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# The psychological nature of conscience in Freudian theory

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GRADUATE SCHOOL

Dissertation

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURE  
OF CONSCIENCE  
IN FREUDIAN THEORY

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1. The Problem of the Dissertation

The problem of this dissertation is to investigate the psychological nature of the conscience in Freudian theory and evaluate it in the light of certain neo-Freudian and non-Freudian findings.

Special attention will be given to the original work of Sigmund Freud and particular emphasis placed on his concept of the super-ego. Freud's concept of the super-ego and its importance in the development of personality will be examined. Later modifications and contributions to the Freudian concept of the super-ego will be cited.

The importance of the subject of conscience is recognized by all concerned with human behavior. The failure of our civilization to solve many of its greatest problems in the realm of human behavior while its technological advances go steadily on, points to the need for re-examination of the factor of moral control, the function by which man makes choices commensurate with his own best interest and that of the society in which he lives. While there have been many attempts to define and explain the nature and function of conscience from the philosophical and religious point of view, serious study of the psychological nature of the conscience received its major impetus from Freud as he proposed

his division of the mind into id, ego and super-ego. Not only did Freud come to view the function of super-ego as crucial in understanding behavior in general and personality growth in particular, but Freudians and others who have come later have also pointed to the importance of understanding the psychological nature of conscience or super-ego as it relates to the total response of a person to his environment.

## 2. Limitations

No attempt will be made in this study to discuss the varied and meaningful approaches to the concept of conscience as they appear in ethical, philosophical or religious writings. The primary emphasis in this study will be to understand the Freudian concept of the conscience and subject it to rigorous criticism using certain later psychological findings as the basis for such criticism. Major attention will be given to psychological theory in order to explore more thoroughly Freud's theory of the super-ego. Much is known of Freud's clinical approach but relatively less is known of his theoretical concepts, especially in regard to the nature of the super-ego.

Freud's concept has been chosen by this writer for special investigation because of several reasons. His formulation differs sharply with many of the traditional views of conscience. His view of this agent of the mind as being essentially harsh, forbidding and primarily destructive is radically different than the majority of philosophical and religious views which hold that conscience is a good, desirable controlling factor in human behavior. While some of the evidence on which Freud erected his

theories of the super-ego is now in doubt, such as the instinct theory, the universality of the Oedipus complex, and the anthropological data regarding primitive society, many of his conclusions have been valuable to those coming after him as they have modified and altered his original concept.

### 3. Previous Ideas About Conscience

Before reviewing the historic pronouncements of Freud regarding the nature and function of the super-ego it will be necessary to note some of the ideas about conscience which are evident in philosophical, theological and psychological thought. Although a complete and intensive study of the historical development of the idea of conscience is not the aim of this dissertation, several trends which were evident prior to Freud's investigations should be noted.

#### i. The Philosophical Heritage

One of the major trends noted in the writings of most philosophers is the tendency to take seriously the problem of conscience. James H. Breasted<sup>1</sup> traces the dawn of conscience to the valley of the Nile, indicating that as early as 3000 B.C. Egyptian writings record man's recognition of something which either approves or disapproves his action. While this tendency to approve or disapprove was noted in primitive man no clear formulation of the concept of conscience was noted until the writings of Socrates.

1. J. H. Breasted, The Dawn of Conscience (New York: Charles Scribner's Son's, 1930).

In The Apology Socrates expresses his belief that he should live a life completely dominated by reason. Only by the use of reason can he feel that he can assume full responsibility for his actions. Socrates feels that he is guided in his rational pursuits by a "familiar oracle"<sup>1</sup> which indicates to him any fallacy in his reasoning. As he speaks in The Apology concerning the accusations of his enemies, one of his points of defense is that he has not been condemned by the "familiar oracle." He states

Hitherto the familiar oracle within me has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error about anything; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought... the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition... This is a great proof to me of what I am saying, for the customary sign would surely have opposed me had I been going to evil and not to good."<sup>2</sup>

This first formal statement about the nature of conscience is thus described by Socrates as the "familiar oracle." This description is confined to his own experience and no attempt is made to generalize, attributing the quality to all men.

Many of the philosophers after Socrates have had something to say about conscience. The majority are influenced by the tendency to view the nature of man as a duality. Conscience is usually identified with a specific part of man's personality. This tendency is noted to a

1. Plato, The Apology of Socrates, Benjamin Jowett, tr. The Harvard Classics series, Charles W. Elliott, ed., 50 vols. (New York: P. F. Collier and Sons, 1909), II, p. 22.
2. Ibid., II, p. 27.

greater or lesser degree in the works of Plato, Immanuel Kant and Arthur Schopenhauer.

Plato, along with giving a defense of the ancient belief that soul and body are fundamentally different, also alluded to a faculty concept of conscience. His theory of the soul precedes later faculty concepts of the mind and its eventual division into three parts in the Freudian theory of id, ego and super-ego. In the Phaedrus, Plato compares the soul to a team of horses, where Reason, as driver, holds together the two horses, Courage and Appetite. Plato in his description of the soul and its parts or faculties also talks of three elements which correspond roughly to cognition, emotion and feeling, their value being in the order mentioned. Such a division of the mind bears a close parallel to the division later suggested by Freud.

In contrast, it must be acknowledged that Aristotle<sup>1</sup> differed sharply with Plato, insisting that the soul is not divided into separate faculties or parts. In every organism it is a unit. While distinguishing various manifestations of the soul such as the nutritive, sensitive and rational, Aristotle claims that in any action it is the complete soul which functions. It is this claim for the unitary function of soul that will be later suggested as the primary role of conscience in personality. Aristotle appears to have set the stage for the holistic view of man which will be presented as this dissertation develops.

Immanuel Kant speaks of "the moral law within."<sup>2</sup> He contends that

1. Aristotle, De anima.

2. I. Kant, Preface to the Metaphysics of Morals, Section 12.

this moral law originates a priori in the reason and becomes imperative for men as reason determines the will. In his Preface to the Metaphysics of Morals<sup>1</sup> Kant applies this idea to conscience. Although he does not equate conscience and moral law he closely relates the two. He states that conscience is not a thing to be acquired, but that every person, because he is a moral being, has it originally within him. Although one may pay no attention to his conscience, he cannot avoid hearing it. It speaks "involuntarily and inevitably" concerning a person's actions.

While Kant closely associates conscience with reason, Schopenhauer reverses the emphasis and gives the predominant place in the structure of reality to will. In his leading work, The World as Will and Idea, he states that the world is basically will and that phenomenal life is only a mirror of will.<sup>2</sup> Will alone gives a person the meaning to his own existence. Conscience to Schopenhauer means the fleeting glimpse by a person that his essential nature (will) is somehow identified with the essential nature of other people. True virtue proceeds from "that intuitive knowledge which recognizes in the individuality of others the same nature as in our own."<sup>3</sup>

Some philosophers came to realize that the faculty concept of conscience was not adequate. Two outstanding writers critical of the faculty concept of conscience were Joseph Butler and F. D. Maurice. Butler attempted to find a unity for human nature in Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel, especially in the first three chapters. He agrees with Plato and others that various faculties exist within man such as reason,

1. I. Kant, Preface to the Metaphysics of Morals, Section XII.

2. A. Schopenhauer, The World as Will and Idea, Book IV, Paragraph 54.

3. Ibid., Paragraph 18.

passion and affection. He takes issue with faculty concepts however, in suggesting that one faculty can be supreme, providing a matrix around which the others may be organized. For Butler, the unity of human nature is found in the nature of conscience, for conscience becomes the supreme faculty, providing unity to the whole of human nature.

Maurice, while sympathizing with Butler's effort to describe the unified nature of man, is critical of his attempt to make one faculty supreme. Maurice argues that the difficulty is found in the insistence that the "I" and the "ought" are not connected. He contends that what a person ought to do is determined by his answer to the question: "Who am I?" Thus, Maurice<sup>1</sup> contends that the whole self involved in ethical and moral decisions may be called the conscience. This view, as we shall see later, is now supported by critics of the faculty concept of conscience and has been carefully explored psychologically as well as philosophically.

While no attempt has been made to note all the philosophical contributions to the study of conscience the faculty tendency in much philosophical thought has been noted in an attempt to set the stage for a summary of the psychological heritage.

## ii. The Theological Heritage

Before doing so however, a brief statement regarding the theological approach to conscience is needed. At this point no attempt will be made to discuss the many and diverse theological concepts of conscience.

Primary attention will be given to the concept of Augustine in that his thought has largely conditioned the main stream of theological think-

1. F. D. Maurice, The Conscience: Lectures on Casuistry (London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Company, 1868), p. 35-36.

ing that has come after him. The separation of personality into various faculties made a profound impression on Augustine, the formulator of much classic Roman Catholic theology. He developed a concept of the body-soul antithesis and the faculty explanation of the various functions of personality, concepts with which modern thinkers still struggle. In the tenth book of The Confessions is found Augustine's description of the dual nature of man. He is, according to Augustine "soul and body, one without, the other within."<sup>1</sup> The outer man is inferior and cannot discover God. The inner man is superior and can know God as He in grace and mercy shows Himself to the inner man. Augustine further argues that God resides in the memory of man and directs him through the power of recollection. On the basis of this recall he is able to "infer future actions, events and hopes."<sup>2</sup> There is implied then, some function of judgment or choice within the personality. This function Augustine suggests is given by God, it depends not on the efforts or experience of man, it is able to function because of God's grace alone, and rather than unifying man's soul and body, it stands in opposition to the outer man attempting further to isolate the mind from the body.

In passing, it is interesting to note that Freud, arguing from the psychological basis many years later shows a striking parallel to Augustine's reasoning but reverses the terms. Freud conceives the super-ego as against the instincts introjected or learned from authorities, whereas Augustine sees the function of conscience as being concerned with the

1. Augustine, The Confessions of St. Augustine, Book X, Paragraph 9.

2. Ibid.

biological side of man, dealing with repression of instinctual desire particularly of a sexual nature.

Two modern theologians who take exception to the segmented view of conscience are Paul Tillich<sup>1</sup> and Emil Brunner.<sup>2</sup> Both argue that it is neither the mind or the soul but the psycho-physical whole, the person 'man' whom God has created on his own image. These two men affirm that conscience involves the whole person in the making of choices and that the decisions made depend greatly on the self-image the person has. This image is not given nor does it exist a priori but depends on a person's experience and growth.

In summary, it has been shown that the faculty concept pervaded much philosophical and theological thinking about the nature and function of conscience. Today this concept is thought of as the segmented view and stands in sharp contrast to the holistic view of man's nature. For centuries conscience has been conceived in terms of a separate faculty response of perception, will and feeling involving the whole self in decisions of all types. In common, both theological and philosophical writings noted above have assumed that conscience is not dependent on experience, that it exists prior to awareness on the part of the individual, that human effort has little to do with its dictates.

While such philosophical thinkers as Maurice and Butler attempted to look at the psychological nature of conscience it remained for Freud to

1. P. Tillich, Systematic Theology, 2 vols. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947), I, pp. 168-170.
2. E. Brunner, Man in Revolt: A Christian Anthropology (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1947), p. 216.

undertake the first major investigation of the nature and function of conscience from a psychological analysis. The psychoanalytic concept of the super-ego has formed the foundation for the bulk of research and writing carried on from the psychological point of view since the turn of the century. In psychoanalytic literature conscience is discussed as super-ego. Freud describes the super-ego as a segment of the personality which develops in terms of the need for prohibition and inhibition. It develops as a specialization of the function of the self as the self attempts to adjust to the surrounding world. In his initial concept of the super-ego<sup>1</sup> Freud refers to it as the "highest mental evolution attainable by man."<sup>2</sup>

Beginning with his assumption about the fixed and unchanging life and death instincts, Freud devoted much of his writing about the super-ego to a description of its harsh and destructive aspects. He reluctantly came to the conclusion that the super-ego was often in league with the id and against the ego. One of the chief goals of the therapist, according to Freud, was to set about reducing the strength of the super-ego, thereby enabling id forces to find thru the ego more adequate and appropriate gratification. Seeing the super-ego primarily as an unconscious and permanent influence of early authorities, Freud further concluded that the super-ego tends to accent the severity and restrictiveness of the parents far more than their love and kindness.

1. S. Freud, The Ego and the Id, Joan Riviere, tr. (London: Hogarth Press, 1927), p. 30.
2. A. A. Brill, tr., The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud (New York: The Modern Library, 1938), p.12.

J. C. Flugel in Man, Morals and Society attempts to apply the findings of psychoanalysis to ethical theory.<sup>1</sup> Accepting Freud's faculty explanation of conscience Flugel discusses the sources and inconsistencies of conscience differing only slightly from Freud. Whereas Freud assumed the ideal self-image was always distorted and unrealistic Flugel acknowledges that given certain favorable environmental circumstances the conscious aspects of the self-image may well be realistic and worthy of serious attention.

Not only have psychoanalytic writers tended toward a faculty concept of conscience, but many have taken a negative attitude toward it. The trend is toward depreciating the value of conscience. This attitude is reflected in the work of Edmund Bergler. He describes his view of the dual nature of conscience in The Battle of Conscience. Conscience, he says, is not only dual because it is both conscious and unconscious, but also because it is both benevolent and malevolent. He describes the end process of conscience as follows

The result is that inside every human being an internal torture chamber is installed... out of inescapable necessity the child creates in himself his worst enemy. The battle of conscience starts in the cradle, and ends in the grave.<sup>2</sup>

In summary, it might be said that psychoanalysis tends to emphasize the unconscious, irrational and negative aspects of conscience. Uncon-

1. J. F. Flugel, Man, Morals and Society: A Psychoanalytic Study (New York: International Universities Press, 1947).
2. E. Bergler, The Battle of Conscience: A Psychiatric Study of the Inner Working of the Conscience (Washington Institute of Medicine, 1948), p. 7.

scious, repressed material has been identified with the immoral or instinctual desires, particularly those of a sexual or aggressive nature. Furthermore, conscience has been reified in psychoanalysis. It is made "the conscience", a thing within the personality. In general it is described as a mechanically functioning process.

More recent psychological research has moved away from this reductionist approach of psychoanalysis. In contrast to the highly individualistic and segmented approach of psychoanalysis is the field approach of many writers currently involved in psychological investigation of the nature and function of conscience. This approach is based on the Gestalt insight that the whole is more than the sum total of its elements.

The self is described in terms of the total psychological environment. Many of these writers argue that feelings of conscience arise from the total self. Conscience develops because there is "a self observed with whatever degree of realism one can muster, and a self clearly or dimly glimpsed as something to be realized."<sup>1</sup> The strength of conscience thus is based on the degree to which a person aspires to be the self to be realized.

Neo-Freudian writers like Fromm and Horney argue that there is a vast difference between the childish self-image which is often perpetuated into adulthood and an ideal self-image having its roots in the growing experience of the individual. Non-Freudians such as Allport and Mowrer contend that conscience is not an agent of repression but of affirmation. They

1. G. Murphy, Personality: A Biosocial Approach to Origins and Structure (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1947), p. 539.

see conscience as the source not merely of parental prohibitions carried over from childhood, but of moral and ethical standards which need to be integrative activity rather than a particular faculty of the personality. Since conscience is a functional quality of the self, it develops as the self develops. A limited self concept implies a limited conscience. It is only in the limited conscience where experiences requiring change or producing pain have been dissociated or repressed that we find negative qualities predominant. In the growing self conscience is seen as an affirmative, ethical and moral function leading not to repression but to fulfillment.

#### 4. The Need For The Study

The need for a dissertation on the psychological nature of conscience in Freudian theory is intensified because of the recent renewal of interest on the part of neo-Freudian and non-Freudian writers in this concept. To evaluate properly their studies and conclusions a clear understanding is needed of the Freudian theory upon which the major part of recent investigation has been built. The powerful influences of Platonic dualism and faculty soul concepts which have led to the understanding of conscience as a segment of personality have been noted. The works of Kant and Schopenhauer have been mentioned to illustrate the effect of Platonic thought on philosophy. In the field of theology the dualistic, faculty approach to personality was directly incorporated in the thought of Augustine. The body-soul antithesis remains a basic postulate in

much theology at the present moment. In the area of psychology Freud accepted the faculty orientation of Plato almost in toto, probably without recognizing it. In fact, the step from the feeling, conation and cognition of Plato to the id, the ego, and the super-ego is indeed a short one.

### 5. The Methodology of the Dissertation

As this study proceeds an attempt will be made to trace Freud's early concept of the function of censorship (1900) to the developed idea of the super-ego. Later analytical modifications of the super-ego will be noted. The Freudian concept will then be evaluated in the light of neo-Freudian and non-Freudian criticism. Finally it will be the contention of this dissertation that in Freudian theory we find a description of the immature conscience, essentially authoritarian and repressive. In contrast it will be argued that creative conscience while influenced somewhat by early parental admonitions, derives its sentiments from self-chosen goals, from a continuously productive relationship between the individual and his environment. The creative conscience will be conceived not as a separate entity existing parallel to the self, but as integral with the self. Conscience will thus be seen as the function of the total self as it moves toward or away from that which is conceived as valuable to the person in his complex relationship. Conscience will be defined as a functional dynamic quality rather than a constitutional

part of the self as conceived by Freud and his followers.

## CHAPTER II

### DEVELOPMENT OF SUPER-EGO IN FREUDIAN THEORY

#### 1. Freud Proposed Three Divisions of the Mind

It will be the purpose of this chapter to trace the development of the Freudian concept of the super-ego. In order to do this we must begin not with the forces of the ego or super-ego but with the forces of the unconscious. It was in the 1890's that Freud first became conscious of powerful forces at work in the human personality that were largely inaccessible to the mind, hence unconscious. In one of his earliest books The Interpretation of Dreams<sup>1</sup> he develops the idea of the unconscious and lays the foundation for the later conceptualization of personality which today forms the bases for Freudian theory of personality and the techniques utilized in analytic therapy.

In The Ego and the Id published in 1921, Freud postulated his classical method for generalizing all psychological phenomena, whether conscious or unconscious. Psychological data could be described in terms of three systems which together comprise the total personality. These he named the Id, the Ego, and the Super-Ego.

##### i. The Id

The word id Freud borrowed from George Groddeck who suggested in

1. Consult Bibliography for further information.

one of his essays that we are 'lived' by unknown and uncontrollable forces. The id (literally the it) is a term which aptly describes the impersonal, non-human, non-conscious nature of instinctive energy in its original aspects. The libido which represents the sum total of sexual energy motivating the individual toward finding pleasurable satisfaction remains an "It" in the id. Id impulses are originally independent of one another. For example, in primitive form aggression is the wish to kill or destroy. In the id this impulse is not fused with libidinal components which alone could turn simple aggression (the wish to kill) into creative and productive acts which are often the observable resultant acts of primitive id impulses after they have been censored and modified by the ego. Another chief characteristic of the id is its subordination to the pleasure principle; id impulses demand immediate gratification and attempt to move toward such a goal irrespective of reality problems or external demands. Hence the reference to id impulses as irrational, unorganized and amoral.

#### ii. The Ego

For Freud, the ego was that part of the id which had been modified by its nearness to the external world and the influence that the external world had on it. The ego takes over the task of representing the external world for the id. Without such representation the id, in effort to find gratification for its instinctual needs, would undoubtedly meet disaster from the superior forces of the outside world. The pleasure principle which is enthroned in the id is modified by the reality principle of the ego. The ego is given the difficult job of controlling the instincts.

It is easy to see from this definition that the goal of analytic therapy was to strengthen the ego function so that it could ward off the restrictive demands of the super-ego and allow the id to find suitable and acceptable outlets by which instinctual gratification could be achieved. In his thought, Freud progressed from his concept of the unconscious, one of his lasting and fundamental contributions to psychology, to what he termed "ego psychology." It was in his investigation of this agency of the mind called ego, the function which is mostly conscious and interprets and coordinates the impressions from the outer world and from our own bodies, that he arrived at the third system which he called super-ego.

### iii. The Super-Ego

In a paper published in 1914 "On Narcissism" he suggested that not all of the libido was connected with primitive bodily satisfactions or directed to the self (conceived as an enduring bodily and mental whole). He then suggests that the portion of the libido so directed to ourselves could be referred to as the narcissistic libido. In the course of further development this portion of the libido itself undergoes differentiation. A part of it remains directed to ourselves as we really are. But this does not satisfy us. As the real self is perceived to be imperfect and less than omnipotent and we become aware of its defects and limitations, physical, mental and moral, we compensate by building up in imagination a sort of ideal self, which we would like to attain. It is as though we refused to stay contented with our real self as a love object, once its deficiencies become apparent, and set out to construct

a better and more worthy self, yet one which has some recognizable resemblance to the self.

To this ideal ego is now directed the self-love which the real ego enjoyed in childhood. The narcissism seems to be now displaced onto this new ideal ego, which, like the infantile ego, deems itself the possessor of all perfections... That which he (man) projects ahead of him as his ideal is merely his substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood-- the time when he was his own idea.<sup>1</sup>

Freud's word 'super-ego' never refers to reasonable objective ego judgments, but it does refer to the unconsciously working repressing forces of the mind. It also by necessity includes the standards these forces have adopted, whether they be known or unknown. Later, we shall consider the division within the super-ego which resulted in the distinction between conscious and unconscious aspects of conscience.

Whereas the ego is essentially the representative of the external world of reality, the id is "a chaos, a cauldron of seething excitement."<sup>2</sup> Freud pictures the super-ego as the representative of the id attempting to find ways in which the id impulses can be discharged. This means that the super-ego and id are closely related and often aligned against the ego function.

Freud, in one of his earliest descriptions of the super-ego says, "the super-ego is, however, not merely a deposit left by the earliest

1. S. Freud, "On Narcissism," Collected Papers, Vol. IV, (London: Hogarth Press, Ltd., 1924), pp. 132-133.
2. S. Freud, New Introductory Lectures (New York: W. W. Norton Co., 1933), p. 102.

object-choices of the id; it also represents an energetic reaction-formation against those choices. Its relation to the ego is not exhausted by the precept: 'You ought to be such and such (like your father)'; it also comprises the prohibition: 'You must not be such and such (like your father); that is, you may not do all that he does; many things are his prerogative'..."<sup>1</sup> In response to criticism of his analytic research which appeared destined to ignore the higher, moral, spiritual side of human nature, Freud says

Here we have that higher nature, in this ego-ideal or super-ego, the representative of our relation to our parents. When we were little children we knew these higher natures, we admired them and feared them; and later we took them into ourselves."<sup>2</sup>

## 2. From Simple Censoring to Super-Ego

The concept of the super-ego was a long time in developing. Its conceptualization was largely a result of two theories postulated by Freud: (1) the theory of instincts and (2) the theory of repression. It was not until 1915 in a paper on "Instincts and Their Vicissitudes" that Freud developed his theory of instincts. He insisted that an instinct is a sum of psychic energy which imparts direction to psychological work. One can speak of the transformation of bodily energy into psychic energy as well as the transformation of psychic energy into bodily energy. For example, we think (psychic energy) and then we act (muscular energy). All

1. S. Freud, The Ego and the Id (London: Hogarth Press, Ltd., 1935), p. 258.

2. Ibid., p. 259.

energy is obtained from the instincts. The principal sources of instinctual energy are bodily needs or impulses. Instincts are inborn.

i. The Basic Instincts

Freud said the number of instincts is to be determined by biological investigation. In his final reckoning, Freud recognized two great groups of instincts, those in the service of life, and those in the service of death. Freud was convinced that aggression is not necessarily a product of the life-instincts and that a tendency to repeat earlier situations explains much of human behavior. In the death-instinct these two convictions found an explanation. The energy of this instinct is definitely destructiveness or aggression that is directed primarily toward the self. The repetition compulsion theoretically is related to the death-instinct. It is an expression of the tendency of life to return to earlier states. As Freud says, this is the tendency of organic life to return to the inorganic. The death-instincts are little known, only their derivatives of which aggression and destructiveness are the better known are observable. The life instincts are better known because their effects are more public. They are mental representatives of all the bodily needs whose satisfaction is necessary for the survival and propagation of human life. The sex instincts are studied by Freud almost to the exclusion of any others. The principal derivative of the sex instincts is love. The sexual instincts include not only direct genital stimulation and manipulation, but also the use of other bodily zones for pleasure. The three principal

zones are the oral, anal and genital zone. In this order the child may be observed finding satisfaction with his body over the early years of his life. From the recorded reports of adults and some young people about their childhood experience, Freud makes his assumptions about the life-instincts. The genital stage, characterized by object-choices rather than by narcissism comes with adolescence and adulthood. At this stage the person is involved in socialization, group activities, marriage, serious vocational choices, etc.

The form of energy which is used by the life-instincts is called "libido", but no special name was ever given by Freud to the form of energy employed by the death-instincts. While the term "libido" was originally used to denote sexual energy, Freud later used it to describe the energy of all the life-instincts.

Analysts coming later have given the death-instincts the name of "thanatos" as opposed to "eros." They suggest that thanatos constitutes an activity of the mind and not merely a reaction from need frustration in other areas. It is acknowledged that these two basic instincts never appear unmixed. They are combined, in quantitatively varying degrees, at different times.

The instincts reside in the id, but they come to expression through the processes of the ego and super-ego. The ego is the principal agent of the life-instincts. By helping these instincts find bodily satisfaction and by transforming the death-instincts into forms that bring life rather than death the ego fulfills a vital function. Thus, the primary death wish in the id becomes transformed in the ego into aggression against outer objects (enemies). When a person becomes aggressive

toward outer objects rather than the self, notably authority figures and enemies he encounters counter-aggression. In order to avoid punishment the person learns to identify with the aggressor. This means that he becomes aggressive against the very impulse which makes him hostile toward others. According to Freud, the person develops a super-ego which plays the same role in controlling his impulses as an external authority does.

