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The Microscope of Comparative Psychoanalysis and the Macrosociety

The following paragraph appeared in an article printed in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* of July 5, 1974:

"The struggle for land ownership, which is assuming increasingly more drastic form throughout all of Latin America, is now beginning even in the Andean highlands of Ecuador. The indios of the Sierra in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador, in each of which they make up approximately half the population, are generally considered to be barely capable of development. Centuries of oppression and dependence have left them docile and apathetic. But under certain conditions this can change over night and with only the slightest of stimuli from without."

The psychoanalyst quite rightly views docility and chronic apathy as deeply rooted traits of character. Yet history has demonstrated that in many, if not in all members of an ethnic group they can suddenly disappear, to be replaced by other attitudes. And it is precisely this interplay of forces on which the science of ethnopsychoanalysis must focus what

* Based on a lecture delivered on November 6, 1974 at the Institute of Psychoanalysis, Johann Wolfgang Goethe University, Frankfurt, West Germany.

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we may term its investigative microscope. When social conditions become intolerable and untenable, the question of just what ultimately determines human behavior emerges inevitably and clearly. Invariably present, this question justifies the legitimate interest of the comparative psychoanalyst. It has proved to be inordinately difficult to define both the interplay of psychical processes investigated by the psychoanalyst and the social processes described within the framework of the social sciences. Ever since Freud's early hypotheses, the problem has fascinated countless researchers; yet to this day neither a specific working method nor a generally recognized theory has been able to establish itself. Even when one was willing to accept the basic postulates of psychoanalytical theory, one factor remained an almost insuperable obstacle. The psychoanalytical observer was invariably a member of the same society and frequently of the

same class as the person being analyzed, and both were products of more or less the same socialization process. Thus it was almost impossible for the analyst to achieve the degree of detachment necessary for comprehension of the social processes involved. This difficulty at least is eliminated when the psychoanalyst focuses his investigative apparatus on members of a different nation, especially when this nation is not a part of the so-calIed "Western cultural area." Under these circumstances the connection between social institutions and processes on the one hand, and psychical structures and functions on the other becomes immeasurably more precise. It is this approach which Georges Devereux (who was the first to do so, as far as I know) called ethnopsychoanalysis (Devereux 1972), a term which I use interchangeably with "comparative psychoanalysis." No matter what name we assign to it, the approach itself is still in its early stages of development; it gives rise to new problems as it solves old ones, and it casts doubt upon a number of long-accepted axioms of psychoanalysis. Since it possesses no established theory as yet, I have no choice but to present the considerations to follow in the scope and form suggested by my own experience in the field. Ethnopsychoanalysis differs from other theories that attempt to explain human behavior by virtue of two basic assumptions. In the first place, it accords the same significance as psychoanalysis to the instinctual energies, which operate in part from the unconscious. In this respect it differs from the theories of learning, from almost all sociological and ethnological theories, from the classical Marxist theory of society, and from the theories of structuralism. In the second place, it assumes that the forces studied by historians, ethnologists, and sociologists keep cultural evolution in motion and that they exert their effects not only in the macrosocial context, but even in the hidden impulses of the individual psyche. This applies to social structures and to all

production processes, ranging from the very simplest, whose purpose it is to guarantee subsistence, to the political structures which serve a comprehensive and complex economic system. And this distinguishes ethnopsychoanalysis from the purely psychological theories, which assume that the nature and behavior of man can be explained only by the laws of human psychology, in combination with the laws of the natural sciences.

We investigate the development of the psyche and its product, the psychical conflicts. These are studied in the individual, and comparisons are made, using--as a rule--only a few selected persons. The genetic approach is the backbone of psychoanalytical theory. We assume that the compulsion to repeat not only ensures that neurotic symptoms will always follow the same recurrent course, but--because of the emotional cathexis of psychical structures, of both ego and super-ego--also

imposes upon the individual the most long-lasting and significant behavioral patterns. The outcome of the conflicts that inevitably confront the child and the adolescent in any society is internalized.

