentation which is conceptualized as the dynamic unconscious or id.

Past history, then, is understood here not so much in the sense of past "objective" events or mental "contents," but more specifically in the sense of an earlier, archaic, form or level of mentation, an undifferentiated form of experiencing, that characterizes early developmental stages but is operative as well at chronologically later stages.

Let me emphasize again, before I go on, that my concern here is not with moral values, standards, or judgments. They of course may become the subject of analytic investigation, and the analyst's own moral standards may influence the treatment of his patients or his understanding of psychoanalytic psychology. But this is not the issue here. I am not speaking of specific moral or moralistic preoccupations and attitudes of patient or analyst, but of the fact that the

dynamic unconscious or id is defined as capable of (or tending toward) a development in which unconscious forms of mentation may become integrated into a higher mental organization, or organized within a hierarchy of differentiated levels of mentation. This condition of higher organization is conceptualized as ego. The development in its direction is seen as being facilitated, perhaps even as originally brought about, by promoting conscious reflection.

A few very condensed remarks on conscious reflection: in a certain sense the expression is redundant. "Conscious" means being in a self-reflecting and self-reflected state. Reflection is a *con-scire,* a knowing-together. It represents the internalization of an interplay originally occurring between the infant and his or her primary caretaker, mostly the mother, and then recurring in many other relationships. Psychoanalysts have spoken of the mother, in the primordial infant–mother psychic unit, as a living mirror in which the infant gradually begins to recognize, to know himself, by being recognized by the mother. This recognition has much more than so-called cognitive connotations. It is mediated to the infant and growing child by a great variety of maternal activities and interactions with the child's bodily and instinctual life. Her knowing and understanding the child, as well as the imperfections and deficiencies of her understanding, are embedded in these interactions. This primal reflection and recognition brings about a *conscire* within the infant–mother

psychic matrix and gradually becomes a crucial constituent, a potential of the individuating child's experiencing or mentation. Further complex developments, in continuous interaction with the caring persons, lead to that articulate and explicit conscire manifested in language and eventually to conscience. The phenomenon of conscience is a more fully developed and specialized resultant and function of what I call the morality of mental development. The *con* in *conscire*—the root verb for the words conscious and conscience —expresses the belonging-together of, and internal encounter between, "raw" experience and its reflecting recognition by the other in oneself. The "other" in oneself appears in psychoanalytic theory in such terms as observing ego and superego. But this internal other is only the end product of a complex differentiating—from another viewpoint, self-alienating—process that takes its start in the primary unity of the infant-mother psychic matrix. This development constitutes the individuation of the individual.

One further element in this process has to be made explicit: the recognizing-caring activities of the primary caretakers crucially contribute to the development of the child's psychic life by the fact of their being ahead of his present stage of organization. Parental caring, knowing, understanding, embedded in their interactions with the child, take place in the context and perspective of the child's overall requirements and future course of development, as perceived and misperceived by the

parents. Thus, parental recognizing care reflects more, as it were, to the child than what he presents; it mediates higher organization. This generation difference or gradient is essential. Similarly, the developing, internal conscire represents something other than an internal reflection of experience in the sense of mere "reduplication."

The id or dynamic unconscious, I have said, is the past history of the individual in the sense of being a mode of experience or mentation that is older than those forms of mental processes we are familiar with from conscious, rational life. We discern these primordial forms in early childhood, in the mental life of primitive peoples, in psychotics. We find signs and elements of it in dreams, in neurotic symptomatology, as well as in what we call the normal mental life of our waking state.

This "archaic" mode of mentation, however, is also a newly rediscovered and appreciated mode that is asserting its own validity and power in our culture. The discoveries, the thrust of psychoanalysis—almost against the conscious intentions of its creator—have contributed an important share to the new valuation of the irrational unconscious. In modern art, literature, and philosophy; in the mood, aspirations, conduct of life of the younger generation, we see a fresh flowering of that more ancient, more deeply rooted mode of human experience which perhaps is leading toward a less rigid, less frozen, and more humane rationality. Freud called the dynamic unconscious indestructible

in comparison with the ephemeral and fragile, but infinitely precious, formations of consciousness. Where id was, there ego shall come into being. Too easily and too often ego is equated with rigid, unmodulated, and unyielding rationality. So today we are moved to add: where ego is, there id shall come into being again to renew the life of the ego and of reason.