Calvin S. Hall in A Primer of Freudian Psychology describes the sequence in the following way. The super-ego upon becoming an internalized authority seeks to modify the demands of the ego, especially when they contain hostile or aggressive feelings toward an external authority figure. We might imagine the process working in the following way: (1) The child feels hostile toward the father, (2) this produces antagonism in the father which results in his punishing the child, (3) the child (through efforts of the super-ego) identifies with the punishing father, (4) as a consequence of this process the authority of the father is internalized and becomes in essence the super-ego (5) and from then on the super-ego punishes the ego when it breaks a moral rule of the super-ego. This conception led to the belief that neurosis was the consequence of repression which the ego and super-ego turned against the forces of the id. It will be the purpose of this dissertation to show later that the reverse is what actually takes place in the development of neurosis; namely that neurosis is the product of id and ego functioning in league against the super-ego.

This sequence, described above, which is Freudian in pattern indicates clearly why Freud regarded the super-ego through most of his

career as something harsh, destructive, and harmful to the personality. If the ego is the agent of the life-instincts, the super-ego by striving to destroy the ego has the same aim as the original death wish in the id. This is why Freud arrived at the reluctant conclusion that the super-ego is the agent of the death-instincts.

Later we shall attempt to show that the super-ego harbors not merely the deposit of the death-instincts, but holds the key to full expression of the life-instincts. As Freud drew near the end of his life he acknowledged that possibly the super-ego embodied not only harsh restrictions but also the clue to real personality development. In the New Introductory Lectures he says

mankind never lives completely in the present; the ideologies of the super-ego perpetuate the past, the traditions of the race and the people, which yield but slowly to the influence of the present and to new developments, and, so long as they work through the super-ego, play an important part in man's life, quite independently of economic conditions.<sup>1</sup>

Freud's first topographic conception of personality involved the unconscious, the conscious, and the censor, formulated in The Interpretation of Dreams. The theories about unconscious processes and repressions were first worked out in connection with hysteria. Freud soon discovered that something similar happened in obsessional neuroses and phobias. The first type of repression consisted of putting out of consciousness single traumatic episodes, while the second type involved the repression in the deep unconscious of impulses and desires which never did become conscious.

1. S. Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (New York: W. S. Norton Co., 1933), p. 96.

ii. Simple Censorship Redefined in Concept of Super-Ego

If repression was a characteristic of all neurotics it was necessary to postulate some kind of censoring activity. It was natural that at first the repressions themselves occupied Freud's attention; soon he turned to the repressing activity. It was found that the contents of the mind that were inaccessible to consciousness were often either in themselves or through their associations, unaware of moral distinctions in that they did not meet the approved standards of the day; in particular they were often connected with sexual or aggressive thoughts and actions. In attempting to make these thoughts conscious it was discovered that resistance was manifest by the patient and this discovery led in turn to the whole doctrine of repression and conflict which is at the heart of psychoanalytic theory and practice. It seemed clear that if the repressed contents were a-moral the repressing forces were themselves acting on behalf of socially accepted standards or morality and this view found expression in the term censorship which was at first applied to the total of the repressing forces.

It is interesting to note that this idea was suggested to Freud by Breuer in the early 1890's. Breuer's theory was that a thought memory or desire became unconscious because of the accidental mental state of the patient while Freud thought there was always a motive for forgetting. Breuer believed that certain conditions such as fatigue, pain, trauma, etc., favored dissociation. Freud came to the conclusion that a thought, or desire must become unconscious for a purpose. In other words, a thought or memory must be actively put out of the mind because, for some reason, it is unbearable. Thus, he concluded, purposive effort is

required to make an experience unconscious, and he called the process repression.

It was this early conclusion about repression that led to the first formulation about censorship. As has been previously indicated, Freud came to picture the mental anatomy of personality, normal and neurotic in the following way.

The unconscious is a large anteroom, in which the various mental excitations are crowding one another, like individual beings. Adjoining this is a second, smaller apartment, a sort of reception room, in which consciousness resides. But on the threshold between the two there stands a personage with the office of doorkeeper, who examines the various mental excitations, censors them, and denies them admittance to the reception room when he disapproves of them... The doorkeeper is what we have learned to know as resistance in our attempts in analytic treatment to loosen the repressions.

Now I know very well that you will say that these conceptions are as crude as they are fantastic and not at all permissible in a scientific presentation... Still, I should like to reassure you that these crude hypotheses, the two chambers, the doorkeeper on the threshold between the two, and consciousness as a spectator at the end of the second room, must indicate an extensive approximation to the actual reality.<sup>1</sup>

According to this conceptual scheme, feelings or impulses which are objectionable to the censor are kept imprisoned as effectively as possible in the anteroom; i.e., in the unconscious. In this early scheme Freud believed that the imprisoned impulses were primarily sexual in nature.

1. S. Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis (New York: Liveright Publishing Corp., 1920), pp. 260-261.

He says

every time we should be led by analysis to the sexual experience and desires of the patient, and every time we should have to affirm that the symptoms served the same purpose. This purpose shows itself to be the gratification of sexual wishes; the symptoms serve the purpose of sexual gratification for the patient; they are a substitute for satisfactions which he does not obtain in reality.<sup>1</sup>

At this point much is left to be desired with respect to the origin and nature of the censor. Some implications, however, seem to be implicit. By this time (1920) it was assumed that neurosis was due to conflict between repressed desires and the repressing force. This first discovery showed that the censorship was not always efficient. It was further shown, that the neurotic conflict could be reduced by ventilating the repressed impulses rather than by attempting to strengthen the repressing force.

If neurotic behavior involved the inhibition of sexual or other impulses when, in reality, the way was open for their gratification, it could easily be assumed that the censor, far from being able and sensitive had become a rigid, archaic institution, often tragically out of touch with the realities of adult life, and often separated from the conscious adult personality, as also from contemporary society. The assumption further suggests that a person is abnormal because his censor is abnormal. How the censor becomes abnormal and why did not concern Freud at this point.

The next formulation of the mind attempted to be more explicit in detail. S. Freud, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, p. 263.

scribing the nature and origin of the repressing factor. In the New Introductory Lectures Freud talks of the unconscious still as a "large anteroom, in which the various mental excitations are crowding one another, like individual beings." But he develops the second and third of the three conceptions much further. In his chapter on "The anatomy of the mental personality" he announces that psychoanalysis is beyond the stage of being a psychology of the unconscious and announces that it embodies something new which he calls "ego psychology."

Freud then takes up the task of describing the super-ego. It will be remembered that in the earlier scheme he had said little about the origin and development of the censorship function. In this book he attempts to define specifically the nature and origin of this function which is now redefined in terms of the super-ego.

After describing the tendency of psychotics to be pre-occupied with violent self-criticism and delusions of persecution Freud says

Under the strong impression of this clinical picture, I formed the idea that the separating off of an observing function from the rest of the ego might be a normal feature of the ego's structure; this idea has never left me, and I was driven to investigate the further characteristics and relations of the function which had been separated off in this way. The next step was soon taken. The actual content of the delusion of observation is only a first step towards conviction and punishment, so that we may guess that another activity of this function must be what we call conscience... I will henceforward call this function in the ego the 'super-ego'.<sup>1</sup>

1. S. Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, pp. 85-86.

The foregoing statement coming in 1933 represents Freud's classical formulation of the mind; up until his death psychoanalysis accepted this formulation as being basically correct. Modifications by Freudian analysts have been few since that time.

In summary, it has been pointed out that in the first Freudian conceptualization the idea of censorship was postulated as a consequence of the clinical evidence pointing to repressing activity which formed the primary basis for neurosis. In the second conceptual scheme the 'censor' was redefined as super-ego. The super-ego was given a place of considerable prominence in the Freudian scheme and many qualities were attributed to it that were missing in the first idea of the censor, i.e. notably aggressive, moral and ideal aspects.

### iii. Aggressive Aspects of the Super-Ego Largely Unconscious

Bergler and others have recently restated the Freudian position with respect to the aggressive aspects of the super-ego. They have agreed that a large part of the super-ego is inaccessible to consciousness... that in particular the aggressive and destructive parts are unconscious. The aggression contained in the super-ego constitutes the accumulation of hate, anger and frustration which the child feels so deeply in his early years. One of the significant discoveries of psychoanalysis is that among the various lines of displacement along which an impulse can be re-directed, turning inward or against the self occupies an important place. In other words, although a child finds it difficult to strike back at parents and other authority symbols, he can take his aggression back into himself. The severity observable in the super-ego is due to a recoil against the self of aggression caused by

frustrating objects in the outer world. Thus, not only does the person have to deal with his aggression which he is unable to direct toward them, but also it is inaccessible to consciousness. This aggression torments, punishes, produces guilt and anxiety in spite of conscious efforts to deal with external situations realistically.

#### iv. Ego-Ideal and "Daimonian" Parts of Super-Ego

The ego-ideal, as has been previously stated, constituted for Freud a self-image constructed to maintain the image of power and glory we held when still children. It was his idea that as the person grew older and realized his deficiencies and inadequacies he set out to construct a better and more worthy self, yet one which had some recognizable resemblance to the self. Portions of the ego-ideal are reflected in the conscious moral precepts which a person maintains for himself. Yet, his "search for glory" as it is characterized by Horney, remains largely unconscious. The sector which contains the infant's unlimited "dreams of glory" is inaccessible except through psychoanalysis.

Previously attempts have been made to define the ego-ideal. The "daimonian" refers to the body of aggression, hate and cruelty which the person has taken into himself, primarily over the long years of infancy when he was helpless and dependent on external authorities. The term "daimonian" was coined by Bergler. He in turn borrowed it from Socrates who claimed that every human being harbors a "daimonical something within himself." In Plato's account in Apologia of Socrates' speech before his judges in Athens during his trial for "corruption of youth," Socrates describes "daimonian" thus: "A godlike and daimonical

something.. some kind of voice that deters me from things I wish to do, but never gives positive advice." The modern daimonian bears no connotation of demons, devils, or other spooks, but refers to the negative aspects of the super-ego, which in effect constitute an anti-hedonistic principle, one which torments the ego-ideal with its failure to realize its goals.

If there is an immense gulf between the ideal and the reality, a person inevitably feels dissatisfied, guilty and anxious. These feelings are not so much a result of failures in the real world as they are of the inability of the ego to attain the superiority and goals held up by the ego-ideal. While a person would not be critical of average performance by another individual he would be extremely unhappy over his own failures and mediocre achievements primarily because of his reluctance to sacrifice his "search for glory" in favor of a realistic ego. In the operation of this mechanism we see a vindication of Adler's contention as to the widespread desire for superiority, and at the same time a justification of Freud's theory of "secondary narcissism" attaching not to the real self but to the ideal one. If successful treatment of neurosis involves a sacrifice on the part of unrealistic id demands, a reduction of no less unrealistic aspirations and requirements of the super-ego are also required.

### 3. Disharmonies Within Ego-Ideal

It is obvious that the place where psychoanalysis differs with other schools in relation to the super-ego is at the point of disharmonies. Implicit in other approaches to this function is the idea that

the self-regarding sentiment is primarily an asset and that it is relatively consistent in wanting the person to go on to bigger and better things. Within the ego-ideal as developed by Freud and others, there are acute conflicts, some of which will be mentioned in the following pages.<sup>1</sup>

#### i. Ambivalent Role of Parents

One of the obvious sources of conflict is to be found in the parents. Simultaneously, they represent a source of love and frustration. A child is completely dependent on the parents for love, help and protection; on the other hand the parents represent the source of prohibitions, fear, and thwarting. It is interesting to note that several writers, while not accepting Freudian theory completely, have noted the factors contributing to this source of disharmony. Suttie in The Origins of Love and Hate points out that our dependence on society in later life is connected with dependence on maternal care in infancy and early youth. He contends that we suffer from 'separation anxiety' when we feel that we have lost the love of mother or society. Horney in New Ways in Psycho-analysis speaks of 'basic anxiety' of infantile origin which can be reduced only by the establishment of a satisfactory social adjustment while Fromm in Escape From Freedom points to man's sense of loneliness and insecurity which lead him to such mechanisms of escape as authoritarianism. All of these writers agree that man's need of social support stems from attitudes acquired during the long dependent and helpless stage of infancy in which the child both fears and loves the parental authorities.

1. J. C. Flugel, Man, Morals and Society (New York: International Universities Press, 1945), pp. 49-63.

## ii. Parents' Super-Ego

Another source of conflict is found in the fact that the aggressive and more cruel aspects of the super-ego are derived not from a true picture of the parents as they are, but rather from the super-ego of the parents. If the parent's ego were adopted by the child, Horney's contention that the super-ego forms a need rather than an agency of the mind would have more validity. But the fact that it is not the gentle, rational primarily loving aspects of the parent's nature but the stern, punishing aspects of the super-ego that are taken over by the child, reinforce the Freudian contention that the super-ego is no mere superficial need but one of the basic components of the mind. Klein in her study of children gives additional evidence suggesting that the child's super-ego does not consist merely of the parental values and ideals, but actually attempts to incorporate the more impossible values of the parental super-ego. With such a pattern prevailing, it is impossible to conceive of an ego-ideal containing harmonious qualities.

## iii. Oedipal Complex

Connected with this distinction between the parent's real ego and his super-ego is a distinction between those aspects of the parent's conduct which it is considered desirable for the child to imitate and thus incorporate into his super-ego, and those which are considered acceptable for the adult and taboo for the child. Notable among these are those of a sexual nature. These present real difficulty especially when they are considered in the light of the Oedipal situation.

#### iv. Conflict Within Super-Ego

A fourth source of disharmony is often found in the conflict prevailing between the more or less conscious aspects of the ego-ideal (concepts of the self prevailing at the adult level) and those deeply unconscious aspects of the ego-ideal probably extending back to early formulations in infancy. These disharmonies between the prevailing attitudes at different levels of experience constitute a serious source of disharmony within the ego-ideal.

### 4. Four Basic Sources of Super-Ego

#### i. Narcissistic Libido

It was one of Freud's great discoveries when he noted that not all of the libido was connected with primitive bodily satisfactions or directed on to outer objects, but that part of it was directed to the self. Previously this process has been described in terms of "self love." It was pointed out that we become dissatisfied with our real self as a love object and set out to construct a more worthy object, yet one which resembles the real self. Thus, the ideal self is constructed and to it is attached the love called secondary narcissism. This source contributes most of the love and idealism which may be found in the super-ego.

#### ii. Introjections

Another source is from the process of inclusion into one's own mind of the principles, morals and attitudes of others, notably those of the parents and other authority symbols that appear in early life.

Along with whatever ego-ideal the child has for himself he looks to the important people in his realm of experience for material by which to further shape this ideal self. It is well known that social, moral and religious values are preserved and given continuity primarily because they are transmitted through this kind of incorporation on the part of children.

### iii. Recoil of Aggression

Freud and others make much of the fact that it is due to the long period of helpless infancy during which the child is compelled to hate those whom he must also most love that he begins to make himself an object of hate which he often feels toward these powerful people. It is one of the remarkable discoveries of psychoanalysis. Freud and his followers deserve the credit for discovering that the super-ego or so-called higher self embodied severe aggression. As has already been noted, the super-ego is no mere echo of the moral standards of the day, in many respects it appears to be more severe. Klein, Jones and others of the English school contend that the severity and aggression of the super-ego is only incidentally related to the parents and that it stems primarily from this mechanism of recoil whereby anger that should be directed outward is taken back into the self. It was partly because of this formation that Freud was so critical of the super-ego function.

### iv. Sado-Masochistic Tendencies

The tendency to take pleasure in the exercise of mastery and in the infliction of pain for their own sake over and above such inevitable consequences of aggression like cruelty and domination has pre-

sented a difficult problem to students of human nature. Later on an attempt will be made to describe the origins of the sado-masochistic tendency. For the present the terms may be defined in the following way: (1) Sadism, in its more general psychoanalytic sense, is defined as the wish, conscious or unconscious, to inflict pain (physical or psychical); (2) masochism is defined as the wish to experience pain. Freud showed how these two tendencies were related to morality. In moral masochism he claimed there was a need to suffer, especially in ways dictated by unconscious punishment phantasies. He insisted that conscious and unconscious guilt constituted not only punishment for tabooed wishes, but at the same time a special form of sexuality.

## 5. Sources of Aggression

### i. Parents

Since the early discoveries by Freud, psychoanalytic writers have been in general agreement that one of the causes of aggression is to be found in the long relatively helpless and dependent relationship which the child has with his parents, a relationship in which he finds himself both hating and loving the parent. As it is too dangerous to express the destructive or hateful feelings toward this all-powerful symbol the child either redirects it outward or incorporates it into himself. This returning aggression appears to attach itself to the super-ego where it acts as a tormentor and cruel judge toward the ego function. The child seems to prefer to deal with his aggression toward the parental figures within himself evidently feeling that when it is

internal he has more of a chance to keep it under control.

ii. "Nemesism"

Thus far we have described the aggression that has an external source in the behavior of the parents or other moral authorities and the way in which it becomes internalized and attached to the super-ego as the result of the introjection of these external authorities. If this were the only source of aggression the super-ego would not present so many problems as it does. There is another source of aggression that springs from the person's own anger and revolt against the frustrating parent figures. With Flugel and others we propose to utilize Rosenzweig's suggestion and use the term "nemesism" as an alternative and technical term for aggression turned against the self. This term first appears in a book by Murray and others entitled Explorations in Personality (1938). Rosenzweig points out in a chapter of this book that the term aggression has been used generally without any attempt to designate the source of the aggressiveness. We agree with him that there is considerable difference between the external aggressive feelings that are introjected and the aggressive elements that arise out of anger directed against the self, both as to source, degree and eventual treatment program. Such a term has the advantage of being easily compared and contrasted with the already familiar "narcissism" which designates the comparable process of love directed to the self.

This nemesism is distinguished from other aspects of the super-ego in at least the following ways: (1) Instead of holding before us an ideal or goal toward which we ought to strive it appears as a relentless

source of punishment and torment which distorts and diminishes any goal or ideal: (2) it is primarily concerned with prohibitions rather than steps by which a goal might be attained. It in essence says "no" without giving reasons or alternatives, acting as a constant source of frustration to the ego function; (3) its chief relation to the ego is one of hate rather than love. It sees no tenderness or affection in the self, only the prototype of the child's pictures of the parent as a harsh, forbidding, terrifying and punishing person; (4) nemesistic aspects of the super-ego are largely unconscious and thus beyond awareness. The effect we are fully cognizant of but the sources of the feeling forever escape us.

### iii. Sadism and Masochism

This idea of aggression that is directed against the self seems to date from Freud's paper on "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" published in 1915. In this work he emphasized the important transformations of instinct, as when a person instead of desiring to exercise mastery desires himself to be mastered. This was followed by a paper in 1917 on "Mourning and Melancholia" in which he drew attention to the fact that the judgments which the melancholic patient would, without apparent justification, bring against himself, could be applied to some person who had been important in the life of the patient. Freud suggested that melancholia resembled mourning in the sense that the patient had lost the important person either through death, separation etc., and had solved his problem by introjecting the lost object; when the lost object became a part of the patient's self, the love was re-

placed with hate and this hate was turned upon the object introjected, i.e. upon the self. Thus by 1917 Freud had established three important clinical observations: (1) the loss of a love object produces traumatic feelings; (2) the lost object is introjected into the self; (3) hate is substituted for the love which was originally felt toward the object which now must be directed toward the self. The example of melancholia was especially suited to bring into prominence the element of aggression that has been called nemesism in this chapter... nemesistic aggression reflected back from an object in the outer world, put in the service of the super-ego and directed against the self.

In the development of Freud's thought on sadism and masochism, at least three levels of development can be traced. In the Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex published in 1905 sadism and masochism were looked upon as more or less independent members of a long list of component instincts. His second theory is expounded further in his article on "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" where he suggests that masochism has its origin in the connection between sex and pain, sadism in the connection between sex and force, and since the use of force and the suffering of pain so often go together, the two tendencies tend to become associated. In this view Freud considered sadism turned against the self, the external partner taking over the active role of sadist. Freud's third theory was developed in the article on "Economic Problems of Masochism" published in 1925 in which he suggests that sadism and masochism are to be differentiated from nemesistic aggression in that the latter there has been a defusion of the life and death instincts,

i.e. a desexualization. This idea was connected with the theory of a death instinct. In order to be consistent with the theory of a death instinct, it was necessary to assume that the destructive drive was directed primarily against oneself and was only secondarily turned outwards in aggression toward others. Thus the third theory considered masochism as the most direct type of union between libido and destructiveness, and sadism as a secondary development, whereas his early idea had been that sadism was primary and masochism was the result of turning sadism against the self.

#### iv. Contributions of Other Authors

##### (1) Reik and Jones

Both Reik and Jones look with skepticism upon the theory of the death instinct and insist that the origins of sadism and masochism are tied to the intrinsically aggressive nature of much infantile activity. Both feel that the roots of these two characteristics are to be found in the ambivalence and fusion of love and hate that is characteristic of the very young child and in the important part played by primitive aggressive tendencies in the earliest days of life.

##### (2) Abraham and Ferenczi

Karl Abraham and Sandor Ferenczi were two followers of Freud in the early days who expanded Freud's ideas as to the sources of aggression. Abraham in a paper entitled "The First Pregenital Stages of the Libido" which was included in the Selected Papers published in 1927 noted that the infant might experience acute anxiety at the earliest oral stage and that something which might be called guilt could occur

at the next or anal stage. Freud had connected the super-ego with the childish attitudes toward the parents that made up what he called the Oedipus complex. The super-ego he called the "heir" to the Oedipus complex. It seemed unlikely to Abraham and Ferenczi that the super-ego should come into final form with the passing of the Oedipal stage. This idea that the primitive aggression and hence primitive super-ego development began in the earliest stages of life was later, as we shall see, verified by Klein and Isaacs in their experiments with child analysis.

Ferenczi, with Freud, emphasized that some of the earliest and most important aspects of the child's education are concerned with learning to control the processes of excretion so that they might occur at a time considered right and convenient on the part of the adults involved. The attempt to meet the parent's demands in this area constituted the child's earliest moral endeavors. This idea Ferenczi carried further in an article "The Analysis of Sexual Habits" published in 1925. What he wrote in this connection seems important enough, in its attempt to establish the origins of aggression and super-ego function at a very early age, to be quoted in part.

The anal and urethral identification... with the parents appears to build up in the child's mind a sort of physiological forerunner of the ego-ideal or super-ego. Not only in the sense that the child constantly compares his achievements in these directions with the capacities of his parents, but in that a severe sphincter-morality is set up which can only be contravened at the cost of bitter self-reproaches and punishment by

conscience. It is by no means improbable that this as yet semi-physiological morality forms the essential groundwork of later purely mental morality.<sup>1</sup>

Here we find the beginning of an idea suggesting that the early formation of the super-ego is connected with pregenital functions that certainly antedate the Oedipal situation let alone its passing. This idea seems to have formed the pattern for the theories developed later by Klein, Reik and Suttie.

### (3) Klein

A member of the English school of psychoanalysis, Klein has done much research in the area of child analysis. Along with Ernest Jones she has made many vital contributions to the analytic conception of personality. In a volume, Contributions to Psychoanalysis she describes the origins of aggression in small children.

According to Klein the growth of the super-ego is a relatively slow process having its beginning in the earliest stages of life. According to her observations, the super-ego has its origins at the same time the child makes its earliest oral introjection of its objects, called the oral-sadistic stage. It is during this pregenital stage that the child experiences the fusion of libido and destructive instincts, resulting in the high degree of sadistic impulses.

In his book Beyond the Pleasure Principle Freud put forward his theory that at the outset of human life the instinct of aggression, or the death-instinct is being opposed by the libido or life-instinct. A fusion of the two instincts follows and gives rise to sadism. In

1. S. Ferenczi, "The Analysis of Sexual Habits" (1925), in Further Contributions to the Theory and Technique of Psychoanalysis, tr. by Jane Suttie, (N.Y.: Boni and Liveright, 1926), p. 86.

ganism makes use of its narcissistic libido to project the aggressive instinct outward toward objects in the external world (the first objects being parental figures). Klein carries this theory further indicating that parallel with this projection of the death-instinct outward, there goes on an internal defense reaction against that part of the death instinct which could not be externalized. The anxiety then experienced by the infantile ego is caused not merely by external objective dangers but by its perception of this internal danger from that part of the death instinct that could not be directed outward. As the ego attempts to mobilize the force of the life instinct it meets with only partial success, owing to the fusion of the two basic instincts. A division takes place in the id, by which one part of the instinctual impulses is directed against the other. Klein goes on to say that this early attempted defense on the part of the ego constitutes "the foundation-stone of the development of the super-ego, whose excessive violence in this early stage would thus be accounted for by the fact that it is an offshoot of very intense destructive instincts, and contains, along with a certain proportion of libidinal impulses, very large quantities of aggressive ones.<sup>1</sup>

This argument leads us to the following conclusions: (a) the super-ego of the child does not coincide with the picture presented by its real parents, but is fashioned out of imaginary pictures of them which the child has taken into himself; (b) its fear of real objects is based upon fear both of its unrealistic super-ego and of objects which are real in

1. M. Klein, Contributions to Psychoanalysis (London: Hogarth Press, Ltd., 1950), p. 269.

themselves but which it views in a distorted light due to the influence exerted by the child's super-ego. Thus the projection of the child's own aggressiveness creates a phantastic notion of the cruelty and severity of the parents, in which their real tendencies to be aggressive become insignificant. In addition, Klein notes two additional observations. First, at this early oral-sadistic stage there is no clear perception of persons as such. The child does not recognize its mother as a unity, it only distinguishes the parts that are important, i.e. the nipple and then the breast. Secondly, the child makes no adequate distinction between his impulses which are highly ambivalent. They are mixtures of love and aggression to a high degree of fusion seldom found in later life.

Other writers like Ernest Jones have been so impressed with Klein's findings that they have thought of the parents' real aggressiveness as being hardly negligible suggesting that such aggression as may exist in the parents is exploited by the child in an attempt to find a suitable outlet for his own fierce aggressive tendencies. In this connection Jones has developed the term "aphanisis" referring to the child's fear that his primitive desires and aggressions may result in the permanent loss of all sources of satisfaction. He believes that it is to guard against this psychic loss rather than to protect against external withdrawal of love that the super-ego is built up.