One might also describe this process by saying that every child is exposed to intensive interactions with his environment, and that this environment rears the child within the family or other corresponding group according to certain specific educational customs. The course taken by these interactions differs greatly depending upon the culture or subculture concerned or even according to the various strata and classes within the same ethnic group. Guided by emotional signals, the child adapts himself to the interchange with his environment. The adaptation process is influenced by the process of maturation, which is biologically determined, and influences in turn a variety of learning processes, which differ from culture to culture.

We have introduced the term "culture-specific psychoanalytical model“ to describe the course and outcome of psychical development. In reconstructing psychical development up to the time psychoanalytic investigation begins and also in describing the adult individual who is the product of this complex development process, we make use of psychoanalytical theory. In other words, we have not set up a new theory of personality; and this is why we describe our model as “psychoanalytical.” Since in every ethnic group it becomes necessary to include so many different influences of the "environment" (in both the narrow and broader senses) which classical psychoanalysis was accustomed to assume tacitly as given and unchanging, our “model“ of development must also include learning and adaptation processes of all types; it corresponds approximately to "process of socialization." Thus the ethnopsychoanalytical model comprises what classical psychoanalysis regards as the product of psychical development, but stresses in addition those structural and functional psychical phenomena.

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as well as their contents, which originate in the environment. The latter constitute an integral component of the model, whereas the classical psychoanalytical theory of development, while taking them into account (often merely as "stimuli") as a general prerequisite for psychical development, describes them within the already developed psychical apparatus only insofar as they represent the contents of a specific structure, for example of an ego ideal, an introject, a lasting identification, etc.

The individuals in whom this development process is most successful perpetuate the culture pattern-or "culture" as such--by means of consensus and social selection. It would seem that those individuals in whom fairly wide deviations from the norm occur are forced to the sidelines, so to

speak; they are not only no longer typical, but also no longer really viable, and apart from a few exceptions no longer an effective instrument in the future development of the social structure or in the rearing of the next generation.

Educational patterns change only very gradually. It is extremely difficult to persuade a family--and even more so to persuade a mother-to rear her children differently from the way in which she herself has been reared. The result is the inevitable crystallization in each new generation of attitudes specific to the culture concerned, attitudes which are passed on via the educational customs, the accepted value systems, and the various behavioral patterns of the mother (and of many other persons making up the environment). One might say that attitudes typical of the culture, once acquired, are subject to a kind of repetition compulsion which remains in effect through successive generations-unlike the repetition compulsion of classical psychoanalysis, which ensures that the characteristic attitudes and neurotic symptoms of an adult will always follow the patterns laid down for them during childhood.

Thus, whether our comparison is based on an entire nation, a caste, class, marginal group, or stratum, we achieve a description of what one might call the conservative aspect of a culture, based on the real and effective behavior of its individual members and on the psychological superstructure of the society or the subgroup concerned.

At the same time, however, mothers, families, and generations are subject to the influence of certain forces, which I should like to summarize according to their macrostructural origin. Such forces are the production process and the political power structure, which of course must be evaluated more carefully by the ethnopsychologist than by the historian in terms of the psychological effect of their institutions, of the needs and frustrations which they engender. Their influence is most clearly apparent in those areas in which it can be perceived ecologically, i.e., in which a certain environment and technology demand specific

methods of production and ways of life in order to ensure survival. Edgerton (1971) carried out psychological studies of four East African folk groups, all characterized by the fact that the geographical features of their respective living areas force one sector of each group to gain its livelihood either exclusively or primarily from agricultural production, and another sector to live as herdsmen engaged in stock-raising. Although the members of each folk group had remained clearly similar to each other not only in language and traditions but also in their specific psychological make-up, nevertheless it could be shown equally clearly that the methods of production had led to the development of the psychical patterns appropriate to them. Those

engaged in agriculture, for example, have certain attitudes towards property ownership, towards various character traits specifically viewed as desirable or undesirable, and possess the "natural" emotions typical of a farming population and shared with the members of other agricultural peoples, while those sectors of the four populations engaged in cattle-herding display psychological characteristics which are not found among the farming population, but which they have in common with other herdsmen peoples. These conditions manifest themselves most obviously in sexual mores and values, which psychoanalysis, of course, tends to derive--to the very last detail--from childhood development. There can be no doubt that, in the case of these four folk groups, ecology has shaped acquired psychical structures as a result of its effects on the processes of production.