Psychoanalytic theory distinguishes between the dynamic unconscious and preconscious mentation and demarcates the latter from conscious mentation in the strict sense, which involves conscious awareness. When I spoke of conscire, I had in mind, not conscious awareness, but the preconscious form of mentation. It is a conscire in its inner organization; but this form of mental process often is not in conscious awareness; and it is not necessarily consciously perceived. Since the term, *pre*conscious, stresses closeness or accessibility to conscious awareness, and since I believe that this is not the essential characteristic of the mental processes so designated, I prefer to speak of *conscient* processes. The term conscient intends to point out the structure of con-scire of this form of mental process. Conscient (preconscious) mentation loses the uniform single-mindedness of unconscious processes while gaining the new dimension of inner responsiveness involving a differentiation or dichotomy of a unitary mental activity. Such differentiation, which introduces duality and multiplicity into unity—and which may disrupt rather than articulate it—has its origin in, and is brought

forth by, the caring environment's active mirroring. This mirroring, I said, reflects more than what the infant presents. It contains the mother's acts of organizing the infant's activities and experiences within an envisioned temporal-spatial totality of his being—the prototype of what is called his ego as a coherent organization. To the extent to which the infant's unitary (I am tempted to say, headlong) acts become integrated within such a totality, an internal mirroring comes into being. The totality or coherent organization is to begin with merely in the mother's foreseeing eye, as a kind of unperceived plan. And so the infant's uniform mental acts thus acquire differentiation.

Unconscious mentation lacks this differentiation. The *un-* in "unconscious" points out this privation. But it is a privation only in reference to conscient mentation. If uniform mentation is considered in its own right, the term "id" is more fitting, since it does not make reference to a conscire. Nevertheless, this uniform activity, although not a con-scire, is a *scire,* a form of knowing or "minding." When Freud included unconscious processes in the category of mental or psychic processes he made a decision. For a time he vacillated: should he treat them as biological or as psychological phenomena? Whatever their status, these processes *had* to be presumed. Only by postulating them could a number of mental and psychopathological phenomena be understood. Thus, Freud did not doubt the existence of such underlying processes. What was in doubt during his

early work (and this echoes throughout his theorizing) was their status in the hierarchy of scientific study. In declaring them to be *psychic* processes, he took the step of investigating them from the standpoint of man's full mental life, from the perspective of man as a moral being, and not from the reductive perspective of modern natural science. But he never was wholly comfortable with his decision.

Early on, Freud equated the unconscious and the repressed, since his hypnotic and analytic studies showed that unconscious fantasies and memories at one time had been conscious. But at that time he did not yet distinguish between the dynamic unconscious and preconscious mentation, but only between mental processes in—and out of—awareness. It is significant that in the very beginning he felt that an unequivocally moral force, an effort of will on the part of the patient, was responsible for initiating repression. Later on, the dynamic unconscious was identified as a realm of mentality that developmentally precedes conscient (preconscious) and conscious mentation and forever remains the active, enduring origin and source for those more developed processes. What is repressed is drawn back into the archaic sphere of mentation, from whence it stems. This is an amoral realm, capable of being personalized.

Let me once more come back to the phrase: *Wo Es war, soll Ich werden;* where id was, there ego shall come into being. *Werden* is: to become, to come into being. *Soll* and "shall" indicate the setting of a task. If ego and

conscient life mean higher mental organization, in the sense of evolving, then id would be ego *in statu nascendi.* The coming into being of higher organization, of a more complex, richer mentality, seen as the realization of a potentiality represented by the id, seems ordained, as it were, by the laws of evolution. Man is understood in psychoanalysis as tending toward higher organization, further development of his unconscious life forces. He tends to become a person. The development of a more conscious life involves a continuous appropriation of the unconscious levels of functioning, an owning up to them as potentially *me,* ego. This appropriation, this owning up, integrating the id into one's life context as an individual self, is then a developmental task or, in a different framework, an existential task. I believe that Heidegger's concepts of *Geworfenheit*—man is thrown into the world, unplanned and unintended by himself—and *Entwerfen*—the taking over and actively developing the potentialities of this fact—have grown in the same soil.[5]