From a study of Klein and Jones several conclusions may be drawn: (1) the super-ego has its origins in the primitive aggressiveness experienced by the child in infancy; (2) the child attempts to get rid of its

cruel, harsh impulses by projecting them outward onto objects rather than complete persons; (3) corresponding to this series of projections is a series of introjections whereby primitive impulses originally displaced outward are turned inward again and incorporated into the organism. (4) It is these objects or persons, endowed with the child's own impulses that are incorporated and that the child feels he possesses within his own being. (5) It is these introjected objects or persons that constitute the beginnings of the super-ego. (6) It is obvious that the parent figure (or object) introjected is colored by the extreme aggressiveness of the child himself, and in this way the super-ego acquires its harsh, cruel, punishing aspects that struggle so fiercely with the loving, tender uplifting qualities often observed in the ego-ideal.

Reik, with Klein and Jones, emphasizes the aggressive aspects of infancy and early childhood. He contends that this quality accounts for the origins of sadism rather than the existence of a death instinct. He suggests that the close relation of mother and child provides the source for much infantile aggression. During this period the child is totally dependent upon a mother who is not always loving, but sometimes threatening, other times demanding, still other times withdrawing love... all of which is very threatening to the child thereby producing his highly ambivalent feelings of love and hate which at this stage are intimately fused. Reik argues that the super-ego arises in response to the ego's request for help in dealing with the aggressive demands of that portion of the id which cannot be directed outward. In a sense,

this argument sets the stage for a brief examination of a view held by another author.

(4) Suttie

Suttie in The Origins of Love and Hate takes issue with Freud's theory of a death-instinct. He considers that love of mother is primary in so far as it is the first formed and directed emotional relationship. He disagrees with Klein and Horney who accept the Freudian formulation of the infant first directing love and hate toward its own self and then directing it outward on to other objects. He claims that in early infancy there is no discrimination of "other" from "self", that the child does not even make a distinction between object and self; the second stage involves the love (and anger) of others. Hate or aggressiveness is not regarded as a primary independent instinct but as a development of "separation-anxiety" which arises as a consequence of a threat against love. Suttie considers the aggressiveness of the child as his supreme way to command and preserve the love relationship. Rather than being the instrument of death, it is used as the final effort to restore the love relationship.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to trace the development of the super-ego in Freudian theory. Freud's first division of the mind into id, ego and super-ego has been presented. Special note has been made of the harsh, forbidding and negative qualities which Freud soon attached to the super-ego function. Further contributions of other Freudians to this concept have been mentioned including those of Flugel, Bergler, Klein, Jones and Reik. In the next chapter an attempt will be

made to trace manifestations of the super-ego in human thought and action. The Freudian contention that many of the primitive characteristics of the super-ego may be seen in adult behavior will be discussed and evaluated.

## CHAPTER III

### MANIFESTATIONS OF SUPER-EGO IN HUMAN THOUGHT AND ACTION

In the previous chapter an attempt was made to trace the development of the super-ego in Freudian theory. Freud's theory of the unconscious was developed in considerable detail. Then followed a treatment of the doctrine of repression, finally resulting in the division of the mind into id, ego, and super-ego by 1915. Contributions by other authors such as Klein, Bergler, and Flugel were discussed and it was shown how their research further advanced the Freudian understanding of the conscience. In particular it was suggested that the Freudian conscience was primarily irrational, destructive and determined to annihilate the total personality through its demands for instinctual gratification. The aggressive qualities of the super-ego and early beginnings of super-ego were outlined as developed by the analytical school. The pre-oedipal beginnings of super-ego development were also cited.

#### 1. Taboo the Forerunner of Super-Ego

In this chapter it will be our purpose to trace the expression of the super-ego in human thought and action. As will be shown, the contention of Freudian theory is that many of the primitive characteristics of the super-ego are still observable in adult behavior today.

Freud believed that the system of totem and taboo prevalent in primitive society revealed characteristics that parallel the behavior pattern of neurotic people of our day. In an article published in 1910 called "Totem and Taboo" he attempted to make a connection between the system of taboo in primitive society and the pattern of neurotic behavior observed in his patients.

i. Taboo Equated with Religion or Social Sanction

It will be recalled that in primitive society taboo consisted of a prohibition that carried with it a supernatural or social sanction. It was the chief method of insuring conformity to the accepted social order. At the earliest level it was believed that the sanction followed automatically from the operation of 'mana', a powerful force which resided in the tabooed object and which could be relied upon to punish or destroy those who violated the taboo relating to the object in question. At a higher level magic was replaced by animism, the sanction being enforced by spirits or demons who would become angry whenever a taboo was broken. At a still higher level the spirits gave way to gods and the breaking of a taboo gave rise to divine displeasure and divinely administered punishment.

Freud discovered that historically taboo expressed itself in a series of prohibitions and restrictions that seemed to have been self imposed by primitive people on themselves without any apparent reason. Violation of the prohibition or restriction would result in punishment. Even innocent transgressions of prohibitions were punished. Taboo was attached to all sorts of things such as dead people, women while in the

menstrual period, certain animals, places where certain battles or deeds had taken place and people who occupied particular places of authority such as the tribal elder, or medicine man. The oldest, and to Freud the most important, taboos were two: namely not to kill the totem animal and to avoid sexual intercourse with totem companions of the other sex.

The foregoing summary of taboo has valid historical documentation and is generally accepted today by anthropologists and historians alike. It is at this point that Freud departs from the record and reconstructs the origin of taboo in such a way as to show clearly what to him is the connection between this primitive means of moral control and the conscience function within modern man. In developing Freud's argument it should be acknowledged that while anthropologists today do not hold as valid the historical documentation, these theories have empirical relevance for us in our attempts to explain the Freudian approach to conscience.

Freud's explanation of the origin of taboo which in turn sheds light on the beginnings of super-ego development will now be set forth. He makes use of certain theoretical reflections of Charles Darwin, J. Atkinson, and especially Robertson Smith. Freud combines the theories and speculations of these men with his findings from psychoanalytic practice.

From Darwin comes the hypothesis that originally men lived in small hordes. These hordes were ruled by one powerful male, probably the father. The women of the horde were his exclusive possession, and any attempt on the part of young males, even his own sons to gain possession

of the women of the horde resulted in either their expulsion or death. If expelled from the horde, the young man would live alone until able to conquer the leader of another horde and thus possess his women. This hypothesis as to how man first began to live with others suggested to Freud a pattern of exogamy.

From Atkinson Freud accepted the theory that this patriarchal system finally came to an end through a rebellion of the sons who united against the father, overpowering him and together consuming his body. Then the sons discovered that they were still in a dilemma for none of them alone was powerful enough to control the others. To avoid self-destruction and in an attempt to live peaceably with one another, the brothers renounced the women for whose sake they had killed the father, and agreed to practice exogamy. This meant that the power of the father was broken and that families were regulated by matriarchy.

From Smith, Freud further took the theory that after the killing of the father by the sons, he was substituted with a totem animal which stood for their ancestor and protecting spirit. No one was allowed to hurt or kill it. Once a year, however, a feast was held during which the whole clan killed the totem and ate it.

#### ii. Ambivalence of Taboo

With these theories in mind we will now attempt to show how Freud related some of his psychoanalytic findings to these historical theories. He saw a connection between the system of taboo in primitive society and the pattern of neurotic behavior observed in his patients. He began with the premise that every taboo involved a double attitude, desire and fear,

attraction and repulsion. His examination of the system of taboo revealed that underneath each prohibition is a real or potential desire, for according to Freud people do not take the trouble to prohibit things that no one wants to do. In its predominance of the negative aspects, taboo seemed to exhibit a special resemblance to one particular form of neurosis, the obsessional or compulsion neurosis. Freud believed that the super-ego had its origin in an attempt to enforce the taboo regulations. He says

Conscience is the inner perception of objections to definite wish impulses that exist within us; the rejection doesn't have to depend on anything else. It probably originates on the basis of an ambivalent feeling from quite definite human relations which contain this ambivalence. It probably originates where one component of the two contrasting feelings is unconscious and is kept repressed by the compulsive domination of the other component.<sup>1</sup>

Freud endeavored to explain at one step both the nature of the desires underlying the two main taboos and the reason for their coexistence. He maintained that these two main classes of taboo were the negative aspects of the tendencies operative in the Oedipus complex.

## 2. Oedipus Complex and Taboo

Because of the significance of this complex in psychoanalytic literature and the strong resistance with which it is met in other psycho-

1. S. Freud, The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud, tr. A. A. Brill (New York: Random House, 1938), p. 859.

logical literature we will treat the origin of the myth and Freud's use of it.

i. Freud's Sexual Interpretation of the Myth

Oedipus, in Sophocles's drama, was the son of Laius, King of Thebes, and Jocasta. Laius is warned by an oracle that the still unborn child would be his father's murderer. The child consequently grew up as a prince in an alien court. In manhood he questioned the oracle as to his origin and was warned to avoid his home since he was destined to murder his father and take his mother in marriage. On the road leading away from what he believed was his home he met King Laius and slew him. Later having solved a riddle for the Thebians he was made their king and given Jocasta's hand in marriage. After living harmoniously with her and having children he learns of his acts - his murder of his father and taking of his mother sexually. Appalled at the abomination which he has unwittingly perpetuated, Oedipus blinds himself and forsakes his home. The oracle has been fulfilled.

In this drama Freud saw a validation of the process he had observed constantly in his analytical work. He believed that our first sexual impulses are directed towards our mother and our first hatred and our first murderous wish against our father. Freud maintained that the basis of all neurosis could be found in the operation of this so-called "Oedipus complex." We are free from psychoneurosis only when we succeed in detaching our sexual impulses from our mothers and in forgetting our jealousy of our fathers. Freud maintains that biological nature or physical existence has been responsible for this complex and that in our repression of these

childhood wishes or refusal to acknowledge them we sow the seed of neurotic behavior.

None of the findings of psychoanalysis has provoked such denials and fierce opposition on the part of critics as this indication of the childhood impulses towards incest which Freud claims persist in the unconscious. Historically the Oedipus complex was touched upon for the first time in the Interpretation of Dreams published in 1900. According to Anna Freud and James Strachey in a footnote contained in their edition of the above work the gist of the idea of the Oedipus complex was put forward by Freud in a letter to Fliess as early as October 15th, 1897. The actual term 'Oedipus complex' seems to have been first used by Freud in his published writings in the first of his "Contributions to the Psychology of Love" in 1910.

#### ii. Myth as Symbolic of Separation Anxiety

The generalization which Freud made from the myth of Oedipus has been sharply called into question by many representatives of psychotherapy. Suttie in Origins of Love and Hate<sup>1</sup> for example, suggests that the maternal rejection is a vastly more effective cause of repression than the mere paternal castration threat defined as being primary by Freud. Suttie believes that the idea "mother would never consent" is the conclusive barrier to the Oedipus wish, even at fantasy level. Suttie then goes on to suggest that fear of separation rather than incestuous wishes toward the parent form the basis of all neurosis. Later in criticizing the Freudian theory of the conscience we will return to his position in

1. I. D. Suttie, The Origins of Love and Hate (New York: The Julian Press Inc., 1952).

greater detail.

Regarding the Oedipus myth Suttie points out that in the legend itself the initial aggression came from Laius, the jealous father, not from the son. He suggests that the father is jealous of babies as such, girls and boys alike and that the basis of this jealousy is not sexual. For Suttie the ambivalence toward parents on the part of children is based not on sexual desire or repulsion but on the fear that love will be withdrawn, particularly by the mother. He feels the nucleus of neurosis is found in separation anxiety and that the mother, not the father, holds the key to its resolution.

### iii. Myth as Symbolic of Self-Knowledge

May in Man's Search for Himself indicates that the myth of Oedipus gives us an age-old but ever new picture of the inner pain and conflict in finding out truths about ourselves. It is in the blinding episode rather than the sexual experience that we find the significance of this drama. May believes that man's unwillingness to look at himself and his desires has more importance here than Freud's interpretation of this myth which suggests that every child has incestuous desires toward the parent of the opposite sex.

### iv. Myth Suggests Sexual Basis of Neurosis

Freud published in 1909 an "Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy." In this case study Freud emphasized the infantile sexual basis for all neurosis, further implementing the idea taken from the Oedipus myth. Hans had a phobia of horses, and as a result refused to go out in the street. He expressed a fear that the horse would come into the room and

bite him. Freud learned that this fear on the part of the boy was based on his wish that the horse would fall down or die. To Freud it became evident that the boy was struggling against wishes which had as their subject the idea of his father being absent. Hans regarded the father as a competitor for the favors and love of his mother toward whom his sexual wishes were aimed. In the analysis it was reported by the father that the boy wishes to sleep in his mother's bed. When forbidden to by the father Hans feared castration. Thinking his mother, like the horse he observed, had a penis; Hans was shaken to discover this organ missing in his mother. This meant to him that she must have lost the penis as punishment for having done something forbidden.

In the analysis Freud discovered that Hans found relief from the conflict arising out of his ambivalent emotional attitudes toward his father by displacing his hostile fearful feelings on to a substitute for his father. In the case of Hans the object of displacement was the horse, a totem symbol existing in many primitive societies. One other insight stemming from this analysis must be mentioned here. Hans not only was frightened of horses; he also approached them with admiration and interest. As soon as his anxiety began to diminish, he identified himself with the fearful animal and in his giraffe phantasy bit his father. Thus to Freud the ambivalence manifested by primitive people toward the two main taboos was further explained by the results of this analysis.

If we substitute the father for the totem animal the two main rules of totemism as conceived by Freud (a) not to kill the totem animal and

(b) not to have sexual relations with a woman belonging to the same totem agrees with the two crimes of Oedipus. According to Freud, totemic systems thus are a result of this Oedipus complex.

For Freud, then, the super-ego developed as a result of the attempts of men to deal with their original desire to kill the father. According to Freudian theory this effort to control the Oedipus complex which is central in all neurosis, resulted in the creation of the totem, the substitute for the father. Gradually the external totem was replaced by the internal super-ego. With the compulsive neurotic as with the primitive savage the real genesis of taboo or restriction is impossible to find. When plagued by harsh restrictions the motive is unconscious to the contemporary neurotic as it was to the primitive savage.

### 3. Modern Equivalents of Taboo

Flugel<sup>1</sup> suggests that the equivalents of primitive taboo may be found in several areas of modern society. Considerable amounts of repression and control once exercised by taboo have been taken over by super-ego development. One of the results of highly individualized behavior and personality development has been the transfer from the group to the individual of the function of repression. Particularly in obsessional neurosis can the evidence supporting this idea be seen. Even if the individual is not neurotic he must use his conscience to restrain him from many anti-social actions to which his instincts would prompt

1. J. C. Flugel, Man, Morals, and Society (New York: International University Press, 1947).

him. What Flugel calls "rational restraint" on the part of the individual is therefore a substitute for taboo.

i. Religious Belief

In religious laws and beliefs we find another manifestation of primitive taboos. They differ from human law in that they apply only to the believers and in that the source of authority is non-human, namely God himself. This means that displeasure on the part of the deity is to be greatly feared and by necessity must be placated. Later in discussing guilt and punishment we will attempt to describe the numerous religious practices which came into being as an effort to deal with the overwhelming feelings of guilt connected with the breaking of the religious laws.

ii. Social Custom

Convention and good manners have many similarities and at many points are impossible to separate. In both however, the sanction is provided by social disapproval or contempt. The social disapproval is not rigid and unbending, but for the most part is more variable than superstitions both in time and space. One convention which is arbitrary and often absurd is the one vogue in New York City where men are expected to change from one kind of hat to another on a certain date regardless of the weather. In many conventions there is no intrinsic factor of usefulness or convenience but there is no doubt about the very real feelings of guilty discomfort that failure to conform produces in most people and these feelings are similar to those aroused by the breaking of more primitive and permanent taboos. Good manners tend to apply to relatively intimate and personal contacts and not so much to social situations. While many of

them are useful and helpful others tend to live on after their usefulness had disappeared. A breach of manners, as with the breaking of a convention, produces real guilt feelings in the person involved and thereby resembles a more primitive taboo.

### iii. Language

Linguistic taboos are psychologically very interesting and socially of considerable importance. Ernest Jones in an article, "A Linguistic Factor in English Characterology", included in Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis has suggested that when we break verbal taboos involved in the practice of swearing, particularly in the use of words relating to religious objects of symbols that we are finding an outlet for our aggression by directing it against the moral authority embodied in the taboo, even though the actual meaning of the words employed may have no relevance to the situation that has aroused our anger.

It appears that the mixed attraction and aversion we have toward many words is paralleled to the ambivalence Freud discovered in primitive people concerning taboos and totems.

Analysts in general agree that the relief and enjoyment experienced when we defy the social authorities and the super-ego in breaking a convention or using a forbidden word gives us some idea of the severity with which the super-ego still rules and the strain which obedience to the archaic and often meaningless demands of the super-ego imposes upon us.

In summary it should be pointed out that in at least three ways the institution of taboo in our society corresponds to the function of the

super-ego in the individual. It is the basic factor in moral control; its roots are primitive and archaic; it is primarily dependent on intuition and usually out of touch with reason. According to Freudian theory its survival indicates that in spite of modern development, man is still fearful of his instinctual urges and finds it difficult to face the requirement confronting him within or without.

#### 4. Guilt

Along with the function of taboo the Freudian theory has maintained that guilt points to the existence and function of the super-ego. It will be our purpose here to describe the function of guilt as one manifestation of the super-ego function. No attempt will be made to explore the many approaches made to this subject by writers in other disciplines. It must be acknowledged that guilt exists as fact and feeling. While often related, our main concern at this point will be to deal with guilt as feeling. Guilt as feeling refers to the emotional aspect of the experience of one who stands in judgment upon himself, and condemns himself. The intensity of the emotion may bear little or no apparent relation to the fact with which it is associated. It is, indeed, the disproportion between fact and feeling that constitutes for the Freudian conclusive proof that guilt is directly related to super-ego function.

##### i. Rootage of Guilt in Repressed Negative Feeling

The Freudian maintains that guilt arises out of certain human experiences. The infant, helpless and anxious, depends upon his mother, loves her because she satisfied his needs, and wishes to possess her wholly so

that he may have her to himself. The father is felt to be a rival, a threat to such a wish, and the very young child resents the father's place with the mother, feeling an elemental hostility toward him as a thwarter whom he hates. Any expression of hostility toward the father is promptly frowned upon, forbidden and punished with the result that even the impulse toward such expression of hostility cannot come into full, conscious view. Should such feelings begin to emerge they are pushed down - repressed - with accompanying intense feelings of guilt. The feeling of guilt is, itself, so painful that it cannot be admitted into full consciousness; and yet it is insisently felt, so much that one also dimly feels the necessity of punishing himself to "atone" for his wrong.

Freudian guilt then, is directly associated with the parent-child relationship. Ernest Jones and others maintain that the guilt arising from ambivalent feelings toward parents is repressed to an inaccessible strata. He suggests that stratification of guilt is found in the following sequence: (1) there are two strata in emotional experience, one being open to conscious awareness and reflection, the other a more primitive type of feeling for which an individual can give no explanation to himself; (2) a possible sequence of emotions at each level; (3) the possibility that a deeper sense of guilt may underlie and set off a more superficial anxiety and hostility; and (4) the possibility that each of the conscious states named may grow out of a much deeper one of kindred nature.

In other words, guilt implies a condition of tension between the

ego and the super-ego, which in turn corresponds to tension between child and parents. On the conscious level there may be awareness of infraction of rules, customs and tradition; but on the deeper level guilt involves the feeling which once was manifest toward the parents and through the efforts of super-ego functioning were repressed. The penalty for repression is the feeling of guilt.

ii. Guilt as a Consequence of Repressed Good

Other writers have suggested that guilt arises not only as a consequence of failure to avoid certain negative feelings (such as hostility toward the father), but from failure to enact positive feelings (such as expressions of love toward parents). Mowrer in Learning Theory and Personality Dynamics discusses anxiety and symptom formation. He agrees with Freud that a neurotic symptom, so-called, is any habit which resolves anxiety but does not lessen the ultimate, realistic problem which the anxiety represents. He also agrees with Freud's contention that repression is necessary to an adequate theory of anxiety. He disagrees sharply as to the essential nature of anxiety itself. Freud holds that anxiety comes from evil wishes, from acts which the individual would commit but dares not. Mowrer suggests the reverse; that anxiety arises from acts which the individual has committed but wishes that he had not. In his words "it is... a guilt theory of anxiety rather than an impulse theory."<sup>1</sup> In the next chapter more attention will be given to Mowrer's theory of super-ego or conscience function and the Freudian concept-

1. O. H. Mowrer, Learning Theory and Personality Dynamics (New York: The Ronald Press, 1950), p. 537.

alization will be criticized and compared to it. This paragraph here seemed pertinent to the discussion of guilt as one manifestation of super-ego functioning. The more basic question revolves around the motive for feelings of guilt rather than whether guilt feelings exist.

## 5. Punishment

In their investigation of guilt Freudians soon discovered a close connection between guilt and punishment. As punishment is the natural method of reducing tension between parent and child, so the Freudian maintained punishment became the natural method of reducing tension between the ego and super-ego.

### i. Need for Punishment

Flugel suggests that we appear to be the victims of a complex he refers to as the "Polycrates complex," after Polycrates the tyrant of Samos (whose story is told by Herodotus and who is the subject of a well-known poem by Schiller). The unprecedented run of success enjoyed by this potentate aroused ever-increasing alarm among his friends who began to think that his balance of ill-luck must be accumulating at a most alarming rate. It was suggested that it might help to avert disaster if he were to make some voluntary sacrifice. Moved by those suggestions, he threw a valuable ring into the sea. The ring, however, was swallowed by a fish, which was caught by a fisherman and, being an exceptionally fine specimen, was served up at the tyrant's table. To the consternation of all the ring was duly found inside; it was clear that

the sacrifice had not been accepted and that the gods were unwilling to mitigate the penalties they had in view. In fear of an approaching catastrophe, his ally, Amasis of Egypt, left the doomed man's presence with unseemly haste.

In this legend Flugel sees an illustration of the need for punishment which he maintains is the most effective way of reducing feelings of guilt. In the previous chapter some consideration was given to the nemesistic or aggressive aspects of the super-ego in which punishment is inflicted upon the ego for failing to live up to the demands of the super-ego. It was pointed out that the super-ego not only imposes severe restrictions upon the instinctual desires of the id but that it turns with aggression toward the ego. Flugel maintains that wherever super-ego development is strong one can find a corresponding strong need for punishment.

#### ii. Reparation

There are devious ways in which we find equivalents of punishment. Flugel maintains that in the equivalents of punishment we have a clear demonstration of the function of the super-ego. One method is that of reparation. Jean Piaget in The Moral Judgment of the Child<sup>1</sup> shows clearly that reparation or making good is a method used by children to relieve feelings of guilt. Klein and her school show that at least some crude notions of reparation are to be found at a very early age. In fact, were it not for the predominance of aggressive elements in the super-ego and in our general moral standards it seems likely that repara-

1. J. Piaget, The Moral Judgment of the Child (London: R. Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., Ltd., 1932).

ration would replace simple punishment as the chief method of reducing guilt. In the institution of sacrifice particularly, the motive of reparation is predominant. The savage may throw back a portion of the food he has gathered to appease the gods; in the higher religions the worshiper makes an offering to please god and show his love for him; the analyst sees in the Christian communion an enactment of this idea of reparation whereby in the sacrifice to God of the body and blood of Christ a reduction of guilt is effected in those participating in the act. In spite of the difficulty we have morally, educationally and otherwise in furthering the idea of reparation instead of simple punishment the desire persists, perhaps pointing to the fact that the super-ego, when stripped of some of its deeply unconscious and aggressive roots is essentially empowered with discrimination ability and concerned with more than instinctual gratification.

### iii. Confession

Another alternative to punishment is confession. All of us can testify to the effectiveness of this method in reducing feelings of guilt. Reik has made a special study of confession from the psycho-analytic view. He suggests that this method reflects growth in moral discernment on the part of individuals and society. In the primitive state punishment is inflicted without opportunity for confession. The next stage involves punishment and confession being intimately blended; in the third stage punishment is reduced for those who confess and some significance is attached to the act itself; in the fourth stage confession is often considered as a sufficient substitute for punishment. Con-

fession as a means of reducing guilt has assumed increasing importance in the modern development of religion indicative of the importance attributed to the motive of an immoral act as distinguished from the act itself. Piaget in his study of the child has discovered that at the earliest stage the child considers guilt to be entirely proportionate to the material consequences, a greater injury brought about by accident being regarded as more blameworthy than a smaller one deliberately contrived. At this stage the attitude of the child is similar in many respects to that implied in taboo in which punishment follows automatically without respect to motive. Piaget discovered that as growth continues considerations of motive take an ever larger place. Freudian thought seems reluctant to acknowledge the full implications of this evidence - namely that the super-ego function in a small child need not be comparable to that of an adult. The material produced by Piaget, Klein and others suggest that the factor of moral control, the super-ego, attempts to grow, rationally distinguishing acts and motives rather than grimly going on upholding primitive and archaic methods of control and judgment. Freudian evidence indicates to this writer that the super-ego while being the custodian of primitive aggression is also potentially the source of what Sherrill in Guilt and Redemption<sup>1</sup> refers to as the "capacity for moral discrimination."

#### iv. Rationalization

Still another alternative to punishment is rationalization in which we endeavor to assuage our guilt by finding a secondary justification for

1. L. J. Sherrill, Guilt and Redemption (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1945).

the guilty action as when we attribute "unusual circumstances" to a situation in which we transgress the accepted code.

#### v. Projection

Projection affords still another alternative to punishment. In this alternative guilt is projected on to some other party who is then regarded as responsible so that we ourselves feel innocent. Freudian theory claims that projection involves an element of delusion. Freud demonstrates how persons with delusions of persecution, characteristic of paranoia, project onto others their aggressive and guilty impulses so that such persons become scapegoats.