Such macrostructural forces and the contradictions they produce in the social structure have long been accorded their role in the evolution of human societies. Comparative psychoanalysts must be prepared to encounter their effects even in individuals, whom the historian would presumably classify as unconscious participants in the destiny of the social groups or classes to which they belong. Whether these forces exert their effects on the development of the psyche or on the adult individual, we can regard them as factors of progress, factors of change.

Any comparative psychoanalytical study must take into consideration both the conservative factor, i.e., the socialization specific to the culture concerned, and the progressive factor, i.e., social conditions themselves. One can conceive of these two factors as coordinates in a system essential to the interpretation of any and all ethnopsychoanalytical observations. A third coordinate, thus in the third dimension, would be the chronological factor. The first two factors, socialization and social conditions, are fundamentally diachronic phenomena, in other words they are constantly changing. In this paper in which we do not concern ourselves in detail with the third coordinate, for reasons of presentation we often proceed on the assumption that, at the point of time of the investigation in Question, the first two processes are standing still and

that a "state of affairs" is under consideration. This system of coordinates, socialization vs. social conditions, is ideally suited to the integration and comparison of research findings obtained by a variety of ethnological and psychological methods. The system seems to be well adapted to both the methods of investigation and the psychological and/or social phenomena under investigation. I consider it to be the best theoretical instrument available at the present time to give understandable form to the dialectic arising out of ethnopsychoanalytical investigation. 1)

To illustrate this, I should like to point to the results of an investigation which has been in progress since 1960. Gene Borowitz (1973) and his co-workers are studying all the 4-year-old Negro children in a housing project, i.e., a Federally planned and financed ghetto in a western suburb of Chicago.

All these 4-year-olds are the offspring of black families with many children and low incomes who have migrated to Chicago from the South. All the children studied were born in the Chicago ghetto. The purpose of the study was to record the psychical development of the children *prior to* kindergarten age in order to spare as many of them as possible the usual fate of such ghetto children, who are frequently incapable of completing their school education and vocational training, by giving them appropriate remedial instruction and schooling. In other words, originally the study was intended to provide a basis for measures designed to permit as many children as possible to leave the ghetto at a later date via the ladder of success in their chosen occupations.

The care and the systematic methods employed in studying the children themselves, the broad conception of the factors to be investigated, covering the families, the mothers, the ecological and economic environments, etc., and the long duration of the project (thirteen years up to the date of the report cited here) ensure its findings a greater measure of accuracy than can be assumed for the findings of most other psychoanalytically oriented studies of „culture and personality."

The children investigated could be divided into three groups. Approximately 25% were classified as "highly competent," i.e., as children whose development could be regarded as normal for their age, who showed about the same developmental level and had about the same prospects of continuing to develop and of succeeding in school as healthy, normally developed white middle-class children of the same age, despite the fact that they differed substantially from the white groups with respect to certain psychological traits. The second and largest group (approximately 50%) was characterized as "medium competent." In contrast to the children in the first and third groups, those belonging to the second were extremely heterogeneous with regard to psychical disturbances and development lags. All the children in this group were

disturbed; their future development, their scholastic ability, and the reversibility of their disturbances could only be termed uncertain. The third group of children (again about 25%) were classified as "low competent" and were characterized by extremely serious developmental damage, diagnosed as irreparable, and by absolute inability to succeed in school.