5. The above is a vast oversimplification of Heidegger's extensive exposition of these concepts. His level of discourse and the intent of his quest for a philosophical elucidation of human existence (*Dasein*) are quite different from those of psychoanalysis as a psychological discipline. The factuality (*Geworfenheit*) of human existence in Heidegger's sense has a different dimension than the psychoanalytic id, and Heidegger does not concern himself with the differentiation of unconscious and conscious mentation. My comparison merely refers to the idea, which both authors have in common, epitomized in the dictum: Become what you are. Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit.* Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1927, pp. 134 ff., 145 f.

To appropriate, to own up to, one's own history is the task of psychoanalysis as a therapeutic endeavor. As such it constitutes a resumption of psychic development, a resumption of developmental tasks. An important aspect of this process is remembering the past. But much more is involved than recollection of past experiences and events, although such recollections usually form significant stepping stones toward this remembering.

Freud distinguished between remembering and repeating the past, only to claim immediately that repeating the past is a form of remembering; it is an unconscious form of remembering.[6] Repeating, in the sense of re-enacting past experiences in the present, is remembering by action and affect rather than in thought. For instance, childhood experiences with one's father are re-enacted with a "father-figure" in adult life; they are remembered in the form of similar or identical behavior with the father-figure, but there is no recollection in thought. A recollection in thought, capable of being expressed in words, amounts to a restructuring of a childhood memory on a higher level of mentation. We may say that the unconscious memory, as such merely expressed in action, has been lifted from that unconscious status into the status of consciousness—in the psychoanalytic situation by the analyst's interpretation. His interpretation—to the effect that the patient's

6. "Remembering, Repeating and Working Through" (1914). *S.E.*, 12:147-56.

behavior must represent the repetition of a childhood experience—brings the unconscious memory, reproduced in the here-and-now, into the context and on to the level of conscious thought. Under favorable circumstances, it enables the patient to connect or reconnect the two levels of mentation, to make the restructuring of the experience his own. We note that the analyst's interpretation is a form of active mirroring, reflecting back to the patient his behavior in a different light, in terms of higher, more comprehensive and more articulate mental organization—analogous to the parental mirroring function in infancy and childhood. Roughly speaking, the patient now may experience his interaction with the analyst/father-figure on two levels and may grasp that the dominance of the regressive level of mentation compelled him to re-enact experience as if he were back in the past.

To own up to our own history, to be responsible for our unconscious, in an important sense means, to bring unconscious forms of experiencing into the context and onto the level of the more mature, more lucid life of the adult mind. Our drives, our basic needs, in such transformation, are not relinquished, nor are traumatic and distorting childhood experiences made conscious in order to be deplored and undone—even if that were possible. They are part of the stuff our lives are made of. What is possible is to engage in the task of actively reorganizing, reworking, creatively transforming those early experiences which, painful as many of them have

been, first gave meaning to our lives. The more we know what it is that we are working with, the better we are able to weave our history which, when all is said and done, is re-creating, in ever-changing modes and transformations, our childhood. To be an adult means that; it does not mean leaving the child in us behind.

There is no one-way street from id to ego. Not only do irrational forces overtake us again and again; in trying to lose them we would be lost. The id, the unconscious modes and contents of human experience, should remain available. If they are in danger of being unavailable—no matter what state of perfection our "intellect" may have reached—or if there is danger of no longer responding to them, it is our task as historical beings to resume our history making by finding a way back to them so that they may be transformed, and away from a frozen ego. This, I think, is the original and enduring quest of psychoanalysis, and its importance in modern history.

We modern Westerners are transfixed by the idea of development as progression in a straight line, as "progress." What is not progress is seen as stagnation, or worse, regression. In psychoanalysis the term "regression in the service of the ego"[7] had to be invented, in an attempt to do justice to the insight that ego development does not proceed in a straight line, does not consist in a movement further and further away from id. Time, in human (not physical) terms, is not an arrow, is not to be measured point by point. One might come closer to human time by saying that it consists in an interpenetration and reciprocal relatedness of past, present, and future. The history of the individual, not construed as the progression of external or intrapsychic events during his life, is constituted by this more-or-less actualized interpenetration and mutual determination of the three temporal modes, as it unfolds during the course of a life.