#### 6. Alliances Between Id and Super-Ego

Some analysts, notably Franz Alexander, have suggested that because of the peculiar relations of interdependence that obtain between the satisfaction and punishment of guilty desire that there appears to exist a sort of alliance between the id and super-ego. He suggests that the super-ego, like a harsh judge, often is open to bribe. Certain instinctual gratification of desire is permitted so long as a bribe is paid in the form of suffering a punishment. Alexander reasons that if the super-ego, as Freud conceived it, is a split-off portion of the ego and the ego itself a modified part of the id, that it is conceivable that the id should attack the ego through the super-ego, the guardian of morality and ideals.

Bergler in the Battle of Conscience also suggests that under certain conditions the super-ego seems vulnerable to corruption. He indicates

that the neurotic conscience or super-ego licenses inner wishes and id desires for gratification in exchange for the bribe of depression, punishment and guilt. He goes on to suggest that the "criminotic conscience" is even more corrupt and demanding insisting that for allowing instinctual gratification the conscience demands total annihilation. He says, "every criminal unconsciously bargains for prison or the electric chair."<sup>1</sup>

## 7. Religion

### i. Religion as Super-Ego Projection

Freud was convinced that the existence of religion in general and Christianity in specific can be explained as a projection of the super-ego. In Totem and Taboo he developed the idea that in primitive society taboo consisted of a prohibition that carried with it a social sanction. The sanction operated on different levels as society advanced. On the lowest level the sanction followed automatically from the operation of 'mana'; a powerful force which resided in the tabooed object. At a higher level magic was replaced by animism, the sanction being enforced by spirits or demons who would become angry whenever a taboo was broken. On the religious level spirits were replaced by gods and the breaking of a taboo gave rise to divine displeasure and divinely administered punishment.

While the king, spiritual leader, or head of the state is the highest earthly figure on whom we can project our super-ego, there is beyond

1. E. Bergler, The Battle of the Conscience (Washington, D. C.: Washington Institute of Medicine, 1948), p. 261.

this the sphere of the superhuman and divine. Freud maintains that with earthly figures we are liable in some degree to a repetition of the disappointment that we suffered when we realized the limitations of our own original parents. As a final refuge we can turn to God, and are at least relatively safe for God is obscure and not immediately experienced and thus not liable to those imperfections which are sooner or later discernible in all human figures.

Even in the projection onto God however, there are difficulties. Two basic components of the super-ego eventually find expression even in God. One is the strong ambivalence which in primitive days resulted in the conviction that God not only loved but judged his children. At the primitive level the savage often regards his gods as punishing, malignant beings as well as helpful ones. At the higher level, including Christianity, this ambivalence often results in a fragmentation into God and the devil. This explains to Freud the reason for the constant regression within Christianity from a god of love to one who is to be feared because of his harshness and judgment that he levies against his people.

The other component of the super-ego that eventually reveals itself in the nature of God is that referred to earlier in this chapter as the need for punishment. This need explains the feeling often expressed by people when afflicted with illness or affliction that perhaps God is punishing them for sins of omission or commission.

In two works, Future of an Illusion and Civilization and Its Discontents published in 1928 and 1930 respectively Freud summarizes the

advantages that religion shares with all animistic beliefs: it gives the believer an opportunity to deal with the forces of nature as with people; he can bribe, flatter or even threaten them. When spirits become exalted into gods, a continuation of the protection and guidance that was given by parents in infancy can be continued. Freud contends that it is especially when man feels overwhelmed and threatened that he projects his super-ego on to God for then he desires to be protected and guided by a power greater than his own. In danger man has a tendency to regress into the dependent infant position rather than endeavoring to stand courageously alone and realistically attempt to deal with the problem at hand.

ii. Religion as a Form of Neurosis

In Moses and Montheism (1939) Freud comes close to Jung's position that racial archetypes play an extremely important part in religious beliefs and account for the remarkable similarities of dogma and symbolism found in many different parts of the world. This view is particularly difficult to accept in that it implies the inheritance of acquired characteristics, even innate ideas--a view which runs counter to a vast preponderance of the evidence available at present from biology and genetics. Freud suggests that the rise of religion parallels the appearance of neurosis in the individual. He maintains that mankind as a whole passed through conflicts of a sexual, aggressive nature as did Moses and that these conflicts have left permanent traces, even though for a long time they were latent.

The hypothesis of this book is that through the efforts of Ikhnaton,

king of Egypt in the 14th century B. C. a new type of religion came into existence. This was an advanced religion which banished ritual, dogma and even belief in an after life. Freud contends that during Ikhnaton's reign there lived a man whose last name was "mose" an Egyptian word meaning child. This Moses, a high ranking member of the government in charge of an outlying province attempted to enforce these concepts which heightened their self-confidence. It did at least these things: (1) it allowed the people to share in the grandeur of its new conception of God; (2) it maintained that the people had been "chosen" by this great God and were destined to enjoy the proofs of his special favor; (3) these new concepts brought about spiritual progress, opening the way for further intellectual growth and greater instinctual renunciations. Elaborate attempts are made further in this book to show how eventually this Moses was killed and the people combined the new religion with the old, the results being Judaism as we know it in the Old Testament.

Following the traumatic and latent period we see in the rise of religion the beginning of the active period in which previous concepts come to the surface. In religion the super-ego works out actively feelings that once were active in primitive times when the sons killed the father and took the women of the tribe for themselves. The totem animal which originated in an endeavor to assuage the guilt over killing the father gave way to the projection onto God. In religion Freud sees a pattern similar to that followed by the neurotic, particularly in the obsessive-compulsion patterns characteristic of much of religious practice. In the practice of asceticism Freud saw an ability on the part of

the individual to turn his aggressiveness inwards and then put it in the service of morality. He claims that in much religious asceticism such as fasting, denial of sexual pleasure, dietary and living restrictions, the religious person is imposing on himself punishment for feelings of guilt. The more harsh and demanding the super-ego, the more rigorous the ascetic practice.

Far from saying that religion is meaningless, Freud does say that it has a basis in wish fulfillment. (The realization of the wish for a close, constant relationship with God is an example.) An illusion for Freud represents a wish fulfillment for some of the oldest desires of mankind, one that evidence suggests we are incapable of fulfilling. He doesn't characterize religion as a delusion but only as symptomatic of unrealistic wishes which have persisted since primitive time.

### iii. Psychoanalysis and Religion

Flugel points out several important relationships between psychoanalysis and religion. (1) Although analysis has taken issue with much of the dogma and belief of religion it has no power to disprove the claims made by religious groups. (2) By demonstrating the fundamental nature and infantile origin of the needs underlying religion analysis has given great significance to religious belief. While doubting the metaphysical implications of religious beliefs, analysis has taken seriously the emotional feelings of an infantile situation as a necessary condition of growth. Both demand a child-like quality as a prerequisite to healing.

Pfister<sup>1</sup> sees Christianity as an attempt to escape from the author-

1. O. Pfister, Christianity and Fear (Thomas W. H. Johnston, New York: Macmillan, 1948).

itarian father-figure and the archaic aspects of the super-ego. It is to him preeminently a son and brother religion rather than a father religion.

Flugel makes two criticisms of Christianity with respect to its attempt to deal adequately with the demands of the super-ego. They are that it has failed both to remove internal guilt and to abolish external aggression.

The implication through all of the discussion of religion by the analyst is that there are no other manifestations of religion other than those which characterize the primitive, harsh, restrictive demands of the child's super-ego. A few, like Flugel, acknowledge that the religion of Jesus did succeed in reducing guilt, replacing judgment with love, and offered effective ways of handling anxiety. Freud and his followers only emphasized the regressive and primitive aspects of religion. All religious expression need not be like that described by Freud, interpreted through the medium of the Oedipus principle. As the child must outgrow this situation Freud insisted that the adult should outgrow the necessity for religion. Suttie claims that mature Christianity does two things which enable the mature super-ego to become a blessing rather than a curse. It offers the conception of social life as based upon love rather than upon authority and thus tends to substitute a conception of the Deity as a "free-giver and forgiver" rather than as withholder, rewarder and punisher. It also emphasizes the attitude of religious behavior being concerned with good social relationships between men rather than with

the individual duty of every man toward his God. It is only the anxious, jealous regressive child that clings to his dependency with marked ambivalence and jealousy. So with growing religion Suttie maintains, the primitive demands are outgrown and replaced with qualities described before.

#### iv. Neo-Freudian Criticism

Suttie sees in these two qualities a parallel of what happens with a child in its relationship to parents. As the child grows up both apprehension and expectation from the parents are diminished. He recognizes them to be good and kind rather than harsh and judgmental. As his love and confidence in the parent figures grow so also does his social activity. No longer is he jealous of others, but finds himself able to play happily with others. Only the anxious, jealous regressive child that clings to his dependency with marked ambivalence and jealousy shows increased negative behavior. Suttie claims that Freud made the error of assuming all religions had to deal with the Oedipus complex; Suttie affirms that mature religion transcends such a complex even as do adults who have achieved maturity.

Fromm in Escape From Freedom (1941) and Man For Himself (1947) insists that while Freud explains religion as a form of neurosis that neurosis is actually a form of religion. For Fromm religion brings a frame of orientation and devotion, one of the necessities for man as he seeks to find meaning and purpose for his life. Fromm stresses the fact that a large number of man's strivings cannot be explained by the force of his instincts. After he has found food, drink and sex his real problem

begins. Man's real needs transcend those of his animal origin. He has an imperative drive to restore a unity and equilibrium between himself and the rest of nature, he needs a mental frame of reference from which he can derive an answer to such questions as where he stands and what he ought to do. In religion, especially those which emphasize love and freedom rather than authority and judgment, Fromm sees such a frame of reference. He describes much of religion as standing for irrational authority which is based not on competence but on power over people. Religion that intends to emphasize love, forgiveness and understanding provides a frame of reference for which modern man desperately seeks. In discussing the Oedipus complex Fromm makes a detailed criticism of Freud's theory which will be discussed in the next chapter as some neo-Freudian theories of the super-ego are discussed. In part, Fromm claims that the Oedipus myth has to be understood not as a symbol of the incestuous tie between mother and son, but as the rebellion of the son against the authority of the father in the patriarchal family; and that the marriage of Oedipus and Jocasta is only a secondary element, only one of the symbols of the son's victory, who takes over his father's place and with it his privileges.

In view of this argument that the core of neurosis is not to be found in infantile sexual striving but in an effort to find freedom and acceptance we can look to the religion of Jesus as a supreme example of a mature religion. In the "son and brother religion" which Christianity brought to us we are provided with a frame of reference, a new concept of love and authority, and are given a new concept of our own status and significance.

While Fromm does not put it in these words, the evidence suggests that he would evaluate Christianity in one way and more primitive religions in quite another.

In this chapter an attempt has been made to describe three ways in which manifestations of the super-ego can be seen in human thought and action. The system of taboo was described both in primitive and modern society. Guilt was discussed and evidence was introduced to show that it constituted one source of super-ego functioning. Religion was explained from the Freudian point of view and criticized in the light of material presented by another school of thought. Thus far we have traced the origin and development of the super-ego according to Freudian theory. In the next chapter we will present a psychoanalytic evaluation of conscience by Freud and others who are leading exponents of his thought.

## CHAPTER IV

### PSYCHOANALYTIC EVALUATION OF CONSCIENCE

Thus far an attempt has been made to trace the development of the conscience in psychoanalytic and psychological literature. Considerable attention was given to Freud's early formulations regarding the concept of repression and censorship finally resulting in the Freudian concept of the super-ego. Contributions of other psychoanalytic writers were cited as this concept was expanded.

The purpose of this chapter is to deal with certain psychoanalytic evaluations of the conscience. As the reader is undoubtedly aware, this function or agency of the mind is accepted by many writers both within and without the analytic tradition.

In this chapter the evaluation of three psychoanalytic authors concerning the conscience will be considered. These three have been chosen because to the writer they are representative of three distinct views prevailing within psychoanalysis at the present time. At the risk of being repetitious Freud's original concept of the super-ego or conscience will be stated. This statement will be brief due to the extended treatment of Freud's idea of the super-ego received in Chapter Two. J. C. Flugel, a British analyst, professor at University College, London and author of widely known psychoanalytic writings discusses the concept of the super-ego in a significant fashion in Man, Morals and Society which has been referred to previously in this dissertation. His evaluation of

the super-ego as it modifies and expands Freud's concept of the ego-ideal will be presented. Edmund Bergler, born and educated in Vienna and now practicing in Washington, D. C. is a contemporary representative of classical Freudian analysis and has been accused of being "more Freudian than Freud." He has restated the Freudian position with some new emphasis in a book The Battle of the Conscience. His treatment of the destructive aspects of super-ego function and the ultimate role this function occupies within the personality calls for critical examination.

#### 1. Freud's Evaluation of the Conscience

##### i. A Repressing Force

In the first Freudian conceptualization the idea of a censor was postulated as a consequence of the clinical evidence pointing to repressing activity which formed the primary basis for neurosis. It will be recalled that one of Freud's first and most basic discoveries was that the neurotic is a person who has at some prior stage in his life cycle resolved a powerful psychic conflict by means of repression. Freud also saw that the forces behind the resistance which are encountered in any therapeutic effort are the same that have produced and subsequently maintained the original repression. By 1920 Freud assumed that neurosis was due to conflict between repressed desires and the repressing force then called the censor. It was further shown that neurotic conflict could be reduced by ventilating the repressed impulses rather than by attempting to strengthen the repressing force. If neurotic behavior involved the inhibition of sexual or other impulses, when, in reality,

the way was open for their gratification, it could easily be assumed that the censor, far from being able and sensitive had become rigid and archaic, often tragically out of touch with the realities of adult life and of contemporary society.

ii. Its Rootage in Oedipal Complex

For Freud the neurotic conflict originates in the fact that the overwhelming power and disciplinary efforts of parents are pitted against the biologically given drives of the small and helpless child. In a sense this may be said to have been his major premise, one that is accepted by this writer and many others who cannot accept what may be called Freud's second or minor premise. His minor premise was that because the child is so completely and for such a long time dependent upon his parents, the latter's demands are relatively quickly and powerfully introjected. Freud believed that once this has happened there follows an endless battle between the super-ego and ego, on the one hand, and the id on the other. This battle he located in the family struggles of the Oedipus complex. As has been previously stated, he believed it was characteristically resolved by repressions which bring infantile sexuality and aggression under control during the so-called latency period and which, in the normal instance, are dissipated in adolescence. But, said Freud, if these repressions are initially too strong or overdone, they are not sufficiently undone in adolescence and may persist on into adult life, with the pathological consequences which we refer to as neurosis.

To put the whole discussion into a therapeutic rather than abstract context what could be clearer as the duty of the therapist than to set

about undoing, belatedly, these too-strong repressions, weakening the severity of an oversevere super-ego or counteracting disciplinary efforts of parents which have "taken" only too well. For Freud, and many others, neurosis was the consequence of repression which the ego and super-ego have turned against the forces of the id. The thesis being developed in this dissertation is exactly the opposite; namely that neurosis is rather the product of id and ego functioning in league against the super-ego.

### iii. Parent's Super-Ego Introjected

Freud himself recognized that the human infant is in the beginning "all id", and as the ego evolves it is predominantly a pleasure ego, an id-ego. It is during the period of so-called socialization, between two and six that serious conflict first arises. During this period the conflict is mainly external between parental figures and child. By the age of five the child cannot shut out the voice of authority simply by stopping his ears, he resorts to repression wherein a similar result may be produced. The internalized criticism and admonitions of parents and community are then muffled and no longer heard clearly, but they are still capable of breaking through into consciousness as depression, anxiety, and inferiority feeling. Symptoms are then formed as defenses against such feelings and sooner or later the individual involved may become a full-fledged neurotic.

Freud assumed that the therapist, confronted with such a neurotic person had only one option; to assume that the patient's super-ego was too severe and join forces as it were with the (presumably repressed) id

and thus attempt to woo the ego away from its allegiance to and domination by the tyrannical super-ego to a more friendly and understanding relationship with the id. As many critics of this Freudian position have pointed out (notably Alexander and French, Mowrer and Allport) this strategy often results in nothing beneficial to the patient but in a deep narcissistic regression. Mowrer advances the probable explanation that such an outcome is to be found in the mistaken belief that neurosis rests upon a conflict in which the ego and super-ego are aligned against the id. This writer agrees with Mowrer's position, namely that neurosis is a result of conflict between an id-dominated ego and an unassimilated or repressed super-ego, a view which will be further developed in a later chapter. If this theory is correct it can be readily seen why orthodox Freudian treatment often serves to prolong neurosis rather than to reduce it.

#### iv. Primitive Ideas in Super-Ego

Returning to Freud's concept of the super-ego it is clear that he regarded it as a more or less archaic relic of childhood and the traditional values, and morality of the race as equally outmoded carry-overs from earlier states in the history of the human race. In Civilization and Its Discontents he advances the theory that human culture is transmitted from generation to generation through the super-ego. At the same time he rejects Jung's idea of the collective unconscious dismissing the concept as being unnecessary maintaining that the super-ego has allocated to it the activities of self-observation, (one which he then does not go on to develop), repressing functions and the holding up of ideals. He indicates

that the super-ego takes over the same content as that of the parent's, it becomes the vehicle of tradition and of all the age-long values which have been handed down (in a similar way) from generation to generation. He seems not to have considered the possibility that culture and tradition while embodying some archaic and primitive ideas also has much to contribute to the growth, happiness and good of the human race. Because of this bias Freud felt that one of the primary tasks of the therapist was to reduce the strength of the super-ego. In Civilization and Its Discontents (1930) we find Freud expressing a negative opinion of the super-ego.

In our investigations and our therapy of the neuroses we cannot avoid finding fault with the super-ego of the individual on two counts: in commanding and prohibiting with such severity it troubles too little about the happiness of the ego and it fails to take into account sufficiently the difficulties in the way of obeying it--the strength of instinctual cravings in the id and the hardships of external environment. Consequently in our therapy we often find ourselves obliged to do battle with the super-ego and work to moderate its demands. Exactly the same objections can be made against the ethical standards of the cultural super-ego.<sup>1</sup>

The writer has quoted at length from Freud because this statement so emphatically declares his evaluation of the super-ego function.

#### v. Super-Ego as Deterent to Pleasure

Freud equated happiness to pleasure in the sense of instinctual pleasure. In his own experience he took many detours that required

1. S. Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents (London: Hogarth Press, Ltd., 1930), p. 139.

pain and discomfort as he searched for insight and knowledge concerning personality, its patterns and drives. On the one hand he shows a penetrating grasp of the reason why human growth is always difficult and filled with much dissatisfaction. In his concept of the pleasure principle having full sway in the child and giving way to the reality principle in the adult, a principle which requires postponing immediate satisfaction for the pursuit of long-term goals, he stated a principle with which this writer is in full agreement. He also correctly insisted that the reality principle does not involve a repudiation of the pleasure principle but rather a refinement and channeling of it. Why, sensing all this and outlining it in such clear terms Freud failed to assign to it the real significance it appears to have for a total theory of personality remains a mystery.

It is surprising that he could overlook the evidence for "conscience pleasure" (Mowrer's term) or as Allport puts it, satisfaction from "propriate striving" which is more than the limited pleasure gained by brief and indirect gratifications of his instinctual impulses. This writer suggests that in adult life man replaces immediate infantile instinctual pleasures by more enduring satisfactions which are to be found in the achievement of religious and moral values; satisfactions which may be experienced more by following the demands of the conscience than by decreasing the strength of such demands. While acknowledging the contribution of Freud in giving the concept of super-ego and assigning to it certain harsh, destructive functions, we find clinical evidence for another function by which the super-ego nourishes some of the basic values and atti-

tudes which undergird a mature personality.

#### vi. Anxiety and Super-Ego Function

To look further into this issue which marks the difference between Freud's concept of the super-ego function and this writer's, let us turn to his concept of anxiety. Here we find that Freud is again convinced of the essentially negative function of the super-ego. It will be recalled that he put forth two theories of anxiety. The first suggested that anxiety occurred whenever the powerful force of libido, essentially sexual in nature, was frustrated. Under normal conditions when libido was discharged it was experienced as pleasurable; when repressed it became painful, manifesting itself as anxiety. Freud further suggested that the presence of anxiety indicated a primitive impulse about to erupt into consciousness. The task of the therapist in dealing with anxiety thus became clear. It was to reduce the force of the repressing agency--the super-ego--and allow the blocked impulse to come into consciousness and find appropriate gratification. Such reasoning could only lead to the conclusion that the super-ego and ego were functioning in league against the id. If the goal of life was to find more adequate opportunities for id expression the super-ego was the villain to be dissipated. It is this theoretical belief that we find it necessary to question. To Freud must go undiminished credit for this first formulation of anxiety. His conclusion as to what produced the anxiety is open to reconsideration.

The second theory of anxiety represents a considerable advance over the first. In brief, Freud suggested in this second theory that anxiety

was not merely transformed libido, but rather an anticipation of some kind of social punishment or disapproval which is set off whenever repressed impulses (sexual or aggressive) threaten to return to consciousness and demand expression.

This theory seems quite valid until we attempt to explain why people most free in their sexual expressions are often most anxious. Nor does this theory help in understanding feelings of inferiority and inadequacy which stem not from regret over things that have been done but from regret over goals that have not been achieved. In other words it seems to this writer that anxiety can arise not only because man's sexual and aggressive impulses press for gratification, but also because man's impulses toward goodness, love and gentleness press for realization through the function of the super-ego, a function which may also become a source of the more noble, moral and religious impulses which have been a part of the human experience since the beginning of man.

In the New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (1933) Freud speaks of this second theory of anxiety and lays down one of the fundamental premises of psychoanalysis. Because of its vital relation to the problem under discussion the two paragraphs in which he sums up the discussion of anxiety are quoted in part.

The division of the mental personality into a super-ego, ego and id, which I spoke about in the last lecture, has forced us to take up a new position with regard to the problem of anxiety. In assuming that the ego is the only seat of anxiety, and that only the ego can produce and feel anxiety, we have taken up a new and secure position, from which many facts take on a

new aspect.

I cannot tell you all the individual steps of an investigation of this kind; let it suffice to say that, to our astonishment, the result was the reverse of what we had expected. It is not the repression that creates the anxiety, but the anxiety is there first and creates the repression! But what sort of anxiety can it be? It can only be fear of a threatening external danger; that is to say objective anxiety..<sup>1</sup>

For Freud, this objective anxiety involved the internal feeling of the boy for his mother as an external object. But this being in love seems to the boy to be an internal danger, which he must avoid by renouncing his object, because it involves an external danger situation.

The basic question is this. If it is not the repression that creates the anxiety, but the anxiety that is there first and creates the repression, what is threatened in the experience which produces anxiety? Freud thought it was the instinctual impulses motivating the child toward the parent of the opposite sex. In a way this is the only conclusion he could reach considering his belief that the end of man was to find more adequate opportunity for expression of his libidinal impulses.

May in The Meaning of Anxiety (1950) comes closer to our proposed answer to the question when he writes

The threat is to something in the 'core' or 'essence' of the personality. Anxiety is the apprehension cued off by a threat to some value which the individual holds essential to his existence as a personality. The threat may be to physical or psychological life, or it may be to some other value which the individual identifies with his existence..<sup>2</sup>

1. S. Freud, New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, pp. 118-119.
2. R. May, The Meaning of Anxiety (New York: The Ronald Press, 1950), p. 191.

This discussion of anxiety is relevant here because it is a major factor in repression, one of the primary functions of the super-ego. The theory here advanced is that what is threatened when anxiety appears is not always the break-through of primitive impulses into consciousness but many times it is occasioned by the rise into consciousness of what Hadfield in Psychology and Morals calls "the voice of the repressed good." This repressed good is objective and not merely an extension of the person's super-ego.

#### vii. Strength of Super-Ego Should be Diminished

In summary, Freud's concept of the super-ego as a more or less archaic relic of childhood plus the traditional values of morality has been reviewed. It has been further shown that Freud assumed the super-ego and id to be in league against the ego in its attempt to cope with the reality principle of the external world. Freud believed that the instinctual demands of the id had to find expression either through direct gratification or in the process of sublimation. Because of this he believed the strength of the super-ego should be diminished so that the ego could permit such gratification to occur. His concept of anxiety has been developed as an illustration of the way in which he believed the super-ego functioned. The final paragraphs were devoted to a criticism of the Freudian evaluation of the super-ego ending with the suggestion that this function rather than acting as the agent of the instinctual forces was actually the potential agent of the forces of love, truth and beauty. These forces while linked to those of the instincts, yet transcend the biologically given drives.

## 2. Flugel's Assessment

### i. Earlier Anticipations

Flugel shows how Freud's concept of the super-ego was anticipated by other writers. He indicates that these other writers agreed to the positive factors inherent in a concept of "self-regard" or "guiding fiction." Baldwin, McDougall and Adler all anticipated to some extent the Freudian formulation of the super-ego. Baldwin, writing as early as 1897 referred to something within the self that demands obedience to its claims and at the same time something the nature of which is determined by social and moral influences from outside. McDougall as early as 1907 speaks of the "sentiment of self-regard" which he describes as a standard by which the individual regulates, or at least passes judgment on his own conduct. McDougall thus recognizes both the existence and great moral influence of the ideal self, together with the fact that it is acquired from models (parents) in the environment. McDougall at that time, however, took no account of the concept of unconscious forces or of the possible negative consequences that might come from the sentiment of self-regard. Adler, a follower of Freud until his secession from the psychoanalytic school in 1912, early formulated a theory that fundamental to human nature is a will to power or an urge to achieve superiority. He contends that early in life when it becomes painfully evident that we are not superior but actually inferior in many ways, we erect a "guiding fiction", an ideal corresponding to that which we are not but which we would like to be. This "guiding fiction" corresponds in

some important ways to Freud's concept of the ego-ideal, one which he never developed to any extent believing that even if the super-ego had the ability to hold before the individual a good image that it would be distorted by the more aggressive and unconscious aspects of this particular function of the mind. Adler attributes the origins of the "guiding fiction" largely to the individual's effort to compensate for inferiority. Like McDougall, Adler suggests that the "guiding fiction" is primarily an asset to personality and makes no allowance for the possibility of negative consequences resulting from a failure on the part of the individual to realize the "guiding fiction."