In the case of all these irreparably damaged "low competent" children, it could be assumed with a high degree of certainty that they had been exposed to serious disturbances in the mother-child

relationship during the early developmental phases, disturbances such as derailment of the dialogue with the mother during the first year of life and the resultant nutritional disturbances, a tendency towards anaclitic depressions, grave emotional deprivation as a result of the absence or the inadequacy of the mother, specifically due to failure in the dissolution of symbiosis and the initial steps towards independence. In the individuation phases described by Mahler (1969), the formation of independent impulses, of expansive and exploratory behavior, had actually been prevented by the mothers and the environment, with disastrous consequences.

Unfortunately, the course of development observed in the children of the "low competent" group up to the time of the report completely substantiated the pessimistic prognosis made for them. The abortive early development of the psyche, the failure of the first--and thus most decisive--steps towards socialization, had determined their psychical make-up and, with it, their social lot. These cases, admittedly extremes, suggest the conclusion that it is the emotional exchange with the mother during the first years of life which determines psychosocial development. For all the other factors, no significant differences could be found between the group of "low competent" children (25%) and the children belonging to the other two groups (75%*),* either in social situation, family composition or stability, income, material environment, or educational methods later employed with them. The only distinction was that attempts had been made to give the "low competent" children supplementary remedial instruction--unfortunately without success. Thus it would seem that in such extreme cases the macrosocial forces do not play any role, that the genetic aspect, in the sense of the classical genetic theory of psychoanalysis, -is the only decisive factor.

Borowitz and co-workers, however, did make a revealing observation. During the early sixties, before the outward manifestations of "black pride" such as the Afro-look, "African" clothing, jewelry, and textile designs had become the fashion, thus at a time when these emblems were worn exclusively by militant, revolutionary blacks, *all* the children of the "highly competent" group wore at least *one* emblem of "black pride," as did a small number of children in the "medium competent" group.

Not a single child in the "low competent" category wore such an emblem as a symbol of his parents' attitude! Thus the 4-year-olds provided proof of the fact that their parents' attitudes towards the social environment differed. In those cases in which successful socialization had taken place in infancy and early childhood, an active attitude on the part of the mother or the family towards the intolerable social situation could be assumed. This attitude was found occasionally in the parents of moderately damaged children, never in those of seriously disturbed

children. We do not know why or by what psychological means or factors of interaction this attitude affects the development of children. One is tempted to conclude that parents need to be able to hope for a more worthwhile life for their children if they are to rear them successfully.
The actual influence of the macrosociety on children could also be measured directly by reference to other characteristics. In the play interviews (the chief method of investigation used throughout the study), which were always carried out in the same way and by the same persons, there was very little verbalization noted among the black children in any of the three groups; in fact, in this test, they spoke approximately five times more rarely than comparable white children. When the study was resumed after a temporary interruption in 1964 (due to the well publicized unrest among black groups at that time), this state of affairs had changed. Although there was no percentual change in the assignment of children being studied for the first time to the above-mentioned three groups, verbalization in all three groups was now much richer, approximately at the same level as that of comparable white children. In the wake of the unrest, a kind of self-administration system had taken over the powers of the executive in the housing project, assigning its own black street patrols to keep order, so that white police had been withdrawn from the settlement. In view of the rapidity with which this shift in the environmental power structure was followed by a change in the ego functions of the small children, the latter change can be attributed only to relatively direct influences exerted by the environment. A deeper psychological restructuring in the parents, in their super-egos for example, cannot be regarded as the cause.
A number of the most plausible formulations developed by the cultural anthropologists are based on the assumption that every culture, through its methods of child-rearing, creates precisely those pre-oedipal instinctual fixations which guarantee the libidinal cathexis of its institutions and thus its own continued existence. Applied in its “pure“ form, this system establishes a self-perpetuating model whose equilibrium can be destroyed only by outside forces, for example by military subjugation of the nation concerned. Neither internal conflicts

nor social tensions would be capable of altering it. Although the onesidedness of this view may appear to obscure a good many factors, still it provides a suitable basis for describing the results of culture-specific socialization, the conservative factor mentioned earlier.
And this is exactly what I should like to attempt now by reference to the course of the anal phase and to the results of this course, to the anal fixations and ego components of the Dogon and the Anyi in West Africa, and of a typical lower-middle-class Swiss (Parin and Morgenthaler 1964; Parin, Morgenthaler, Parin-Matthey 1963, 1971; Parin 1972).