7. E. Kris, "The Psychology of Caricature." In *Psychoanalytic Explorations in Art*. New York: International Universities Press, 1952, p. 177.

Pictured in physical, space-motion terms (more adequately than by a straight line) individual development could be described as an ascending spiral in which the same basic themes are re-experienced and enacted on different levels of mentation and action. Sublimation might best be understood in the light of such an image.

It will be objected that the superego should not be absent from a psychoanalyst's discussion of moral issues. So far I have not been explicit. If id and ego represent, respectively, psychic past and present, the superego might be seen as the representative of futurity. The superego is conceptualized as the inner agency of standards, demands, ideals, hopes, reproaches, and punishments. We become aware of it as the voice of conscience, and in relation to it we may experience guilt, shame, pride, or self-approval. It represents the care and concern we have for ourselves, in past and present, as continuing on into a future that is to be shaped. The

been, first gave meaning to our lives. The more we know what it is that we are working with, the better we are able to weave our history which, when all is said and done, is re-creating, in ever-changing modes and transformations, our childhood. To be an adult means that; it does not mean leaving the child in us behind.

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superego has been characterized as a differentiating grade in the ego (*eine Stufe im Ich*).[8] In terms of psychic time, this is the differentiation between inner present and inner future in the course of mental development. It is the growing recognition of a differential between who I am, what I do at present, and who I may or should be, what I may, should or should not do in the future—as hoped for, desired, demanded, by myself. The foundation for this differentiating grade is laid in those early times, when the mother, as a living mirror, reflected "more" to the child than he presented, when she, in her responsive activities, was cognizant of his potential for future growth and development and mediated it to the infant.

The superego, as a differentiating grade or phase in the ego, is brought about by the internalization of the parents' acts of envisioning future development and exemplifying it. At the same time, Freud stressed the intimate relations of the superego to the id. I wish to point out only one aspect of this relationship that has bearing on my main theme. Freud alluded to it in a posthumous, unfinished book, "An Outline of Psychoanalysis" (1938).[9] In speaking of the relations between superego and id he quotes a line from Goethe's *Faust:* "What thou hast inherited from thy fathers, acquire it to make it thine." The past comprises the inherited,

8. S. Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921). *S.E.*, 18:129.

9. *S.E.*, 23:207.

innate potential of our genes, the historical, cultural, moral tradition transmitted to us by our elders, and finally that primordial form of mentation, called unconscious or id, and the "contents" of our lives that are experienced in this primordial form at the earliest level. This past is to be acquired, appropriated, made ours, in the creative development of the future.

To the extent to which the individual remains entangled in his unappropriated id or disowns it, as in repression—and most of us do to a considerable extent—he is driven by unmastered unconscious forces within himself. He is free to develop, to engender his future, to the extent to which he remains or becomes open to his id and can personalize, again and again and on various levels, his unconscious powers. For Freud these unconscious powers are the true psychic reality. This apersonal ground of our existence, he claims, we are called upon to make human, to make, each in his own way, into a person.

Freud's last instinct theory postulates Eros and Thanatos, the love or life instinct and the destructive or death instinct, as those apersonal—and that also means, amoral—forces. They become more or less personalized in the conduct of a human life. Freud was not a religious man and certainly not a mystic. But one does not have to be a mystic to remain open to the mysteries of life and human individuality, to the enigmas that remain beyond all the elucidations of scientific explanation and interpretation. The life and death

instinct theory was Freud's way of naming the creative-destructive powers that shape, and are shaped by, becoming a person.

Let me close with a quotation from Samuel Butler, another scientific spirit preoccupied with the unconscious, pertaining to science:

> If it tends to thicken the crust of ice on which, as it were, we are skating, it is all right. If it tries to find, or professes to have found, the solid ground at the bottom of the water, it is all wrong. Our [that is, the scientist's] business is with the thickening of this crust by extending our knowledge downward from above, as ice gets thicker while the frost lasts; we should not try to freeze upwards from the bottom.[10]

10. *The Note-Books of Samuel Butler,* selections arranged and edited by Henry Festing Jones. New York: Dutton, 1917, p. 329.

II

Transference and Love