#### ii. Two Aspects of Super-Ego

Flugel suggests that Freud inferred there were at least two parts of the super-ego; that part which was unconscious and not accessible to consciousness containing the aggression, hate and cruelty which arise as a consequence of the given components of personality, and the ego-ideal representing the more or less conscious moral precepts which a person maintains for himself and which arise as a consequence of his own interaction with parents and others in the external world.

Odier and Bergler suggest that the term 'super' is generally associated with a more conscious as opposed to a subconscious level in psychology and with a 'higher' rather than a 'lower' value in ethics, and therefore tends to be understood in ways different from and actually contrary to those intended by Freud in this connection. They would call the unconscious and more aggressive aspects of the super-ego the "super-id" to emphasize especially the characteristic of being unconscious which it

shares with the Freudian id. Alexander, speaking in a similar fashion, prefers to use the 'super-ego' for the more unconscious and irrational elements, and the 'ego-ideal' for the more conscious and adaptable ones.

### iii. Importance of Ego-Ideal

Flugel acknowledges that Freud failed to follow up the ideal aspects of the super-ego and concentrated his attention too exclusively on the introjective and aggressive factors of the super-ego. He admits that Horney and other neo-Freudians (whose views we shall examine in some detail in the next chapter) have a point when they distinguish between an ideal self toward which the individual strives through many and devious routes and the childish "search for glory" which reflects one of the unrealistic demands of the super-ego. Flugel contends that within this aspect of the super-ego called the ego-ideal, presupposing adequate and environmental experiences there exists the possibility of constructing an ideal which is both practical and attainable through individual striving and effort. He keeps reminding the reader however, that much misery in life is a result of the individual's failure to reduce unrealistic and unreasonable aspirations and requirements of the super-ego. He seems to favor thinkers of the eastern cultures who suggest that man will find more happiness by reducing his desires so that he will be satisfied with less. The other side of such an argument is obvious. While one manner of securing happiness is to reduce desire another method is exactly the opposite; namely that of making such efforts as may be necessary to bring about a greater measure of fulfillment. This approach, called by Allport, 'proprie striving' is seen particularly in the quest of religious people

who endure all types of deprivation, frustration and agony in their attempt to shorten the gap between their real self (ego) and their ideal image (ego-ideal). To be sure there exists in many an obsessive compulsion which is undesirable and in others a hopelessly high goal which tends in the long run to reduce both interest and achievement.

Flugel appears to this writer to be on more solid ground when at the conclusion of his arguments he suggests that it is the task of mental hygiene to discover the optimum ideal that is neither too far above nor too far below the level of capacity. He seems to imply that there could be both a diseased and a healthy super-ego function and that between the two might be found some important differences. The healthy super-ego would be able to discriminate between unrealistic and realistic demands of an idealistic nature; it would tend to reduce the more primitive and archaic demands of the unconscious aspects of its function; it would show characteristics of forgiveness rather than judgment, interpretation rather than condemnation. In short, a healthy super-ego would provide incentive for meaningful striving on the part of the individual, it would help develop a flexible and growing morality, while acknowledging the power of instinctual demands it would point the way to other demands as powerful and infinitely more satisfying which the individual ought to heed.

### 3. Bergler's View

Bergler in two works The Battle of the Conscience (1948) and The Super-Ego (1952) has restated the Freudian position especially with re-

spect to the aggressive aspects of the super-ego. He notes that a large part of the super-ego is inaccessible to consciousness. In particular he speaks of the aggressive and destructive parts of the super-ego, those containing the accumulation of hate, anger and frustration which the child feels so deeply in his early years. Bergler expands Freud's original observation about the severity of the super-ego and suggests that it is due to a recoil against the self of aggression caused by frustrating objects in the outer world and a corresponding amount of repressed impulses of aggression which exist independent of the child's relation with persons or objects in the outer world.

#### i. Aggressive Aspects of Super-Ego

Bergler chooses to develop almost exclusively Freud's emphasis on the aggressive aspects of the super-ego. He dismisses the importance of human relations or "disturbed relations" as being of little consequence in understanding the super-ego function. He also dismisses with equal ease the more conscious or rational aspects of the super-ego designated in this work as the ego-ideal. According to Bergler's thesis it is the "unconscious inner conscience" alone which has the final say in human behavior. This inner conscience consists primarily of the "daimonian" or the repressed impulses of aggression arising out of instinctual demands coupled with the aggression which the person has taken unto himself primarily over the long years of infancy when he was helpless and dependent on external authorities.

In his book Beyond The Pleasure Principle, it will be recalled, Freud put forth a theory according to which at the outset of the life of

the human organism the instinct of aggression, or the death-instinct, is being opposed and bound by the libido, or life-instinct. A fusion of the two instincts ensues, and gives rise to sadism. (This concept was discussed in detail in Chapter Two.) In order to escape from being destroyed by its own death-instinct, the organism utilizes its narcissistic, or self-regarding libido to force the former outward, and direct it against its objects. Parallel with this deflection of the death-instinct outward against objects, a similar type of reaction goes on within, with an internal reaction of defense being raised against that part of the death-instinct which could not be externalized.

Bergler, Klein and others feel that the danger of being destroyed by this instinct of aggression sets up an excessive tension in the ego, which is felt by it as an anxiety, so that it is faced at the very beginning of its development with the task of mobilizing libido against its death-instinct. Because of the fusion of the two instincts the ego can only imperfectly fulfill this task. A division therefore takes place in the id by which one part of the instinctual impulse is directed against the other. Bergler maintains that this apparently earliest measure of defense on the part of the ego constitutes the foundation stone of the development of the super-ego whose excessive cruelty and aggression can thus be accounted for by the fact that it is an offshoot of a very intense destructive instinct, continuing along with a certain proportion of libidinal impulses very large quantities of aggressive ones.

#### ii. Dynamic Negative Qualities

Bergler then goes on to make a significant observation, namely that

while many writers in psychoanalysis have considered the conscience merely as a restricting censor, it has become clear to him that the unconscious inner conscience is a dynamic force with decisive results for the personal history of the individual.

Bergler does not acknowledge the possibility that this dynamic force of the unconscious conscience could be the source for something good and meaningful. Biased by his belief in the instinctual theory of personality he does not allow for the finding of happiness through other than the instinctual gratification. To be sure one must find such pleasure, but evidence is overwhelming to suggest that this is a limited rather than an ultimate source of real happiness. By the term happiness the writer refers to a sense of lasting achievement, one which is not temporary and fleeting as is instinctual pleasure but one which is experienced in spite of frustration, pain and denial. Bergler's real value to our understanding of the super-ego and its function is in his emphasis on its instinctual beginnings. His error is in assuming that such beginnings can never be transcended.

While working on this section the writer is spending some time at the ocean. While sailing the other day he felt a strange attack of anxiety. Following Bergler's thesis the cause should have been discovered in some instinctual demand that was about to erupt into consciousness. Later in discussing the experience with his wife the writer finally deduced that the anxiety had its source in a desire to get on with the writing and that while the sailing episode offered opportunity for instinctual

gratification, the writing offered opportunity for a real sense of achievement, which would long endure when the former had passed away. Acknowledging that anxiety could have its source in instinctual demands and that often its source is to be found not in one but in two directions, this illustration is offered to show that many times conscience rather than being a restricting censor, acts as a dynamic force urging the person on toward the goals which he regards as important to him. Yielding to conscience demands in this instance brought infinitely more satisfaction than concentrating on reducing them.

Bergler is correct in reminding us that the super-ego is not simply a necessary restrictive institution. He is only partially correct when he maintains that it is the anti-hedonistic force in the personality over-run with derivatives of the death-instinct. He assumes with Freud that the accumulation of experience which is stored in the super-ego represents only destructive remnants of human nature. Never does he allow for the possibility that the experience of the race also includes some positive factors and that relations with parents and others, along with providing for an accumulating of hate and anger, also often result in the experiencing of love and affection. Starting with given biological and fixed drives Bergler selects only the evidence which helps maintain this original presupposition.

### iii. Three Types of Super-Ego Functioning

In one chapter<sup>1</sup> he does suggest that in persons who are not psychotic, three main techniques are used in coping with the super-ego. The so-

1. E. Bergler, The Battle of the Conscience, Chapter XV.

called normal conscience when confronted with an unconscious wish, of an instinctual nature, automatically gives a "stop" signal. As a consequence these wishes are driven back into the repository of the unconscious, emerging either as raw material for dreams or reappearing in a sublimated form after being transformed into a socially approved function. Evidently a normal conscience for Bergler consists of one that cannot be bribed. Its primary function, that of censoring is impossible to impregnate.

The neurotic conscience differs from the normal, according to Bergler, in that the "stop" signal is only the beginning of an inner drama of compromise and eventual corruption. He feels that this type of conscience allows inner wishes to be modified and at points find license for gratification in exchange for depression, anxiety and guilt, all of which are accepted by the neurotic conscience in return for the privilege of certain id gratification.

The "criminotic" conscience is even more corrupt and demanding. The deepest core of the criminal's conflict is the pre-oedipal helplessness and the feeling that the mother and her successive representatives do not believe that the child can help himself, even in revenge. If this pre-oedipal helplessness has been particularly intense and overwhelming, in adult life the person's behavior becomes criminal according to Bergler, in direct connection with the amount of inner passivity he once experienced and the intensity of the masochistic expression needed for the solution of the infantile conflict.

#### iv. Super-Ego Primarily Unconscious

For Bergler, conscience may function on any of the three levels men-

tioned above. He does suggest that with most people there is seen a variation of all three levels manifested at different stages of life. For him the super-ego, its ego-ideal and daimonian function are unconscious and inaccessible to conscious control or modification. He appears to place his emphasis on a psychology of the unconscious rather than the conscious. In this regard he counteracts a tendency in Freud's writing to move in the opposite direction. He feels that the ego is weak and totally unfitted for its role in helping the individual to actualize the reality principle. Agreeing with Freud and others that the long stage of infancy with its dependence and helplessness makes necessary the rise of the super-ego function he goes on to explain much of the later aggression of the super-ego by the passivity attached to infancy rather than the sexual urges of the infant toward the parent.

In general, the Oedipus complex is frequently misunderstood and means only that 'the boy desires his mother sexually.' Its pre-history, which is suffused with fright, terror, massive passivity, is entirely disregarded. The boy's identification with the father's 'cruelty' has one major purpose; to counteract passivity by demoting the Giantess.<sup>1</sup>

At this point Bergler is nearer in viewpoint to Suttie, Fromm and Horney in their contention that sexual desire is not the core of neurotic development. Here is implied that a disturbance in human relations is at the heart of the problem. He ignores this implication however, and goes on to reiterate the Freudian position that the super-ego is determined by certain biologically given factors and that they are impossible to modify.

1. E. Bergler, The Battle of the Conscience, p. 272.

He does acknowledge that the restrictions of the culture are man-made and therefore can be modified. He feels that the proper social and parental relations are important where cultural factors are involved; where super-ego restrictions are involved he feels that only analysis with its ability to probe into the unconscious can resolve the conflict.

#### v. Super-Ego as Agent of Death-Instinct

Bergler's position seems to imply the following: (1) The core of the super-ego consists of the introjected educational authority (mother, father and their successive representatives); what is introjected is not the real parents but the mother and father as the child sees them through the eyes of his own projections as has been noted previously in our discussions of the English analysts. (2) The super-ego is not a benevolent institution. While containing some fragments of the life-instinct, it contains primarily the accumulation of hate and anger resulting from the long stage of passivity experienced in infancy. (3) The real function of the super-ego is to impose exaggerated and unrealistic restrictions on the id, that the ego cannot take. (4) In the so-called normal conscience function complete restriction is achieved thereby keeping id impulses from gaining a foothold in consciousness; in the neurotic and criminotic conscience the super-ego function is susceptible to bribery, allowing many id impulses to find expression without first undergoing socialization through the process of sublimation. When this occurs the super-ego accepts the penalty of guilt, unhappiness and depression. (5) All of these statements are predicated on the belief that the goal of human life is to find opportunity for more complete instinctual gratification. These state-

ments also presuppose the validity of Freud's life-death instinct theory.

Bergler's basic belief that the ego-ideal is unconscious does not seem to be upheld by other evidence. Such a belief also leads to the conclusion that we are unaware of our most primary desires, and hence not responsible for what happens, either positive or negative. He also assumes that the only approach to the super-ego is to diminish its strength, in order that more id impulses can find gratification.

This writer has been contending that the super-ego while embodying considerable aggression arising from the passive situation of infancy, also holds many positive strivings, among them those which seek to transcend the primitive id impulses. It is one thing to give up certain sexual expressions because the super-ego function indicates they are "bad"; it is quite another to give them up because something infinitely more satisfying and lasting has been found to take their place. Bergler is right in his evaluation of many of the functions of the super-ego. Unfortunately he describes what to this writer is only the childish and immature conscience. His emphasis on unconscious functions of the super-ego is difficult either to affirm or contradict. He follows a thin line of inference without adequate support of his theories. Any kind of moral control presupposes that an individual has some awareness of his motives and behavior and that such awareness presents the condition for his being responsible. To follow Bergler's argument to its logical conclusion would remove any sense of responsibility from man for an overwhelming amount of his behavior.

Bergler assumes further, that if a sharp discrepancy exists between

the ego-ideal and the ego that the only solution is to set about lowering the ego-ideal, bringing it into harmony with the ego that exists. An alternate course of action would be to see what could be done to enable the ego to achieve its ideal. Instead of reducing everything to its lowest possible common denominator, one may find real satisfaction and achievement by becoming the kind of person his ego-ideal indicates he is destined to be.

In this chapter the views of three representative psychoanalytic writers have been presented and critically discussed. It has been shown that Freud, Flugel and Bergler agree that the super-ego is formed because of certain biological determinants; namely the presence of the life-death instinct battle and the long period of passivity through which every person passes in infancy. They also agree that the super-ego and id functions are in league against the ego. The super-ego contains accumulations of aggression and hate rather than love and other components of the life-instincts. It is for them primarily a censoring function, seeing as its chief aim the repression of id impulses seeking entrance into consciousness. The more positive aspects of the super-ego, referred to in this writing as the ego-ideal are thought to arise only from the infant's unlimited search for power and glory. They are therefore seen as negative rather than positive components.

We have acknowledged the human origins of the super-ego function, and have also acknowledged the presence of much aggression and hate within the super-ego. Yet we have suggested that these constitute only a part of the content of this function. We have seen in the concept of the ego-ideal

the existence of something which is both able to be modified and a goal toward which the individual may strive with some reasonable sense of expectation. It has been suggested that while in infancy the child sees his goal as that of satisfying instinctual desires, in coming to adult life he develops other desires of moral and religious aspirations. Such qualities as the search for truth, the capacity to love in altruistic devotion, the desire to grow intellectually and spiritually, can become goals with as much drive and impetus as the more physically limited goals of the child. It was finally suggested that rather than seeking to reduce the claims of the super-ego, one should, after careful evaluation search for ways by which its demands can be augmented rather than diminished. In the next chapter an evaluation of certain neo-Freudian concepts of the conscience will be considered. These concepts will be related to those presented in this chapter and they will be critically discussed as the material is presented.

## CHAPTER V

### SOME NEO-FREUDIAN CRITICISMS

In the previous chapter the psychoanalytic concept of the conscience was discussed and critically evaluated. The views of Freud, Flugel and Bergler formed the basis of the chapter. It was shown that all three agree the super-ego is formed because of certain biological factors; namely the battle of the life and death instincts and the long struggle of dependence with assertive needs through which every person passes in infancy. These three further agreed that the super-ego and id are likely to function in league against the ego. Finally, they consider the aggressive and destructive aspects of the super-ego to have more strength than the conserving and integrative tendencies emerging into the ego-ideal.

The writer has contended that although the super-ego has a repressive role, it is also the source of man's sense of responsibility, his desire to search for the truth, his attempt to love rather than hate. Granting man has certain biological needs such as hunger for food and sexual expression, he is able to transcend the primitive needs and struggle to give expression to other potentials within himself manifesting his own integrity, discovering more about the world of nature and human nature, and further exploring the potentialities of his own being. It is proposed that rather than seeking to reduce the claims of the super-

ego, one should, after careful evaluation search for ways in which its demands can be implemented rather than diminished.

### 1. Neo-Freudian Views

In this chapter some neo-Freudian views of the conscience will be presented. In particular, the concepts of the two neo-Freudians will be discussed in more detail: those of Erich Fromm and Karen Horney. Both were trained in psychoanalysis in Europe, Fromm as a non-medical analyst; and Horney through her training in medicine. Both practiced psychoanalysis in its traditional orthodox sense for more than fifteen years. They began to modify theories and practices in their analytic practice primarily as a result of two things; clinical evidence which suggested repeatedly that the many complexities of human behavior could not always be reduced to instinctual strivings nor traced back to infantile experiences, and a removal from Europe to the American scene where the cultural and social factors in the molding of personality were recognized, while the European School continued to emphasize biological and instinctual factors as the primary causes.

The term "neo-Freudian" designates the view of those persons who accept certain basic trends of thought concerning the role of unconscious processes and the ways in which they find expression, and hold to the analytic form of therapeutic treatment that brings these processes to awareness, yet deviate from the orthodox theories of Freud and differ with many of his interpretations.

For example, neo-Freudian writers agree that in his discovery of

the Oedipus complex -- the importance of the infantile relation with parents -- Freud made a profound contribution to our understanding of personality. They take issue with his assumption that sexual desires are at the root of this relation and Horney, for example, believes that fixations on the parents do not arise so much because of biological reasons as they do from describable conditions in the family relationships. Early relationships in their totality mold the character and while sexual factors play a part they constitute but one of many.

In discussing the neo-Freudian view of conscience it will be necessary to consider the basic personality concepts held by these two writers, for only in the light of such concepts can we discover their evaluation of the conscience. The method of criticism will be primarily by contrast with the Freudian position. By examining the comparative and contrasting views of these neo-Freudian writers and evaluating them the work of these analysts will reveal significant aspects in the developmental view of the conscience.

Although Horney's first publication on New Ways in Psychoanalysis<sup>1</sup> (1939) antedates by two years Fromm's Escape From Freedom, his concepts were well-known to Horney and according to her testimony played a vital role in determining her own theories and concepts. In this chapter Fromm's concepts will be discussed first, then Horney's and finally a comparison of the two.

1. K. Horney, New Ways in Psychoanalysis (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1939).

## 2. Fromm

### i. Vitality of Relationship

In Escape From Freedom<sup>1</sup> (1941) Fromm lays the groundwork for his concept of personality and evaluation of the conscience. He departs from Freudian psychology, which is individualistic in emphasis, and talks of social psychology implying that it is not man attempting to satisfy his instinctual desires, but man in relation to man within the social environment that constitutes the area of concern for psychology. He believes that the key problem of psychology is that of the individual's relatedness toward the world of nature and human nature and not that of the satisfaction or repression of this or that instinctual need. He further assumes that the relation between man and society is not a static one determined by biological factors. Freud saw man's nature as essentially unchanging and different from the demands of society, and concerned with the satisfying or frustrating of these given drives. Fromm believes that society has not only a suppressing function but also a creative function, that in a real sense it determines much of man's nature and desire. In the interaction of man and society Fromm sees a great deal of flexibility and opportunity for modification. In other words, he believes that psychological forces are socially conditioned.

There are two types of needs; (1) the physiologically conditioned needs like hunger and thirst which can be summarized in the notion of a need for self-preservation. (2) The other type of needs are rooted not in the physical process but in the essence of the human mode and practice

1. E. Fromm, Escape From Freedom (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1941).

of life: namely the need to be related to the world outside oneself and avoid loneliness. Both sets of needs are subject to adaptation, change and variation in emphasis depending upon social and cultural conditions.

### ii. Spontaneity

In his first work Fromm contends that as man gained freedom in the sense of emerging from the original dependence upon others to become an "individual", he was confronted with the necessity of uniting himself again with the world in what he calls the "spontaneity of love and productive work". Otherwise he would relapse to a kind of abject security with man and the world which eventually would destroy both his freedom and the integrity of his individual self.

In the loss of external authority and the rise of internal authority, symbolized by Luther's and Calvin's position in the reformation, Fromm sees a further attempt to deny man an opportunity to express himself with spontaneity. He contends that internalized authority appearing in the form of conscience or super-ego rules with a harshness as great as external authority, and that its dictates are not governed by demands of the individual self but by social demands which have assumed the dignity of ethical and moral norms. They are even harsher than external demands because the person feels them to be his own orders, and rebellion against self is even more costly than rebellion against external authority.

### iii. Inner Dynamism

In developing his idea of the authoritarian conscience Fromm utilizes several other concepts to form his view of man. He believes that destructiveness is not an inevitable consequence of the death instinct but arises

only when growth and freedom are threatened. The amount of destructiveness to be found in individuals is proportionate to the amount to which the expansiveness of life is curtailed. He believes life has an "inner dynamism" of its own which tends to grow and to be expressed. Destructiveness results not from a fixed instinctual drive, but from unlived life.

One might immediately question why there is so much unlived life if persons have a tendency to grow and live. Fromm answers by saying that man has real ambivalence toward accepting the progressive role of growth that society has thrust upon him. While on the one hand he wants freedom and its fruits of spontaneity in the expression of his sensuous, emotional and intellectual capacities, he also feels powerless and helpless as he sees the world about him. For many persons the freedom offered by the separation from primary bonds is too much; they are driven into new bondage and while never recapturing their lost security symbolized by the parent-child relationship they find comfort in forgetting their self as a separate entity. In this regression the individual substitutes a pseudo-self for the real self. This pseudo-self becomes for Horney the "idealized image", for Riesman in The Lonely Crowd it is the "other-directed self." Whatever name is chosen this false image performs the same function. It is an agent not for the real self but for external authority that is internalized, bringing with it occasional feelings of security but only at the cost of losing the feelings, thoughts, and desires of the real self. What is repressed consists not only of the feelings of helplessness and anger which were dominant in infancy but also the very best

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things which belonged to the real self.

Freud talked of free association as a process in which a person tries to uncover this real self of which Fromm speaks. In the expression of spontaneous feeling one does not say what is expected but what is original, unique to the person involved. Fromm implies that here Freud stopped too soon. That along with repressing evil wishes and desires, people also repress the real self with its creative and original thrust. This writer agrees with Fromm that the authoritarian conscience, with its function of upholding external beliefs or those alien to the individual, is negative and thwarts growth by forcibly repressing the aspirations striving for expression within the personality.

#### iv. Freedom

Fromm thus sees the function of conscience arising out of man's problem in handling his emerging freedom. In the rise of Protestantism he sees the emphasis on the internal feeling of the person as opposed to the external authority of the church. This is one manifestation of the authoritarian conscience, which for him is the voice of an internalized external authority, the parent, the state, the church or whoever the authorities in a culture happen to be. In Man For Himself (1947) he expands this idea of the authoritarian conscience equating it with what Freud called the super-ego. He insists that this is only one form of conscience or rather a preliminary stage in the development of the humanistic conscience.

The good authoritarian conscience consists of consciousness of pleasing the internalized authority; a guilty conscience is the consciousness of displeasing it. When conscience functions primarily as an agent of some

authority that has been internalized but is not rooted in the real self the capacity to grow is limited. Pleasing the authority implies well-being and closeness to the authority (whether it be parent, teacher or God). The guilty conscience produces fear and insecurity, because acting against the will of the authority implies the danger of being punished and separated from the authority.

Fromm illustrates this point with the Biblical story of Cain's crime and punishment showing that what man is most afraid of is not punishment but rejection. God accepted Abel's offerings but did not accept Cain's. By thus rejecting Cain God separated him from what he needed most, namely a meaningful relation with the authority and other men. This punishment was one of which Cain had to say: "My punishment is greater than I can bear."

In man's search for freedom Fromm sees a re-enactment of this ancient problem. While separated from the primary authorities on the one hand man cannot stand on the other hand the isolation which his freedom brings. Fromm contends that one alternative to the vicious circle is escape which leads many to forsake their negative freedom for certain types of security, illustrated in the development of the authoritarian conscience. The other alternative is to realize the real self by being oneself. This happens when by spontaneous activity man once again relates himself to the world and people about him, not in the sense of a child to an all-powerful parent but as an individual with dignity and worth of his own, with ideals which are not a mere reflection of the parent's wishes but which spring from the source of his own being, ideals which are expressions of his real

self quite different from those upheld by the pseudo-self.

Fromm also argues that there is no higher power than this unique individual self. He seems to defend this idea because of the kind of supernatural authority he finds portrayed in the report of Cain and Abel. If this is the only kind of higher authority, then the writer would agree with Fromm. It appears however, that in religious experience as well as in human experience there has been change, not merely a reappearance of what originally existed in the beginning. The story of the prodigal son contrasted with the story of Cain and Abel vividly illustrates the kind of religious authority represented in the New Testament as opposed to the more primitive authority figures portrayed in Genesis. Fromm does not imply that all authority is equal. What he wants to get away from is authority that stifles, that produces stagnation and concentrates on blind obedience. Authority that recognizes the dignity and worth of persons is sought not because it must be but because it ought to be. As with Freud what Fromm sees so clearly in the human dilemma he refuses to acknowledge in the religious realm. By rejecting the instinctive basis for conscience and substituting man's quest for freedom he does, however, take a significant step forward.

#### v. Authoritarian Conscience

Building on Freud's investigations, Fromm concludes that two significant consequences occur as a result of the development of the authoritarian conscience.