Analytical developmental psychology has long since ceased to view the concept "anal" as no more than a biologically determined phase in the maturation and development of instincts. The ego characteristics and ego functions permanently acquired during this phase are also called "anal"-in reference to the phase in which they originate. Such characteristics and functions may be, for example, secondary autonomous reaction-formations such as retentiveness, the ability to wait, bodily cleanliness, or characteristic forms of instinctual fixations, such as sadistic or masochistic wishes, and of object relations, such as sadomasochistic cathexes.

Among the Dogon, during most of the anal phase the child traditionally is still being nursed or at least still remains under the intensive and, so far as possible, uninterrupted care of the mother. There is no compulsion to control the excretory function, no punishments of any kind are imposed, and hardly any use is made of the practice of withholding or giving affection for any educational purpose. The children do occasionally display defiance, but this is met by the adults with understanding, with an attempt to distract the child' s attention -never with counter-aggressiveness.

It is only the other children, those belonging to the group to which the child is admitted usually during or towards the end of the anal phase of development, who respond to defiance either by withdrawing or by becoming aggressive themselves. Control of the sphincter muscles is then learned by the new child as a game, through imitation within the group. The adult Dogon show no tendency whatsoever towards retentiveness, have a low repugnance threshold, and display hardly any sadistic or masochistic impulses, at least towards persons for whom they feel affection. Miserliness and thriftiness are known to them and seem to develop in exceptional cases, but they are generally regarded as bizarre, comical, or even pathological qualities. The Dogon are definitely capable of aggressiveness, but not of sadism; nor can they sustain their aggressiveness in the form of resentment for any length of time. Nevertheless, their behavior and their emotional responses are characterized by typical anal traits as regards their detachment from.

confrontation with, and independence of other persons. Apparently the separation from the mother, coupled with the fact that the attitudes of the group towards the small child it takes into its midst are so very different from those of the mother, does result in a fixation which is highly specific for only one of the ego characteristics that we, too, acquire during the anal phase -- namely the concept “no”, the independence of the self and its detachment from the other members of the group. The fact that the barrenness of their environment forces the Dogon to save and hoard their supplies in order to escape starvation creates almost a laboratory situation. The functions of

saving and hoarding, which our farmers perform with the help of anal character traits (retentiveness as a reaction-formation to relinquishment), are taken over among the Dogon by a socio-psychological apparatus, within whose framework each individual tries to prevent the other from wasting available supplies.

In contrast to what we had expected, we were forced to conclude that thriftiness and the ability to plan for the future on the part of the Dogon planter are achieved not by anal, but rather by oral instinctual fixations and by well-developed oral ego characteristics. In short, the anal pattern of the adult who has adapted to his culture corresponds exactly to his development in early childhood. This impression was reinforced by our observation of a number of subjects who had been exposed during the anal phase to influence not typical of the Dogon culture and who displayed additional, atypical anal traits. One such example was the boy Amegere, the son of Ogobara, who showed a tendency towards sadomasochistic fantasies.

In the case of the Anyi we found equally complete agreement between the experiences of the anal phase and the typical anal character traits of the adult. Sadomasochistic fixations and magic-projective anxieties, both of which are decisive for the course of the subsequent phallic phase, can easily be traced back to the aggressive and indifferent treatment meted out to the child during the anal phase. It is no wonder that anal retentiveness cannot be developed as a permanent character trait when the child, instead of receiving sphincter or bowel training, is given daily enemas consisting of a suspension of hot red peppers, felt as a painful violation and followed immediately by abdominal cramps and bowel evacuation.