(1) Man finds goodness in obedience, badness in disobedience to authority. Guilt feelings result from one's dependence on an irrational au-

thority and from the feeling that it is one's duty to please that authority. The guilt of unavoidable transgressions before authority coupled with the need for its forgiveness creates an endless chain of offense, guilt feeling and the need for forgiveness. Horney agrees with this observation giving it the term "vicious circle"; Freud called this "repetition compulsion". Freud saw this development as a consequence of the basic instinctual conflict. Fromm sees this circle developing as a result of the interaction between child and parent coupled with other authoritarian forces in the social structure. Freud thought religion in general represented irrational authority and thus explained its existence as a neurotic manifestation of the repetition compulsion described above. Fromm sees religion not as neurosis but as a system of reference. He does feel that while effective for many people it is essentially limiting because of its appeal to irrational authority and its insistence that this authority is basically different from man and as a consequence forever beyond him. He admits that the idea of being created in "God's image" transcends the authoritarian structure appearing in many religious documents and implies that if such an idea were dominant religion would lose some of its irrational aspects. Such an idea, however, he does not pursue.

(2) The other implication stemming from the internalization of authority is seen where man takes over the role of the authority by treating himself with the same strictness and cruelty. Here Fromm agrees with Freud that the authoritarian conscience requires not only that man become the obedient slave but also the strict taskmaster, treating himself as his own slave. Whether the root of this aggression is to be found as Freud

assumed in the death instinct, or as Fromm contends in the parent-child relationship where the struggle for psychological freedom is waged is beside the point; what matters is the fact that the authoritarian conscience is fed by destructiveness against the person's own self so that destructive strivings are thus permitted to operate under the disguise of virtue. In his analysis of the Oedipus complex Fromm acknowledges the validity of Freud's observation concerning the conflict between parent and child, and the child's failure to solve this authority conflict satisfactorily. Fromm sees this conflict not as a consequence of sexual rivalry but resulting from the child's reaction to the pressure of parental authority, which is itself an intrinsic part of the society in which we live.

#### vi. Humanistic Conscience

Freud's error, says Fromm, is in assuming that all conscience function is authoritarian and crippling. Where psychological freedom is experienced and where authority is not irrational Fromm sees the development of a humanistic conscience. It is a reaction of our true self to what is going on within our total personality. Its roots are in the "inner dynamism" which is a part of every person and is characterized by the strivings for justice, truth and freedom which are seen in human experience. Humanistic conscience is a function of the real self while authoritarian conscience is a function of the pseudo-self. Humanistic conscience concerns itself not so much with obedience as it does with productivity. Representing the expression of our true selves, it constitutes the reaction of our total personality, not to "goodness" or "badness" as such; but to the proper functioning or disfunctioning of our total personality. The humanistic

conscience becomes the voice of the self that potentially is in contrast to the pseudo-self, summoning us back to the true self. The true self insists on exploring its own potential, creating its own moral fiber, making its own choices, not merely because some outside authority said they were best, but because in the process of growth the true self indicated that such morality, choices and potentials were best for that particular person.

Fromm implies in this discussion that "social adjustment" is not the goal of life; that when conscience is healthy and free it often requires the person to become a non-conformist, it induces rebellion in some instances, and it is responsible for the evolution seen within the history of man and society. The source of the "inner dynamism" making all this possible is shadowy and vague within Fromm's analysis. Restricting himself to human experiences alone, it does not appear feasible to him as it does to this writer that the source of the inner dynamism could be outside the self, namely in the creative religious authority which was in the beginning and which was denied by man as he found it easier to create a pseudo-self rather than live up to the self that was created in God's image. Here however, as with Freud, the writer accepts much of Fromm's observation about authoritarian religion without agreeing to the theory inferred from that observation.

Before turning to a discussion of Horney's view of the conscience we can restate at this point the important differences between the psychological approach followed by Fromm in contrast to the approach taken by Freud.

(1) While Freud looks upon human nature as biologically fixed and de-

terminated, Fromm sees it as essentially historically conditioned. He acknowledges the importance of biological factors and pleads not for a fragmentation between the biological and cultural but for acknowledgment of their interrelation.

(2) Freud's essential principle is to look upon man as an entirely closed system, given by nature certain drives known as life and death instincts. He interprets the development of personality as a reaction to satisfactions and frustrations of these drives. Fromm sees a more valid approach to personality in understanding man's relation to the world, to other persons, and to himself. He believes that man is primarily a social being and not as Freud assumes, primarily self-sufficient and only dependent on others for satisfaction of his instinctual needs. Man's relatedness rather than the satisfaction of a specific instinctual drive is seen as the crucial problem in Fromm's psychology.

(3) Freud believes that all ideals spring from man's instinctual orientation. An illustration is found in his explanation of the sense of justice as the outcome of the original envy a child has for anybody who has more than he. Fromm holds that ideals such as those represented by truth and justice are often rationalizations, yet they can be genuine strivings, based not on instinctual demands, but on a sense of oughtness manifested by the real self.

(4) A final point of difference is one which Fromm calls the differentiation between psychological phenomena of want and those of abundance. He contends that the primitive level of human existence revolves around want. Earlier in this chapter Fromm's idea of want was elaborated.

It consists of the satisfaction of primary needs such as those found in food, water and shelter. After these needs have found satisfaction Fromm contends that strivings concerned with phenomena of abundance can be pursued. Free or spontaneous acts are always phenomena of abundance. Freud limits himself to a psychology of wants. Pleasure, for him, consists in the removal of painful tension. The spontaneous joy resulting from an experience of love and tenderness escapes him. Fromm contends that Freud's analysis is true so long as we confine ourselves to primitive and primary experience. It is here that Fromm and Freud sharply differ with respect to the function of conscience. Fromm agrees with Freud's analysis of the super-ego as being essentially destructive and crippling in its effect on the total personality. He says, however, that this for him is the authoritarian conscience, the conscience that necessarily precedes the development of another kind of conscience function seen in the operation of the humanistic conscience. After primary needs are met, after man evolves, Fromm sees him attempting to develop his real self. While not specific in defining what this real self is, he implies that it is powered by an inner dynamism which manifests itself in free and spontaneous experience and in the development of integrity, phenomena of abundance such as truth and justice and in the positive aspects of freedom which unite man with others and with the environment not in a compulsive way but freely and without denying the inherent dignity and worth of the person. In maturity the authoritarian conscience is not repressed; it is discarded and replaced by the humanistic conscience, the expression of man's mature self-interest and integrity.

## 2. Horney

### i. Core of Neurosis

Horney concerns herself primarily with neurotic conflict. She believes that culture, rather than playing a mechanical role in that it frustrates libidinal or other drives as claimed by Freud, provides the framework within which personality develops and operates. In short, specific cultural conditions engender specific qualities and faculties in people. In her first work New Ways in Psychoanalysis (1939) she indicates her growing conviction that psychoanalysis should outgrow the limitation set by its being an instinctivistic and a genetic psychology. For her the core of neurosis is found not in the sexual factors operative in the Oedipus complex but in the entirety of infantile experience combined to form a certain character structure. She believes that the person and the environment interact rather than existing independently of each other. Out of this interaction comes the experiences leading either to neurosis or to emotional health. For Horney, neurosis is prevalent because of the many adverse influences in the culture which make a child feel helpless and defenseless, resulting in a conception of the world as potentially menacing. It is this dread of potential dangers that drives the child to develop certain neurotic patterns in his attempt to cope with such a world.

### ii. Appearance of Perfection

The rise of so-called super-ego function appears as one neurotic trend permitting the child to deal with the potentially dangerous world about him. Freud, bound by his instinct theory, conceives the super-ego as an inner

agency of a primarily forbidding character, dominated by aggression and in league with the id. This function being essentially restrictive and destructive has the power to destroy. While Freud conceives the super-ego as arising from infantile love, hatred and fear, he believes it soon becomes an autonomous inner function with a primary task of repressing id forces and denying pleasure and happiness. Rather than being driven by a need for an ever-increasing perfection, as Freud assumes, Horney believes the function is motivated by a need to maintain the appearance of perfection. Such an appearance grows not out of the fixed conflict between the life and death instincts, but out of two factors; one is the total relation existing between the person and his environment including the contact with important persons such as parents and authority figures; and another is the particular capacities, tendencies and potentials operative within the individual person. This appearance of perfection is characterized by Horney as "the search for glory " (Neurosis and Human Growth, 1950). When the child discovers that his world is potentially dangerous he sets about constructing safety measures that will prevent him from being overwhelmed. Common to all, contends Horney, is the creation of an "idealized image" which at one stroke gives the person unlimited power and ability to deal with any of the dangers which life presents. This idealized image once conceived commands all the energy of the person.

The real self in contrast, consists of the alive, unique "personal center" of ourselves; the only part that can and wants to grow. The real self has a tendency to grow, it is inherent within personality. This belief is in sharp contrast to Freud's pessimistic concept of personality as

being locked in endless struggle between life and death instincts. The real self doesn't have a chance in childhood primarily because the social conditions are unavoidable. Parents are caught in their own neurotic conflicts, social pressure denies the child freedom to be, to explore, to rebel; they present a stereotype mold into which each child is thrust, often against his will. In the face of such pressure the development of the real self, fragile, sensitive and unique, is too dangerous. Hence there arises in response to both the internal and external need, the idealized self, characterized by its search for glory.

Following this line of thought we can see how for Horney the whole concept of the super-ego is changed. She regards the super-ego function as directed toward a pretense of perfection which it is necessary to maintain. It constitutes a need within the personality rather than, as, for Freud, a special agency within the ego or id. So long as the energy of the person is utilized in maintaining the idealized image this function is required. Once stripped of such a neurotic concept, Horney contends this need is not required and will disappear.

### iii. Nature of Repression

One implication arising from this point of view involves the dynamics of repression, both in the force which represses and in the factors which are repressed. Freud believed that fear of the super-ego is the force which brings about repression. Horney believes this view is too narrow. She contends that any drive or need can be repressed if it imperils another drive or need which is of vital importance to the individual. Freud argues that it is the "bad" in man that is repressed. Horney argues for more

flexibility saying that what is repressed depends on the kind of facade or idealized image which the individual feels forced to maintain. For example, the necessity to maintain a certain facade may lead not only to repressing anti-social drives but also to repressing the most vital factors in a person such as spontaneous wishes, feelings and judgments. This argument coincides with the writer's thesis that often persons repress the most idealistic thrusts of their own being and that the super-ego, while many times containing harshness and aggressiveness, often attempts to point toward the real self with its desires for integrity, love and justice.

Freud argues that the super-ego as the inner representative of moral demands and prohibitions is similar to the more conscious ideals and standards held by the individual. He believes that both, while the inner demands are more exacting, stem from a discharge of cruelty against the self. Horney, in contrast, insists that when ideals represent the standards, feelings and behavior which the individual recognizes as being part of his true self, they are different qualitatively as well as quantitatively from those upheld by the idealized self and stand in sharp contrast to the compulsive ego-alien demands set forth by the super-ego. Thus, Horney recognizes the fact that people may repress not only their so-called evil wishes, but that they also may repress the demands of the real self. She acknowledges that valid ideals may guide into maturity. They are different from the pseudo-ideals of the super-ego, they lack the compulsive and unrealistic qualities so often manifest by the super-ego and they are flexible and subject to modification as the real self grows in contrast to the inflexible and impossible goals held by the idealized self-image.

#### iv. Tyranny of the Shoulds

In Neurosis and Human Growth<sup>1</sup> Horney analyzes the "tyranny of the shoulds" and because of their proximity to Freud's super-ego they will here be contrasted with Freud's view. Horney, we have noted, believes that neurosis arises as a consequence of disturbances in human relations. She believes the idealized self-image is developed as the child attempts to cope with the potential dangers in his world. These dangers stem not from instinctual urges but from conditions existing in the world represented by people, social conditions and cultural forces. The search for glory is the essential characteristic of the idealized self-image. There are outer as well as inner attempts to maintain this search. The inner attempts are by far the stronger and can be summed up as the "tyranny of the shoulds." They comprise all that the neurotics should be able to do, feel and know. They also contain the taboos on how and what he should not be. Four basic qualities of the "shoulds" may be cited:

(1) They are characterized by a disregard for feasibility. For example, a minister well-known to this writer realizes that he cannot do extensive research, carry on a ministry to a large congregation, and fulfill a heavy speaking schedule. Yet, after attempts to reduce one of these areas of work, he persists in carrying on at the same pace. Limitation in time and energy are not for him. In this compulsive behavior Horney would see a reluctance on the part of the individual to acknowledge any of the realistic limitations imposed by being human. She would call this minister's behavior characteristic of the "search for glory" and would see it

1. K. Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1950), pp. 64-85.

stemming not from real self-striving but from an attempt to maintain the idealized self-image.

(2) Another characteristic of the "shoulds" is that they operate with complete disregard for the person's own psychic condition. By this Horney refers to what the person can feel or do as he is at present. A person who feels he should "never" make a mistake, when still in the learning part of his professional training would be an example of this condition. In a similar vein the religious person who feels he should never experience doubts would be an example of this tyrannical should.

(3) Yet another characteristic of the "shoulds" is that they have a complete disregard for the conditions under which they could be fulfilled. This writer experienced the power of this type of "should" when first confronted with the job of writing a dissertation. After extensive reading he felt that the material should flow from the typewriter in coherent and scientific fashion. Only after painful re-evaluation did he discover that undertaking such an original task made it impossible for such a thing to happen. Repeatedly persons have acknowledged in conference with the writer, acute feelings of guilt for negative feelings they harbor toward parents. These feelings have persisted even after it has been shown that there were realistic provocations for the existence of such negative feeling. To the individuals concerned however, conditions played no part in their feeling. One "should" feel kindly disposed toward parents, irrespective of what experiences one has known with them. Such an inflexible rigid standard would be for Horney an example of this characteristic of the "shoulds".

(4) The basic premise running through all the characteristics of the

"shoulds" is this: nothing should be or is impossible for oneself.

Horney acknowledges that "shoulds" are revealed clearly in demands that are directed against the past. She differs from Freud in pointing to the fact that their influence is determined not so much by good or bad done in the past as by the present needs of the person. Instead of upholding the repetition-compulsion theory held by Freud, she believes that the final determinant of any experience in the past is to be found in the individual's present organization and concept of himself. In other words, if he still needs the protection and security that he longed for as a child, past experience will have a dominant influence on him. On the other hand, if he has grown in the expression of his real self, adopted goals and ideals that are germane to his real being, then experiences of the past will lose much of their power over him and while acknowledging what they once meant, he will be liberated from their continued effect. Such a view puts the emphasis on the present rather than the past, on a dynamic rather than on a static view of personality.

#### v. Comparison and Contrast with Freudian Super-Ego

Obviously these characteristics attributed to the tyranny of the "shoulds" bear a close resemblance to Freud's description of the super-ego. The differences are as follows:

(1) For Horney "shoulds" differ in quality as well as quantity from genuine ideals and moral precepts. Freud regarded "shoulds" as constituting morality in general leaving no room for objective morality. Any ideal, for Freud, grew out of an attempt to deal with the instinctual demands. Horney, allowing for a real self, one free from external or internal author-

ity save that generated by the self in spontaneous striving indicates that "shoulds" represent only one type of morality.

As does Fromm, she acknowledges that a healthy person can exist. Such an acknowledgment however, lacks documentation. She describes the neurotic personality without revealing clearly the characteristics of a normal person. Aside from talking of the real self as being characterized by spontaneity and freedom Horney does not develop any further description of the so-called normal person. She does mention two characteristics which are observable in all neurosis, namely rigidity in reaction and discrepancy between potentialities and accomplishments. This leads one to assume that a normal person is characterized by flexibility and a realistic awareness of his desires and their relation to his actual accomplishments. The important point separating Freud from Horney here is that Freud sees no hope for the eventual emergence of a normal healthy person due to his belief in fixed and unalterable instinctual drives. Horney does recognize, that persons are not forever bound by instinctual drives, that the primary reasons for their neurotic manifestation are to be found in the culturally and socially determined influences of the society, and thus are amenable to real change. She is thus optimistic about the eventual growth of personality.

(2) Horney recognizes that both with valid ideas (stemming from the real self) and "shoulds" there is a coercive character. Unlike Freud, she insists that the source of this character differs not merely in quantity but also in quality. The compulsiveness of the "shoulds" grows out of demands of the idealized self-image, when foreign to the real self. The authority of the "shoulds" is not found in the real self; but either in some

internalized authority symbol such as parent, state, or church, or in the need of the idealized self-image to maintain its appearance of perfection. The source of the drive underlying ideals held by the real self grows out of the nature of freedom belonging to the real self, the free acceptance of self-imposed goals.

It is the distinction between pseudo-ideals designed to maintain the appearance of perfection and ideals springing from the real self that constitutes Horney's greatest contribution to our view of the place conscience can hold in the development of personality. The importance of this distinction will appear as additional characteristics if the "shoulds" are delineated. They do not aim at real change in the person but only at disposing of imperfection by denial. They lack the moral seriousness of genuine ideals.

People in their grip are not striving, for instance, toward approximating a greater degree of honesty but are driven to attain the absolute in honesty--which is always just around the corner, or is attained in imagination.<sup>1</sup>

Horney criticizes Freud's assumption that because super-ego functions tend to uphold standards they represent morality in general. She shows how many of the "shoulds" are concerned not with moral questions but with such as "I should be able to get out of a Sunday afternoon traffic jam" or "I should be able to get away with anything I want to do." Such questions are not only divorced from true moral standards but lack even a moral pretense. When "shoulds" are characterized by a spirit of arrogance and aim

1. K. Horney, Neurosis and Human Growth, p. 72.

at continuing the person's appearance of perfection and at making him god-like, then Horney contends they are the "neurotic counterfeit of normal moral strivings." Horney makes no attempt to define a "true morality" for all people. She merely claims that genuine moral striving must be connected with development of the real self and that there is inherent within the real self a desire to adopt moral goals. One is reminded of Kant's philosophical argument that conscience demands obedience to the highest known value the person recognizes. Such a value might differ from person to person and from time to time.

Horney notes that any general morality could not develop unless cultural and social conditions were similar in all places. But if persons can only rediscover their real self, live amid conditions that are conducive to self growth and exploration, the real moral goals they develop will have a similarity irrespective of the dwelling place.

(3) For Horney the source of the "tyranny of the shoulds" as well as their manifestation differs with each person. Unlike Freud, who contends that at the basis of all super-ego development is the instinctual conflict, Horney argues that we have no right to generalize from specific data about individual persons for all people. Such reasoning bears a close resemblance to Allport's argument in Personality where he says that there are no general laws for personality, only congruent individual laws for individual persons.

(4) With Freud, Horney indicates that the compulsive "shoulds" and their counterfeit moral standards are revealed most vividly in those whose idealized image lies in the direction of goodness and saintliness. She

implies that these feelings place severe restrictions on any spontaneous feelings which might linger in the real self searching for a means of expression. By implication she takes the position of both Freud and Fromm regarding religious feeling. Namely, that because it is so often seen in those pursuing an appearance of perfection it must be a negative influence and one to be regarded with suspicion. Yet if religious feelings issue from the real self their power and integrative character is astonishing. In her brief comments on religion it appears that with Fromm she would reject any religious feeling whose source was outside the individual himself. Thus while progressing a long way from the Freudian view of the super-ego in general and morality in particular, Horney is neo-Freudian in holding to a humanistic morality whose source must be human if it has any validity.

Horney finds three types of conscience: (a) one characterized by inner submission to external authorities with the corresponding fear of discovery and punishment, (b) another of "condemnatory self-accusations" issuing from the neurotic striving to maintain the appearance of perfection which is amoral in origin and immoral in effect and (c) another which manifests itself as constructive discontent with the real self. That is what Fromm terms "man's recall to himself." In her opinion only this third function can be regarded as a conscience function.

#### vi. Humanistic Conscience as Seen by Fromm and Horney

Thus far an attempt has been made to contrast the views of Fromm and Horney with those of Freud. In conclusion, let us compare the views of Horney and Fromm. There are more lines of agreement than disagreement. Both reject Freud's instinctual explanation of human behavior. Both agree

that social and cultural conditions within the environment are at the basis of neurotic difficulty, Fromm emphasizing the social conditions and Horney the disturbance in human relations. Both tend to emphasize the present rather than the past while acknowledging the vital role childhood experiences play in the development of personality, especially the relation between parent and child. Because they both see neurosis developing from conditions prevailing in the environment, they are optimistic about the future. If the conditions can be changed, they foresee the eventual lessening of neurotic development. This optimism is in sharp contrast to Freud's inevitable pessimism stemming from his closed system of biological drives which plunge the individual into endless conflict as the life and death instincts do battle with each other. Both are hazy about what constitutes the character of the real self. They agree that its observable traits are found in spontaneity, freedom from external pressure and the presence of goals arising out of convictions held by the self rather than the ideals and standards held by others. Both agree that there is a vast difference between pseudo-ideals held by those attempting to preserve an idealized self-image which embodies the appearance of perfection and god-like qualities and those valid ideals and moral goals held by the self. They see each real self as a dynamism potentially good, loving and tender and assess the task of the therapist as that of helping to destroy the false self so that the real self can grow. This is a different goal than that held by the Freudian therapist who sees his function as one of reducing conscience demands and to enable the individual to find more adequate and socially acceptable ways to express instinctual needs.

One cannot help but feel that both have analyzed only neurotic religious experience issuing from an authoritarian base. Both seem to conceptualize any god as a Frankenstein monster of a rigid and punitive character. The God concept revealed in the life of Jesus coupled with the feeling of oughtness experienced by innumerable persons who are freed from authoritarianism either does not concern them or is not in their area of awareness. Fromm presents only the authoritarian aspects of reformation religion implying that such religion is the only kind in existence.

Both Horney and Fromm do agree that when conscience functions as man's recall to his true self, then its demands ought to be heeded rather than diminished, supported rather than ignored. Yet both fail to give supporting evidence for their contention that man is potentially good, that there is in every person a striving for self-development, and that people want a true morality. To leave the source of such important qualities shrouded in mystery is the dilemma of two authors that are restricted to humanistic concepts. If for both any external authority is forbidding and punitive one can see why the possible existence of such authority is rejected by them.

Fromm explains the basic problem confronting modern man in his concept of freedom. His analysis sees man as slowly emerging from a oneness with other man and nature. This evolution while freeing man from earlier ties has left him with a type of negative freedom. Although separated from primary ties, he has yet to develop more mature ties with the real world and the people within it. Many, finding this emerging freedom too painful, sacrifice it for a false but often temporarily satisfying security

by yielding to external authorities and pressures. These people deny growth to their real self by this adoption of authority other than their own. The authoritarian conscience with its emphasis on obedience and the upholding of external authority that has become internalized is the result of this inability to deal with emerging freedom in the face of the social and cultural patterns imposed on modern man. Fromm equates this authoritarian conscience with Freud's super-ego. He goes further however, insisting that when conscience, rather than being concerned with obedience to irrational and alien authority, acts as a moral agency serving our growth, being the reaction of our true self to the proper functioning or the malfunctioning of our total personality, such a conscience is healthy. In this state it performs two vital functions: (1) it enables the person to discover more of his real potential, to develop more of the unique qualities which are inherent within his spontaneous and productive self; and (2) it provides the means by which the negative freedom now confronting modern man can be transcended resulting in a new way of relating to the physical world and the people in it. This new freedom is constantly bringing voluntary relationship rather than a compulsive relationship. The mature and creative relatedness Fromm sees as the outgrowth of humanistic psychology and its contribution to the understanding of modern man.

Horney does not picture man's dilemma in such a historical perspective, for she is more of a clinician than a sociologist. To this extent her theory of neurosis and its causes offer more clinical documentation for her criticism of Freud as well as for support of her own theoretical considerations. She finds the neurosis arising out of human relations.

Through environmental factors which obstruct the child's emotional growth she sees him developing instead of a basic confidence in self and others a basic anxiety which is defined as a feeling of being isolated and helpless toward a potentially hostile world. In an attempt to keep this basic anxiety at a minimum the child develops not his real self, but patterns of defense against people and objects in his danger-filled world. These defenses develop an integrative function called the idealized image. This image usurps the individual's drive to grow and to actualize his given potentialities. Preserving this idealized image becomes the person's main task in life and his basic conflict is between such an idealized image and the real self. While rejecting Freud's instinctual theory, Horney does finally posit two opposite forces doing battle within personality, motivations that for her are culturally determined while for Freud's they are biologically given.

She feels that the most significant conflict is that between the search for unlimited glory or power and self-hate. She sees a parallel in all human history where light and darkness have been contrasted as well as good and evil.

To the writer, the explanation of this idealized image growing out of disturbances within self and relations with others is not adequate. It does not begin to explain the power and the destructiveness which results when the true self is pitted against the idealized image in later years. It is still a theory and not a demonstrable fact that modifications in the culture will alone alter the development of the pride system. As will be shown in the next chapter, this writer believes that there is yet another

step which must be taken. It concerns the supposition that in the beginning there existed a set of environmental conditions in which the infant's world was not danger-ridden. From this sheltered nest of infancy, the child became anxious as he rebelled against the authority of parents and society and became more conscious of his own capacities. It may be justifiably suggested that this moral law which existed from the beginning and whose source was not in man but in an objective outside authority, was not consciously realized until man's consciousness had expanded and developed. To a limited extent we see a parallel between the developing relation between parent and child and man and God. As Freud, Fromm and Horney have so vividly illustrated, a great deal of the problem between parent and child results from the child's own needs and his perception of the parents rather than from the parents as they really are. In a similar vein, much of the difficulty between man and God, described by Fromm as the struggle with irrational authority, centers not so much in the God concept as in man's concept of God. Fromm sees a vast difference between Reformation concepts of God and modern concepts of God.

To us the pride system of which Horney speaks, developed partially as a result of human relations, but also as a consequence of man's effort to become like God. This may explain the tremendous power which such a system holds over the person. It also explains why changes in social and cultural conditions only partially resolve the neurotic dilemma. It also reveals why persons with religious feelings are either acutely disturbed or remarkably able to develop a creative selfhood. In this area is to be found the most potent sources of energy. Misused, such energy brings swift and pain-

ful consequences. Properly used this source of energy may strengthen the dynamic wisdom of the healthy conscience and enable man to actualize his potentials.

In this chapter we have presented neo-Freudian views of the conscience as developed by Fromm and Horney. These views have been seen in contrast with Freud's concept of the super-ego. We have found neo-Freudian views constituting a significant step toward a more adequate understanding of the conscience function. Both authors agree that conscience can outgrow its beginning. Both acknowledge that while the authoritarian conscience serves a negative function the healthy conscience may serve an indispensable function in enabling man to discover and explore his real self. Both authors realize a qualitative as well as quantitative difference between pseudo ideals and those resulting from real self-striving. They reject Freud's instinctive explanation of all human behavior and acknowledge that in man there appears a tendency to grow and strive for moral goals. Finally, it was evident that Fromm and Horney take a dim view of religion. Horney ignores the religious area. Fromm analyzes the authoritarian manifestations of religion to the exclusion of any others.

In the next chapter certain non-Freudian views of the conscience will be presented. An attempt will be made to show that they represent another step forward in understanding the conscience.

## CHAPTER VI

### SOME NON-FREUDIAN VIEWS OF CONSCIENCE

In the preceding chapters the psychoanalytic concept of the conscience has been discussed. Freud's initial development of the concept has been presented and evaluated. It was shown that the Freudian claim asserts the super-ego is formed because of certain biological factors; namely the battle of the life and death instincts and the long struggle with dependent and assertive needs through which every person passes in infancy. It has further been shown that contemporary Freudian investigators agree that the super-ego and id are likely to function in league against the ego. They also consider the aggressive and destructive aspects of the super-ego to have more strength than the conserving and integrative tendencies emerging into the ego-ideal.

In the previous chapter some neo-Freudian views have been presented. They were contrasted with Freudian views of the conscience. Differences were noted especially in the following areas: (1) Fromm and Horney agree that conscience can outgrow its early beginning whereas Freudians contend that its beginnings found in the parent-child relationship are dominant throughout life. (2) Fromm and Horney reject Freud's instinctive explanation of all human behavior as well as his emphasis on the negative aspects of the super-ego. They emphasize the positive growth factors of conscience as well as the tendency in personality to look toward moral goals

rather than instinctual gratification.

### 1. Non-Freudian Views

In this chapter some non-Freudian views of conscience will be presented. In particular the views of Gordon W. Allport, Hobart Mowrer, Rollo May and Harry Stack Sullivan will be presented. These four have been engaged in both theoretical and clinical research relating to personality theory and counseling procedure. All are non-Freudian in the sense that they modify the basic trends of his thought concerning the role of unconscious processes and the ways in which they find expression. All four go beyond the analytic form of therapeutic treatment with its emphasis on free association and unconscious patterns, and develop techniques and principles for dealing with conscious processes within an interpersonal setting. While acknowledging their indebtedness to Freud and his followers, each embarks on a new path regarding the nature of personality. The primary emphasis is on the present interpersonal relations of the individual rather than upon the past. Conscious factors are considered as more vital than unconscious phenomena. The procedure, in this chapter, will be to present the various authors' views of conscience, sketch briefly their theory of personality, and then compare and contrast their views with those presented thus far in this dissertation. These four men have been selected because to this writer their thinking about conscience, while utilizing the best from the past carries the concept forward and relates it to current thinking about personality and its structure.

## 2. The Concepts of Allport

Gordon W. Allport has been professor of psychology in Harvard University for twenty-seven years. In his writing about personality in that time he has manifested a continuing interest in the factor of self control within personality. While affirming the psychobiological nature of personality he has strongly rejected any approach to personality which places the physical factors above the psychological. In his theory he has insisted that there are no general laws governing personality growth; only specific laws for individual persons. The uniqueness of the individual constitutes one of Allport's dominant themes. Rather than accept Freud's theory of instincts he talks of "inborn dispositions" which constitute the raw material for the development of personality. They comprise at least three sets of factors. First, those which make for survival of the organism are often referred to as instincts. Second, these forming under the heading of "inheritance" associated with the family, stock, and race. Finally, there is another set of factors identified as latent or potential capacities that play a crucial role in the development of personality. Such a disposition would be what Allport calls "A disposition to form structures."<sup>1</sup> Such structures may include simple habits but they also include more complex structures such as conscience, self-concepts and a philosophy of life.

### 1. Process of Becoming

In Becoming (1955) Allport presents his mature thinking on conscience. He also reviews his earlier theory of personality claiming that personality

1. G. W. Allport, Becoming (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), p. 27.

is not present at birth either in disposition, or as the Freudians claim in instinctually given drives, but that it emerges as the infant moves from earlier to later states of development. The infant cannot possibly be a socialized being. His striving is directed toward the immediate object; it is transitory and impulsive and in no way referred to the self. As this initial layer of development gives way to a more complex one, momentary impulses are organized into patterns of strivings and interests in which the role of self-awareness plays a large part.

While acknowledging the importance of initial influences Allport contends that they need not remain dominant as later motives emerge. In Personality<sup>1</sup> (1937) he calls this "functional autonomy" meaning that the motives of adults are varied and self-sustaining and while growing out of antecedent or earlier systems they are in adult years functionally independent of them. The most dominant disposition in personality is that of individuation, the formation of an individual style of life that is self-aware, self-critical, and self-enhancing. The process of "becoming" as Allport describes it can best be understood as the effort on the part of the personality to develop his unique adjustment to the environment and give recognition to this dominant tendency toward individuation and growth.

#### ii. Theory of the Proprium

Before considering Allport's view of conscience one other concept needs to be considered--that of the "proprium." In discussing the concept of self he distinguishes between what are matters of importance to the individual and what are merely matters of fact. For example, all of

1. G. W. Allport, Personality (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1937), pp. 191-211.

us have a variety of physiological habits such as eating and sleeping habits, which are part of our existence, yet these may be segmental and peripheral. Allport recommends that we call the central regions of our life regarded as peculiarly our own the proprium. For him the proprium includes "all aspects of personality that make for inward unity."<sup>1</sup>

Among some of the appropriate aspects of personality are the following:

(1) Appearing within the first five years are three aspects possessing a heavy biological quality contained primarily within the organism itself. Bodily senses streaming together technically called "coenesthesia", involve certain organic sensations; their localization and recognition are a core of becoming.

(2) Another group distinguishing a later stage of development involve ego-extension or the expansion of what a person calls "mine" to include loved objects as well as causes, ideals and loyalties. The self-image is another appropriate function. It contains two aspects: what the person regards as his present status and what Horney calls his "idealized self-image" or what he would like to become. Irrespective of whether this image is attainable or distorted, compulsive and restrictive or wholesome and helpful, it explains much of the appropriate striving of the individual.

(3) Appropriate striving for Allport is sharply different from opportunistic striving or traditional concepts of motivation in terms of drives and their reduction. "Appropriate striving," says Allport, "distinguishes

1. G. W. Allport, Becoming, p. 40.

itself from other forms of motivation in that, however beset by conflicts, it makes for unification of personality."<sup>1</sup> And this characteristic of prop-riate striving is that it pursues long-range goals often increasing rather than reducing tension. While motivations prevalent in some aspects of becoming may have as their aim the reduction of tension, prop-riate striving goes beyond physical satisfaction of instinctual pleasure and unifies the whole personality as it seeks long-range goals conceived of in non-physical terms i.e. attainment of ideals and control of physical desires by moral values.

Allport believes that prop-riate functions do not exist at birth, but can be distinguished beginning by the age of two or three. We start at birth with an organism which develops unique modes of adjusting to and mastering the environment; these modes we call personality.

Whereas Freud and his followers claim that the instincts strive toward pleasure and that the primary striving of the personality is to reduce the tension set up by the instincts, Allport claims that prop-riate striving often increases tension. It subordinates instinctual demands for the pursuit of ideals and long-range goals that often require much immediate frustration. This also calls for a distinction between what "happens to us" and what "we ourselves do." Allport borrows Maslow's terms to describe motives, referring to deficit and growth motives. Deficit motives call for the reduction of tension and restoration of equilibrium; growth motives, on the contrary, maintain tension and deny restoration of equilibrium in the interest of seemingly unattainable long-term goals. Allport

1. Allport, Becoming, p. 68.

believes this difference is all important.

As such they (growth motives) distinguish human from animal becoming and adult from infant becoming. By growth motives we refer to the hold that ideals gain upon the process of development. Long-range purposes... are all of this order.<sup>1</sup>

The holding of long-range goals and the development of an ideal self-image are more essential for the growing person according to Allport. Conscience is that agent within the personality that controls momentary impulses, that enables the person to direct his striving and energy in a direction consistent with the ideals, and goals, growing out of his appropriate striving.

### iii. Mature Conscience

Allport sees two definite types of conscience. (1) "Must conscience"<sup>2</sup> clearly defined and analyzed by Freudians. This conscience function develops as a result of internalization of the authority system of the parents and symbols of authority prevalent in childhood. This conscience function has little to do with the person's self-image. It is primarily concerned with obedience to external values. As appropriate striving begins to manifest itself, and the child develops an ideal self-image and sense of values peculiarly his own, then conscience somehow shifts from "must" to "ought." Conscience then functions not primarily as an agent of obedience but as an agent of expression. It enables the person to make choices that are in harmony with the long-term goals of the ideal self-image. In effect it says to the person: "If you choose this goal it will help you fulfill your ideal

1. Allport, Becoming, p. 68.

2. Ibid., p. 71.

self-image; if you do that it will be damaging to your own self-chosen goals and will end in total frustration." An additional characteristic of "ought" conscience is that it shifts its interest from specific habits of obedience, and observance of group standards to broad value judgments and a high sense of individual responsibility.

Of considerable importance is Allport's contention that one type of conscience gives way to another. He sees personality as a growing structure not limited by what occurs in the first few years of existence. His is an emergent theory.

He argues with the Freudian supposition that conscience is primarily a repressive function. He feels that impulses incompatible with the ideal self-image do not always have to be repressed. Many simply evaporate. Conscience has as its primary task the guiding and directing of the personality in paths that enable it to strive toward its long-term goals rather than merely to serve as the agent of repression for desires and impulses that were forbidden in childhood.

Allport points to evidence suggesting that people are not always attempting to reduce tension. Many people deny satisfaction to certain impulses because of their desire to pursue long-term goals. What he terms "opportunistic becoming" is seen only in the small child or in the adult whose conscience development has been repressed. To explain the function of conscience therefore, as a repressive agent designed to prevent certain instinctual impulses from demanding satisfaction hardly explains the choices and behavior patterns of many adults. An immature conscience for Allport, would be characterized by fear and obedience to specific rules and regula-

tions. The mature conscience is characterized by growth; it has emerged from being the internal voice of external authority; it has developed in proportion to the person's ideal self-image; its function is seen as a rudder rather than a repressive agent; its source of authority is not in childhood admonitions or parental wishes but in the desire of the person to observe his own value system and to make those choices which bring into more complete realization the qualities inherent in his ideal self-image.

#### iv. Allport's Criticism of Freudian Super-Ego

Obviously Allport takes sharp issue with the Freudian concept of conscience. Some of the points of agreement and disagreement might be noted as follows:

(1) Allport agrees with Freud that in childhood conscience develops in directions related to parental authority and cultural practice. Its source of authority is fear of punishment. Guilt arises in early conscience over violation of external taboos.

(2) Allport argues that this kind of conscience begins to disappear as the child develops an ideal self-image. While this image is influenced by parents and cultural surroundings it has certain qualities that are uniquely its own. For example, the child may want to make something of himself, a desire which is conditioned largely by parents and society, but this desire may become specific in his intent to become a physician. He soon begins to build a scheme of values and goals which will enable him to bring this desire into actuality. This will cause frustration of many instinctual forces such as the desire for marriage and a family, an early attainment of authority, the finding of a secure position. Through the long

process of school and the economic burden of medical training these desires may be thwarted for a long time. The factor enabling such frustration of desire in favor of attainment of long-term goals Allport calls conscience. It is not so interested in repressing secondary desires as it is in helping the person attain primary goals.

(3) With his theory of emergence Allport disagrees with the Freudian supposition that persons are born with certain given instincts that can never be changed but only modified. He dismisses the idea that we are chained to infantile experience or desires. Adult systems of behavior while growing out of earlier ones, are independent of childhood and have validity in their own right.

(4) The concept of "proprie striving" is different in kind as well as degree from instinctual striving. Allport insists that other than biological factors are at the basis of human motivation. He sharply separates the human from the animal. His inference that undesirable desires and motives can simply evaporate rather than being relegated to the limbo of the unconscious is consistent with the principle of functional autonomy which he advances in Personality (1937). Implicit further in this thinking is a tendency to attach less importance to the repetition-compulsion motive which is basic to Freudian theory and practice.

(5) The unconscious as a concept or as a dynamic property has little concern for Allport. He is primarily interested in conscious processes and finds the conscience to be an agent functioning in consciousness rather than a factor making itself felt primarily in the unconscious.

(6) As Freud illustrates his theories about the unconscious and nega-

tive aspects of conscience with appropriate case material, Allport chooses illustrations that are appropriate to his more optimistic theories regarding human personality. Allport makes no attempt to account for the destructive aspects of conscience nor does he deal with the extremely harsh and punishing conscience functions which are observable in so many persons. He assumes that where people suffer from conscience guilt and fear of punishment the cause may be found in an arrested development at an earlier stage. With his concept of stage of development he would explain pathological systems in conscience functioning as due to the insufficient development of an ideal self-image or to an earlier conflict with an authority figure. In no way however, would he feel that this is the dominant characteristic of conscience functioning.

(7) A further basic difference between Freud and Allport is in their initial presupposition about human behavior. Freud starts with fixed drives and assumes all behavior may be explained as an attempt to give expression to them. Allport assumes the growth motive to be central in each person. He sees no specific motives as being automatically present but feels that each person develops his own growth tendencies and that his behavior can be explained as an attempt to attain the goals toward which his self-image aspires. In this process the function of conscience is to make choices which are in harmony with the person's self-chosen goals. This view stands in sharp contrast to Freud's assumption that instincts present at birth demand gratification throughout life, never deviating either in intensity or desire, and that conscience is a function which prevents such drives from finding gratification.

Both Freud and Allport agree that the ego-ideal or ideal self-image is of vital importance to our understanding of the function of conscience. Both imply that this image is brought into being primarily through cultural and social contacts. Both fail to explain why the image is different for each person and why the image is characterized by qualities standing in sharp contrast to what they observe in others or what their physical desires demand. Allport, not bound by Freud's instinct theory, traces the shift from "must" to "ought" conscience. Implicit in this explanation is an idea that an ideal self-image is universal to human nature, that its specific form is determined by individual differences. Whereas Freud implies that man desires instinctual gratification and an eventual return to the inorganic, Allport suggests that man really wants to be better than he is at any given time, that this desire stems neither from neurotic sources or an unresolved Oedipal situation but from a genuine striving to actualize the best potential which is within him. While not believing in innate qualities, Allport talks about emergent conscience suggesting that personality would strive toward realization of its ideal self-image irrespective of the social and cultural experiences to which it was exposed.

### 3. Mowrer

Mowrer became interested in the nature and function of conscience as he studied learning theory. In several published works, notably Learning Theory and Personality Dynamics<sup>1</sup> Mowrer advances the theory that neurosis

1. O. H. Mowrer, Learning Theory and Personality Dynamics (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1950).

is the product of id and ego functioning in league against the super-ego. He agrees with Freud's major premise concerning neurosis; namely that the neurotic conflict originates in the fact that the disciplinary and power efforts of the parents are pitted against the child during his long period of relative dependence and helplessness.

Mowrer takes sharp issue however, with what might be termed Freud's second or minor premise that infantile desires in the sexual or aggressive area are repressed by the super-ego and if "over-learned" persist through adolescence and carry on into adulthood with consequent neurotic manifestations. Based upon this assumption Freud and many others have assumed that the duty of the therapist should be conceived in terms of reducing the strength of the super-ego so that id wishes could find some socially acceptable gratification.

Mowrer contends that just the reverse of this widely accepted position is what occurs in a majority of instances. In the early years the child doesn't learn sufficiently to deal with instinctual desires and conflicts and as a consequence grows up with an unassimilated or under-developed super-ego. Because of resistance which the infantile ego raises against pressures of society and the super-ego as representative of those forces it remains id-dominated and immature. Mowrer sees the task of the therapist thus, as that of strengthening the super-ego function and considering neurosis as a consequence of a "learning deficit" rather than a "learning excess."

#### i. Theories of Neurosis

Here it might be well to review the classical view of neurosis com-

paring it with concepts held by other thinkers in the field who, while differing with many of Freud's ideas, agree as to what produces neurotic behavior.

It will be recalled from a previous chapter that Freud pictured the super-ego as playing the role within the personality which is at first played by an external power, namely the parents. He argues that the super-ego takes the place of the parental function and for the rest of the person's life controls, punishes and threatens the ego in a way similar to that carried out by the parent during the early years.

In Mowrer's terms, neurosis was for Freud both a "disorder of conditioning" and a "disorder of problem solving."<sup>1</sup> In every instance Freud believed one of the central problems was the over-severity of the super-ego.

While in many instances the clinical evidence revealed an excess of discipline and harshness on the part of parents, many clinical pictures lacked documentation in this regard. Although this lack of evidence puzzled Freud, he nevertheless insisted that somewhere the influence on the super-ego was excessive and needed to be reduced. A corollary of this belief is found in his instinctual theory which claims that the primary aim of the person is to achieve instinctual satisfaction.

Along with the assumption that neurosis arises as a consequence of something that is done to the person (mal-conditioning hypothesis) Freud believed that neurosis can be understood only by positing an intrapsychic process called "repression." It is interesting to note that other writers,

1. O. H. Mowrer, "Neurosis: A Disorder of Conditioning or Problem Solving?" Annals of The New York Academy of Sciences, 56 (1953), p. 277.

who sharply diverge from Freud's theory agree up to this point. What Freud called repression, Rogers has called "denial of feeling," Sullivan selective inattention," and Janet, Prince, and others have called "dissociation." The method of handling repressions by creation of symptoms, constituted for Freud a deficiency in problem solving. He argued that by releasing repressed material, especially that in the sexual and aggressive areas, the person found more adequate ways for finding gratification and thereby reduced the formation of symptoms and neurotic compulsive behavior.

Dollard and Miller in Personality and Psychotherapy (1950) take essentially the same position as Freud regarding the origin of neurotic behavior. They contend that neurosis arises because of excessive and unrealistic fears. While not holding to the theory of instincts, they do mention sexual desires and aggressive behavior as the two areas of experience around which much neurotic behavior arises. With Freud, Dollard and Miller agree however that neurosis arises as a consequence of something that is done to the person and that the goal of therapy is to undo the traumatic experiences of judgment and harshness in which the child was first disciplined, providing a more permissive atmosphere in which to unlearn fear produced by these moments and relearn more acceptable adult patterns by which basic desires (notably in the sexual and aggressive areas) can be satisfied.

Freud, Dollard, Miller and others are in agreement that neurosis has its origin in something that happens to the person. A bad environment, harsh parental commands, lack of acceptance all work on the person to produce repression or dissociation which in turn brings neurotic behavior.

ii. Neurosis as a "Learning Deficit"

Mowrer argues that neurosis arises not so much as a consequence of something happening to the individual as from something within the person, a misdirected attempt to cope with the problems with which he is confronted. While others argue that neurosis is something imposed from without, Mowrer insists that it is less an imposition than an invention and that basically its point of origin is internal rather than external.

Neurosis is thus an expression, not of excessive conditioning, but of problem-solving skills and techniques which, under the sway of the primitive pleasure principle, are directed toward the prevention of conditioning and the avoidance of discipline which, in the long run, are to the individual's decided advantage.<sup>1</sup>

Such a statement as the one quoted above implies an entirely different therapeutic approach to people with neurotic problems. It places an emphasis on the advantages of exposing the individual to the consequences of his action rather than of reducing false fears out of the past. It implies that the super-ego is not merely the source of negative hostile impression, characterized by harshness and over-severity, but that in many individuals the super-ego is under-developed, not adequate to the task of enabling adults to make choices leading to long-term goals and achievements other than the satisfaction of instinctual desires.

Mowrer argues that the neurotic is not a person whose super-ego has overwhelmed the ego and raised fixed barriers against the id. Rather the

1. O. H. Mowrer, "Neurosis: A Disorder of Conditioning or Problem Solving?" Annals of The New York Academy of Sciences, 56 (1953), p. 282.

neurotic is a person whose ego remains weak and infantile in adulthood and in league with the id attempts to keep dissociated from the influence and desire of the super-ego. This idea further implies that symptoms are not indicative of unexpressed instincts so much as of repudiated ideals.<sup>1</sup>

### iii. Conscience as an Agent of Growth

A comparison of Freud's and Mowrer's views of the conscience function would lead at least to the following observations.

(1) Mowrer believes with other writers whose thought we have examined (Allport, Fromm and Horney) that there is more than a difference in quality between the animal and the human. While in the beginning similarities are great, the child as he gains self-consciousness finds that he is basically different from the animal who never achieves this status and is thus, instinct-bound for life. It is for this reason that Mowrer rejects the instinct theory claiming that only animals or human beings who reject their human potential are motivated primarily by instincts.

(2) Mowrer accepts Freud's conceptual scheme of id, ego and super-ego. He also accepts Freud's supposition that neurosis implies an intrapsychic process called repression. He disagrees at the point of what is being repressed.

(3) Mowrer finds in parents and society more that is mature than immature. He sees in the social scene the presence of values which are sound and while these values often repudiate instinctual desires they are the very values which alone bring long-term satisfaction to human beings. Anyone in the pursuit of truth finds it necessary to frustrate many immediate desires;

1. O. H. Mowrer, Learning Theory and Personality Dynamics, p. 525.

those desiring to find the fullest expression of love must often move at least temporarily away from satisfaction before moving back into situations that bring long and lasting fulfillment in this area. Mowrer implies that the ability to make detours, to withhold certain immediate satisfactions, to substitute ideal achievement for impulse satisfaction is one of the distinguishing factors between neurotic and healthy persons.

(4) Mowrer acknowledges that conflict is inescapable in human experience. He argues that the way conflict is handled is of crucial importance. Freud assumes the greatest conflict comes over the treatment of instinctual desires; Mowrer argues that far greater is the conflict revolving around ideals, long-term goals and the fulfillment of desires leading not to biological but mental and spiritual goals. To assume that conflict in personality indicates that id forces are about to erupt is not substantiated in clinical experience where it is often discovered, according to Mowrer, that repudiated ideals, basic personality integrity, or conscience demands are about to erupt.

(5) Mowrer's theory has important implications for the role of the therapist. If it is true that id and ego are in league against super-ego demands, and that the super-ego is often too weak and unassimilated, then it becomes the task of the therapist to strengthen the demands, rather than diminish them as is the assumption of the majority of therapists who follow Freud.

(6) Another difference in the role of therapist revolves around the goal of having the patient verbalize material from the past. The importance of this goal diminishes if we accept Mowrer's theory. The resolution

of conflict for the neurotic comes under this system not so much because he verbalizes id demands, but because he has opportunity to act in line with conscience demands. Therapy then becomes a finishing of the task started by the parents, though not sufficiently strengthened in the early years. The role of the therapist becomes that of helping the individual to be more human, repudiating many instinctual demands, while at the same time learning to handle his problems and conflicts as a person rather than an animal. In this role, the therapist cannot avoid being committed to a set of values, even as the Freudian is committed to a set of values which involve biological determinism, and the goal of enabling a person to find expression for a maximum number of instinctual demands.

Since first reading of Mowrer's theory regarding the nature and function of conscience, this writer has been seeing a woman who first presented herself with classical neurotic symptoms, hysterical in nature. Nancy is an attractive, intelligent, professional person of thirty-three. In brief, her problem revolved around behavior which was contradictory to her ideals. For more than a decade she has been promiscuous with another professional person, many years older and with the responsibility of wife and family. The writer thought at first this was a classic example of Freud's Oedipus complex. This girl in early years had been the victim of a broken home. The relationship with the father left much to be desired; at first an intense relationship, then broken abruptly and permanently. Since reaching puberty this woman has constantly found herself attracted to older men, already married. Although many men have sought her interest and affection she has been "cold" and "uninterested" in them. Freudian theory would urge us

to explore the childhood experiences referred to previously. It would further explain the neurotic symptoms as arising because of an over-severe super-ego. Therapeutically one of the tasks would be to reduce the severity of the super-ego so that this conflict between desire and ideal could be reduced thereby alleviating the neurotic symptoms.

But Mowrer's theory would see the problem as needing a strengthening of the super-ego demands. The resolution of this girl's desire would be seen as faulty problem-solving. The basic task would be that of finishing the task begun and abruptly ended by the parents so that this person could find adult ways, ones that would not violate the integrity of the persons involved or the ideals of the super-ego, struggling for assimilation and acknowledgment on the part of the ego. As Mowrer's theory was followed in the therapeutic sessions the hysterical symptoms disappeared. Toward the end of the sessions the woman expressed amazement that although her instinctual pleasure was now denied, she knew a greater joy in the conscience pleasure she experiences as the result of the changed behavior which enables her to live up to the demands of her super-ego. The turning point came not when she was made aware of the Oedipal factors operating in her personality, but when she found support and strength for the conscience demands whose denial evidently produced the severe neurotic hysterical symptoms. Her anxiety was caused, according to Mowrer's theory by guilt over rejected ideals, rather than over the eruption of id forces into consciousness. Such a theory implies that action in accordance with the standards of parents and society is fully as important as insight into infantile desires and experiences.

In summary, the following statements might be made about Mowrer's concept of conscience. He refuses to believe that man is controlled by irrational forces, contending that there is a difference in kind as well as degree between animal and human behavior. Although the human uniqueness of man evolves out of biological material, the movement to higher levels indicates control of the more primitive levels by the higher ones. Mowrer sees the super-ego as often being too weak, in that the ideals and standards which it symbolizes cannot break through into the ego and provide direction and control for the person to the extent necessary for adult behavior. Once freed from a biologically determined view of personality, Mowrer sees the world and its values as valid and worth striving for. The function of conscience is to represent these traditional moral and ethical standards and see that they find representation in the ego choices and awareness of each person. Neurosis arises as a consequence of too little learning rather than too much, anxiety indicates that repressed material is about to break through into consciousness; but the material is often concerned with ethical and moral ideals not with instinctual desires searching for expression. Mowrer implies that there is a basic tendency operative within human personality striving toward emotional and spiritual growth and that the satisfaction experienced when this growth is felt by the individual far exceeds the pleasurable sensation accompanying instinctual satisfaction. With Allport, Mowrer argues for a more dignified and rational concept of human nature than do the Freudians. While not denying the presence of id demands, he does insist that they can be controlled by super-ego activity and as a consequence bring lasting pleasure to the individual involved. Neurotic

behavior with its attendant pain and dissatisfaction stems from infantile behavior on the part of the individual and an inability to strengthen the standards and principles inherent within the super-ego.

#### 4. May

##### i. Conscience and Anxiety

Rollo May in The Meaning of Anxiety<sup>1</sup> (1950) and Man's Search For Himself<sup>2</sup> (1953) discusses the concept of conscience as it relates to anxiety. For May anxiety is experienced whenever a value considered by the individual as necessary to his existence is threatened. Anxiety always involves a threat to the "core" of personality. By suggesting that anxiety can stem from psychological and moral roots as well as from physical ones, May sharply disagrees with Freud who insists that anxiety is the feeling of apprehension felt by the person whenever id forces, essentially physical in nature, threaten to break through into consciousness.

May distinguishes between fear which he defines as the organism's reaction to specific dangers and anxiety which he claims occurs on an entirely different level of experience and threatens the self-image of the person or the "essence" of his personality.

May sees the difference between normal and neurotic anxiety in terms of association or dissociation rather than as apprehension over past or current experiences. In other words, so long as the person refrains from repression or separation of painful experiences and keeps them within the

1. R. May, The Meaning of Anxiety (New York: Ronald Press, 1950).
2. ----- Man's Search For Himself (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1953).

the scope of his self-image they may be classified as normal anxieties, but when the person dissociates these experiences or threats from his self-image they become neurotic. May implies that all persons have anxiety; that the goal of therapy is not always to reduce anxiety but to replace dissociation with association enabling the person to cope productively with the threats to his being.

Basic to May's concept of anxiety is the self-image. Whatever else it may be he claims it is a system or organization, that as the body has an organic unity, so the mind has a psychic unity. May suggests that this psychic unity can be threatened by moral values and ideals as well as id-produced anxiety. They appear however on two different levels and one must be separated from the other.

#### ii. The Creative Conscience

In talking of the "creative conscience"<sup>1</sup> May suggests that it differs from the authoritarian or "obedience" conscience in several ways. (1) The authoritarian conscience places its greatest emphasis on obedience. One is good to the extent that he obeys the dictates of society represented by parents or their equivalents. There is nothing ethical in such blind obedience. (2) The authoritarian conscience clings to childhood patterns, diminishing any sense of freedom or choice in the new relationships made possible by growth from childhood to adulthood. (3) Where religious conscience tends to provide a cosmic parent, one who will take care of everything, that type of religious conscience is infantile and neurotic, the one type of religious conscience defined by Freud in his analysis of the

1. R. May, Man's Search For Himself, p. 215.

super-ego. (4) May believes the creative conscience has within it religious elements. For him religion concerns the way one relates to his existence. Psychologically religion enables the person to choose values which are of ultimate concern to him, ones around which he can organize his psychic structure, his personality patterns. (5) Creative conscience is not opposed to tradition i.e. dictates of parents and society. It is opposed to the authoritarian use of tradition irrespective of its origin. Such a conscience seeks to relate tradition to immediate experience, it seeks to enlarge the person's self awareness rather than acting exclusively as a repressive agent. (6) Creative conscience is distinguished primarily by ethical choices consciously made by the individual rather than obedience to whatever tradition he knows. This creative conscience further is characterized by an ability to choose long-term goals which while producing immediate pain and frustration, promise satisfaction on another level than the instinctual or physical.

## 5. Harry Stack Sullivan

### i. Importance of Relationships

The relationship between conscience and the self-image has been investigated by Harry Stack Sullivan in terms of the emphasis on the importance of interpersonal relations in the formation of the self structure.<sup>1</sup> Sullivan's emphasis is that the actual events which occur in the life of a person are not so important as the type of relationship which exists between the experiencing self and those around him. That which is the end-

1. H. S. Sullivan, Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry (Washington: The William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, 1947).

result of the total relation of the person with significant persons Sullivan calls the "self system" or the "self dynamism."

This is "the product of interpersonal experience arising from anxiety encountered in the pursuit of the satisfaction of general and zonal needs."<sup>1</sup> With May and Allport, Sullivan argues that the self system is built out of experiences of approval and disapproval, reward and punishment as the person moves toward the goals of satisfaction and security. As it grows, it functions in accordance with the level it has attained.

#### ii. Self System

Sullivan's description of the origin of the self system and Freud's theory of the super-ego show a striking parallel. Sullivan points to the need for approval felt by the self at an early stage, especially by significant persons. The self system therefore, functions like a microscope-- it focuses minutely on those actions which cause approval or disapproval. Also like the microscope, the self tends to disregard things other than that on which it is focused minutely. Hence, the self system is the "guardian of awareness." When anything spectacular happens that is not in sympathy with the self dynamism, anxiety appears.

Although Sullivan's description of the origin of the self system and Freud's discussion of the super-ego are similar, Sullivan warns against trying to identify the two. He says that he is not talking about a function of or identity with a parent. Neither is he describing the taking over by introjection of another's standard of values. Rather he refers to an or-

1. H. S. Sullivan, The Interpersonal Theory of Psychiatry (New York: W. W. Morton and Co., 1953), p. 164.

ganization of experience in a way that produces a minimum of anxiety as the education processes are confronted.

Such a description of the self finds acceptance by Rogers<sup>1</sup> who appears to equate the development of conscience with the growth of the concept of the self. "Most of the ways of behaving which are adopted by the organism are those which are consistent with the concept of the self."<sup>2</sup> In correspondence with Rogers the writer found a reluctance on Rogers' part to make this connection. He writes: "I believe other constructs better cover the phenomena which usually are contained under the broad label of conscience. For example, I suspect that the individual has a configuration of the self he wants to be, another overlapping configuration of the self he feels he should be and these tend to be discrepant from the way in which he perceives himself."

### iii. Conscience as the Total Self in Motion

In May, Sullivan and Rogers, the self-concept is taken seriously. Unlike Horney who only talks of the idealized self-image as utterly impossible to achieve and a concept to be eliminated if possible, these authors claim that the self that is has a tendency to strive toward becoming like the self that is desired. Conscience thus becomes the total self in motion rather than a particular faculty of the personality. Since conscience is a functional quality of the self, it develops as the self develops. Where a limited self concept exists there also may be found a limited conscience. These people imply that Freud talked exclusively of super-ego in terms of

1. C. Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1951), pp. 487-496.

2. Ibid., p. 507.

that existing either in infants or in persons whose self-concept is limited. With Allport, however, they point to innumerable people who discover that as the self concept is enlarged and modified so the factor of moral control called conscience undergoes basic revisions. The expanded self enables the person to shift from "must" to "ought" conscience. The shift might be described as the total personality involved in a conscience decision. In the growing self an attempt is made to integrate all experiences requiring change or producing pain in the limited self, these experiences have a tendency to be dissociated or repressed. It is in this limited self concept that conscience becomes characterized by a repressive negative quality. In the growing self conscience is seen as an affirmative, ethical and moral function leading not to repression but to affirmation.

In this chapter the views of four non-Freudians have been presented. Their views of conscience have been considered in the light of Freudian concepts of the super-ego. Similarities and differences have been noted.

In summary, the threads common to Allport, Mowrer and May and Sullivan might be noted. All agree that man is not limited to biological drives, either fixed or developed. All agree that there is operative within personality a function described as conscience. It is not something mysterious or supernatural automatically supplied at birth. Its potential however seems to be present at birth. These four subscribe to an emergent theory of conscience. They draw a clear distinction between mature and immature conscience, its creative and destructive aspects. They agree that Freud's analysis of the super-ego was partially correct. But they perceive that he dealt only with the infantile conscience and assumed that all people

manifested such conscience functions. They further showed more concern with the expressive valid conscience demands than with its repressive function. Whether it is Mowrer's concept of "conscience pleasure" or May's use of the term "creative conscience" the implication is the same, namely that much of modern man's trouble stems not from frustrated instinctual desire, but from unfulfilled conscience demands, ones which ought to be taken more seriously. The conscience function is seen as that which enables man to become uniquely human, to free him from animal behavior, to give expression to his best psychic potential. The goal of human behavior is seen in terms of ethical and religious values rather than the achievement of any physical goal.

Allport and May speak specifically about the value of the religious influence on conscience. They both distinguish between authoritarian or mature religious manifestations. Mowrer implies that it is impossible to find religious behavior, at least in its organized forms, that is not authoritarian. All agree that conscience in its mature function is to be strengthened and its demands heeded.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to examine the concept of conscience in psychoanalytic theory and evaluate it in the light of certain neo-Freudian and non-Freudian findings. Freud's early conceptualization of the super-ego was presented in considerable detail. Contributions of other analytical writers were noted.

In presenting the views of neo-Freudian and non-Freudian writers an attempt was made to relate their concepts to those ideas first advanced by Freud and then make an evaluation both by comparison and contrast. In every instance acknowledgment has been made of the constant influence Freud's concept of the super-ego had on later modifications and departures from his theory.

The primary emphasis in this study has been on the psychological nature of conscience. No attempt has been made to discuss other approaches to this concept such as the ethical, philosophical or religious. Major attention has been given to theory rather than clinical material in order to explore more thoroughly the theoretical problems connected with Freud's theory of the super-ego.

Freud first became interested in the concept of conscience as he considered the dynamics of repression. The Interpretation of Dreams, published

in 1900 contains his first reference to the function of the super-ego. He noticed that in neurotic disturbances which came to his attention there were at least two types of repression always present. The first type consisted of putting out of consciousness single traumatic episodes which had occurred in the past, the second type involved the repression in the deep unconscious of impulses and desires which never did become conscious.

If repression was a characteristic of all neurotics it soon became necessary to postulate some kind of censoring activity. As Freud shifted his emphasis from the nature of repressed material to the repressing function he began to develop his concept from simple censorship to super-ego. By 1933 when New Introductory Lectures appeared Freud had further developed his concept of the super-ego until it included the following characteristics. (1) That part of the libido which was neither connected with primitive bodily satisfactions or directed to the self, he called narcissistic libido. As the child grows dissatisfied with the real self as a love object he sets out to construct a more worthy object, yet one which resembles the real self. As this ideal self is constructed the love called by Freud "secondary narcissism" is attached to it. (2) Another characteristic of the super-ego consists of the introjection into the child's mind of the principles, morals and attitudes of others, notably those of the parents and other authority symbols which appear in early life. The external authority of the parents becomes internalized in the super-ego. (3) Along with an ideal self-image and the principles of parents and others, another characteristic of the super-ego is found in the recoil of aggression aroused by frustrating objects in the outer world. All Freudians agree that during the long

and relatively helpless period of childhood the infant redirects toward himself much of the anger and hate which he feels toward the parents but dares not direct toward them. Building on Freud's original discovery others, notably Klein, Flugel and Bergler have expanded this concept of severe and aggressive components within the super-ego. (4) The primary characteristic of the super-ego for Freudians is found in regard to sexual or aggressive impulses. The duty of the therapist was thus seen as that of reducing the strength of the super-ego especially in these areas.

Neo-Freudians, such as Fromm, Horney etc., while recognizing the validity of Freud's analysis of the destructive and harsh aspects of the super-ego, maintain that the self-image is not altogether valueless. Fromm suggests that there is a difference between the image that perpetuates the childhood concept of power and glory and a self-image which is in touch with reality and in proportion to a growing awareness of adult patterns of behavior. Neo-Freudians agree that Freud analyzed only the immature or authoritarian conscience. They argue that conscience can function in a mature way enabling a person to increase his productivity and more ably meet the demands and opportunities of adulthood.

Non-Freudians, such as Allport, Mowrer and May see the conscience function primarily as something positive rather than negative. All agree that primitive patterns of behavior need not be carried over into adulthood. They argue that early beginnings may disappear rather than always being repressed as claimed by Freudians. The instinct theory is rejected by non-Freudians. They see the development of ideals and long term goals as the chief characteristics of adult behavior and mature conscience function.

Movement toward realization of an ideal self-image is the chief function of conscience. Here conscience is distinguished by its affirmative and positive tendencies, almost the reverse of the Freudian view of conscience function. While mature conscience often refutes and denies it is never because of blind obedience, it is because immediate frustration is often necessary for long-term fulfillment. Conscience thereby is perceived as the total self involved in decisions which enable the person to achieve a more adequate attainment of the ideal self-image toward which he strives. The mature conscience for the non-Freudian includes other than parental and authority commands known in childhood; it includes an ideal self-image uniquely arrived at by the individual as his awareness and experience develops.

This study has led to the conclusion that there is a vast difference between immature and mature conscience functioning. It has contended that conscience occupies neither the same position nor performs the same function for each person. The study further suggests that conscience is not present at birth but develops as the person grows. Although the Freudian theory of conscience differs in many respects from the theory developed by neo-Freudians and non-Freudians all agree that it is a crucial agent in determining behavior and in the implementation of ideals in personality. As the outcome of this study it is possible to set forth some distinguishing characteristics of the immature and creative conscience.

1. Immature conscience rests upon the foundation of a basic authoritarian orientation. This orientation includes the voice of internalized external authority, the parent, the state, the church or whoever the authorities in a culture happen to be. The good authoritarian conscience consists of

consciousness of pleasing the internalized authority; a guilty conscience is the consciousness of displeasing it. This type of conscience, functioning as an agent of some authority that has been internalized but not rooted in the real self, will limit the capacities for growth on two counts: (a) Finding goodness in obedience to authority the person with authoritarian conscience is more interested in pleasing the authority than in exploring the attributes of his own personality and the situation in which he stands. (b) Coupled with the desire to please this foreign and irrational authority comes the tendency where man takes over the role of the authority by treating himself with the same strictness and cruelty. In other words, man, under the sway of the authoritarian conscience not only becomes the obedient slave, he must also be the strict taskmaster, treating himself as his own slave.

2. Immature conscience is distinguished by a repressive, negative functioning. Its influence is felt by a series of prohibitions revolving around what Fromm refers to as the psychological phenomena of want. Want consists of primary needs such as those found in food, water and shelter. The task of the conscience is seen in terms of denying expression to certain primitive wants especially in the sexual and aggressive areas. Conscience is negative in that by denying satisfaction to primitive wants it increases the level of painful tension. Pleasure is thus denied and conscience remains the grim task-master.

3. Immature conscience is further characterized by a disproportionate sense of guilt. Guilt is a natural product of conscience, but conscience that has not grown up may produce guilt that is out of proportion to the act

committed. The so-called guilty conscience may come about because the emotional content is displaced on something other than the actual cause of the guilt. Where desires toward parents, particularly those of a sexual or aggressive nature have been forbidden and repressed, seemingly innocent situations in later life will trigger these feelings that remain very near the surface of experience. As a result where a person displaces his emotional content onto a seemingly threatening situation his sense of guilt is not only out of proportion to the fact, it is likely to remain unrelieved.

4. Another characteristic of immature conscience is that the unconscious elements of conscience achieve precedence over the conscious elements of its make-up. Freudians insist that the super-ego functions primarily in the unconscious and is thereby irrational, out of touch with reason, and highly charged with instinctual energy. Being largely unconscious, this type of conscience function is not responsible, nor is the person aware of consciously chosen paths for his life. He feels, rather, driven by forces of which he is not aware. The more unconscious parts of the conscience are in control the more likely is the struggle to be seen in terms of primitive, childish, archaic wants.

5. Immature conscience is motivated by a need to maintain the appearance of perfection. This idealized image which at one stroke gives the person unlimited power and ability to deal with any of the dangers which life presents develops as the child attempts to cope with the potential dangers in his world. For the Freudian these dangers stem from instinctual urges, for the neo-Freudians these dangers come from conditions existing in the world, such as the long period of dependence which a child undergoes

and the disturbances in human relations which he observes about him. The idealized image has little connection to the real self which in turn is often neglected as the energy of the personality is expended to maintain the appearance of perfection.

6. Immature conscience is characterized by what Horney calls the "tyranny of the shoulds." Four basic qualities of the shoulds are as follows: they are characterized by a disregard for feasibility, they operate with a complete disregard for what the person feels he can or cannot do at the present moment. These shoulds have a complete disregard for the conditions under which they could be fulfilled. The basic premise running through all the qualities mentioned is the phantasy that nothing should be or is impossible for oneself.

7. Immature conscience attempts to maintain pseudo-ideals designed to maintain the appearance of perfection. The authority for such ideals is found not in the real self but either in some internalized authority symbol such as parent, or in the need of the idealized self-image to maintain its appearance of perfection. Pseudo-ideals aim only at disposing of imperfection, not at real change in the person. Such ideals have not only a compulsive and coercive character but they lack the authority to produce lasting change either in the person or those about him.

8. Immature conscience lacks an integrative capacity and functions in terms of immediate opportunistic goals. It fails to provide a matrix around which other personality traits can be organized. It is concerned only with immediate needs and desires.

These characteristics emphasize that immature conscience is one in

which the activity of the restrictive, prohibitive conscience of childhood remains predominant in adulthood. There is little opportunity for the development of spontaneity and individuality. Immature conscience points to a person whose self-image is not fully developed. Two primary qualities of immature conscience revolve around (a) fear and obedience to specific rules and regulations, and (b) guilt arising over violation of external taboos. The source of authority for immature conscience develops in direct relation to parental authority and social regulations.

In contrast to immature conscience, mature conscience derives its sentiments from self-chosen goals, from a continuously productive relationship between the individual and his environment. The content of mature conscience has been assimilated, and not merely introjected. The mature self is related to the assimilated content in what Fromm calls a "spontaneous fashion." This permits a more creative approach to the dilemma of human existence. In further conclusion we may recognize the following characteristics of creative conscience.

1. Creative conscience is an agent of expression rather than repression. It is preceded by "must" conscience which is primarily concerned with obedience to external authorities which have been internalized. As the child develops an adequate self-image and sense of values peculiarly his own, then, as Allport says, conscience shifts from "must" to "ought." Ideas that are incompatible with the growing self-image do not have to be repressed; many of them simply evaporate. Creative conscience enables the individual to make choices consistent with the ideals and goals toward which his self-image indicates he ought to strive.

2. Creative conscience is characterized by a shift in interest from specific habits of obedience and observance of group standards to broad value judgments and a high sense of individual responsibility. Allport's use of "propriate striving" to indicate that quality which enables the person to deny satisfaction of many immediate desires in the interest of attaining long term goals is appropriate here. Rather than being characterized by such moralistic terms as good and bad creative conscience asks the question: Is this type of behavior meaningful and does it seek to understand and have relevance for the values of the present situation?

3. The creative conscience is characterized by growth; it is emerging from being the internal voice of external authority; it is developing in proportion to the person's ideal self-image; its function is seen as a rudder rather than a repressive agent; its source of authority is not in childhood admonitions or parental wishes but in the desire of the person to observe his own value system and to make those choices which bring him into harmony with the qualities inherent in his ideal self-image. While early conscience function is primarily in response to demands for obedience to parental and cultural dictates, creative conscience outgrows these beginnings, leaving many of their manifestations behind for new norms and goals toward which to strive. Growth of conscience function is directly related to the ever changing and expanding self-image which seeks expression in individual behavior.

4. The creative conscience often increases tension as it enables the individual to make choices which are in harmony with the ideals and goals accepted as valid by the self-image. The pursuit of long range goals re-

quires much immediate frustration and long detours around momentary satisfactions, thereby increasing tension. This awareness of increased tension has been referred to by Mowrer as "conscience pleasure."

5. Creative conscience is not opposed to tradition or the dictates of parents and society. It is opposed to the authoritarian use of tradition irrespective of its origin. Creative conscience seeks to relate tradition to immediate experience, assuming that many of the standards and norms which have withstood the passage of time point in the direction of mental and spiritual goals toward which the individual is striving. The past is neither repressed or ignored by the creative conscience; it is utilized in enabling the individual to appropriate from it those qualities and experiences which will help him in his growth toward maturity.

6. Creative conscience is distinguished primarily by its integrative function in that it enables the person to organize his patterns of behavior and his goals around a central, self-chosen goal toward which much of his experience is directed and in terms of which activity is evaluated.

7. Creative conscience often has within it religious elements. Many times it has been acknowledged in this study that religious elements characterized by such words as obedience, self-sacrifice, duty and resignation describe immature conscience and immature religion. While in childhood the God to whom the individual submits may well be one who is made in the image of those authorities to whom he has been submissive. Fromm well recognizes that many religions have a way of turning into "power systems" that exercise control over people's conscience function. What is not grasped by Freud and neo-Freudians is that this power system exercises control but for a short

span of time. It is entirely possible as the ideal self-image is developed by the individual that he may rediscover the vital truths of his religion and incorporate them into the creative conscience, not because he must, but because he ought. These religious values, accepted rationally and freely rather than compulsively and fearfully point to ultimate values and have more breadth and scope in the sense that religion concerns the way one relates to his total existence. The creative conscience may therefore arise in religious experience.

8. The creative conscience is to be conceived not as a separate entity existing parallel to the self, but as intrinsic with the self. This means that conscience is more than a faculty. It becomes, in its creative aspects, the function of the total self as it moves toward or away from that which is conceived as valuable to the self. This further makes conscience a functional dynamic quality rather than a constitutional part of the self as conceived by Freud and his followers.

9. The creative conscience needs to be distinguished from super-ego. Super-ego, in the Freudian sense, emphasizes the negation and inhibition of the self, while conscience as conceived here has reference to both negative and positive functions of the self. Super-ego is largely unconscious; it is the result of repression and is relatively unchangeable. Creative conscience arises out of self recognition which creates a sense of oughtness and may change as this self conception is modified. The desire to live in terms of a self whose nature and destiny is related to values and goals freely arrived at and held together by religious elements will form the basis of the creative conscience.

10. Creative conscience is characterized by individuality. It derives

its energy from self-chosen goals. This emphasizes the conscious function of conscience. The person is not driven by desires and impulses of which he has little or no awareness, but gathers his energy and strength from goals accepted as his own. This quality implies that conscience is not and cannot be the same in every person. While every person has goals toward which he strives, the specific nature of the goals will be different with each person.

In summary we have noted that conscience may either be a help or hindrance to effective and mature living. It has been the contention of the writer that in Freudian theory we find a description of the immature conscience, essentially authoritarian and repressive. Immature conscience functions on the basis of compulsion, prohibition, and a limited responsibility. Mature conscience has been described as operating in the context of freedom, growth, and enlarging responsibility. Immature conscience is arrested by the immature development of the self; mature conscience emerges with the mature development of the self.

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# THE PSYCHOLOGICAL NATURE OF CONSCIENCE IN FREUDIAN THEORY

by

Otis A. Maxfield

Abstract of Ph.D. Dissertation, Boston University, 1957

This dissertation attempts to investigate the psychological nature of the conscience in Freudian theory and evaluate it in the light of certain neo-Freudian and non-Freudian findings. Special attention is given to the original work of Sigmund Freud and particular emphasis is placed on his concept of the super-ego. In psychological literature conscience is generally referred to as the super-ego.

For Freud, the super-ego comes into being through the psychic processes of repression, identification and introjection. Its central task is that of playing the role within the personality once occupied by the parental or other authorities. The super-ego tends to accent the harshness, severity and restrictiveness of the parents far more than their love and kindness. Other Freudians, notably Bergler, Flugel, Klein and Jones expand Freud's early theories of conscience as a stern and punitive tendency in personality. They see the ideal self-image as of little value and rooted in unrealistic expectations.

Neo-Freudians like Fromm and Horney see conscience as the source not merely of parental prohibitions carried over from childhood, but of growing moral responsibility. Noting a vast difference between the self-image which is in touch with reality and rooted in the growing experience of the

individual, neo-Freudians agree that Freud analyzed only the authoritarian conscience.

Non-Freudians, such as Allport, Mowrer and May see the conscience primarily as positive rather than negative. These writers see conscience as the total self involved in integrative activity rather than a segmental faculty. Mature conscience includes an ideal self-image uniquely arrived at by the individual through his developing awareness and experience.

As an outcome of this study it is possible to set forth some distinguishing characteristics of the creative conscience.

(1) Creative conscience is an agent of expression rather than repression. It is preceded by the "must" conscience which is primarily concerned with obedience to external authorities which have been internalized. As the child develops an adequate self-image, conscience shifts from "must" to "ought", enabling the person to make choices consistent with the ideals and goals toward which his self-image indicates he ought to strive.

(2) Creative conscience is not opposed to tradition or the dictates of parents and society, only to the authoritarian use of tradition irrespective of its origin.

(3) Creative conscience is distinguished primarily by its integrative function in that it enables the person to organize his purposes around a central, self-chosen goal toward which much of his experience is directed and in terms of which activity is evaluated.

(4) Creative conscience often has within it religious elements. Acknowledging that religious attitudes characterized by obedience and duty may be immature, the creative conscience enables a person to rediscover the

vital truths of religious truth and love in a mature devotion to the ultimate concerns of life.

(5) The creative conscience needs to be distinguished from super-ego. In the Freudian sense super-ego emphasizes the negation and inhibition of the self, which is largely unconscious, and arises as the consequence of repression in rigid and unchangeable patterns. Creative conscience arises out of self-understanding and may change as this self-conception is modified. It is primarily conscious and acts more to affirm than to repress.

(6) The creative conscience is to be conceived not as a separate entity existing parallel to the self, but as intrinsic with the self. More than a faculty, it becomes the function of the total self as it moves toward that which is perceived as valuable in the perspective of the utmost good to all concerned. This makes conscience a functional dynamic quality rather than a constitutional part of the self as conceived by Freud and his followers.

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