The child which is exposed to the violent and usually sadistically tinted aggressions of the adults reacts with anger and rage. However, in the absence of retentiveness in the anal phase, it is not able to maintain an object representative constant enough to cathect it with chronic resentment. In place of that the ego remains extremely irritable when exposed to any form of aggression and develops the capacity to ward off its own aggressive strivings immediately by projection. Even more revealing is

the Anyi attitude towards property ownership. Although the structure of the Anyi economy provides ideal prerequisites for the formation of capital, and although the historical and social stability of the Anyi culture is as great as the intelligence of its members, no such formation of capital has taken place as yet; socio-economists are at a loss to understand why.

It was our assumption that the Anyi, due to their anal training and the resultant fixations, are psychically incapable of becoming capitalists. Their characters are, as one might term it, anally

determined, but lack the ability to retain property, which is of course essential to the formation and exploitation of capital. It is remarkable how well their character, with its typically anal components, must have suited their former economic structure and way of life --as hunters and food gatherers and later as slavers and pillagers --and how poorly suited it is to the plantation economy which has prevailed among them for about the last 70 years.

This is a good example of the way in which a dual conservatism, adherence to the traditional forms of child-rearing and fixation of the adult on his experiences in early childhood, is capable of maintaining itself in the face of macrosocial exigencies. On the other hand, observations of this kind serve as a warning not to simply assign the anal character traits of a people or a class to a specific organization of society and, further, not --as is sometimes done without adequate reflection --to regard anality simply as the result or, even more erroneously, as the cause of the capitalist class society.

To conclude this part of my paper, I should like to describe still another anal characteristic, this one exemplified by a typical young man from German-speaking Switzerland, a member of the rural lower middle class. Approximately 30 years of age and a university graduate, this young man showed no neurotic traits. He was unusually fortunate and adaptable in his object relations, as successful as he was gifted in his studies. Without any help from his family he had managed to establish himself in a different social class, that of the urban intellectuals, in which he deservedly played a leading role as an ardent and active supporter of the political struggle of the new left. He lived in a commune and seemed to have renounced all the prejudices and habits of his petty bourgeois origins, without, however, having turned away emotionally from his parents and siblings.

This young man was able to get along extremely well with his friends and political associates of both sexes, but --and this may seem surprising --only after he had defined, either during the course of a conversation or by thinking the matter out carefully himself, exactly what financial advantages or disadvantages he might expect from a given relationship. It was not that he hoped for financial advantages from a new

relationship --on the contrary, he himself was extremely generous with his money --but just that he was tense and anxious until he had determined to his own satisfaction just how much he might benefit, in terms of francs and centimes, from a relationship with a given person. When he neglected to work this out beforehand, his relationship with the person or persons concerned either failed to develop at all or was aggressive and ambivalent.

This attitude is also reflected in an idiom frequently heard in Swiss German: "Es rentiert" (it brings dividends, i.e., it's worth the trouble) or "Es rentiert nöd" (it brings no dividends, i.e., it's not worth the trouble), referring to something that one wants to do and looks forward to doing or not, as the case may be. As an example: „ Are you going fishing with Hans?" /"It brings no dividends"; "Shall I invite Mrs. X?" /"It brings no dividends."

Viewing it analytically, one might say that this is the anal fixation, that is, that the equation feces-money-person is highly cathected. One might even be tempted to conclude that it represents one neurotic symptom anyway, in an otherwise non-neurotic individual. I would not dispute the first statement, but whether one can consider neurotic and thus pathological a fixation acquired during the training of the anal phase and not only typical of a certain class of a certain nation, but also extremely common, is quite another question.

A thorough study of the functioning of the Swiss version of a capitalist industrial and monetary economy in comparison with other variants such as the French and West German ones would presumably come to the conclusion that precisely this anal fixation (as a specific step in the process of socialization) was particularly well adapted to the production processes which have prevailed in Switzerland for the last century or so. Naturally, a change in the social situation, material existence, or politicohistorical consciousness may alter super-ego-, components and many ego traits to some extent; other ego acquisitions, however, are far more resistant.

Let us make the intellectual experiment of introducing socialism in German-speaking Switzerland and let us ask ourselves whether such a money-oriented regulation of attitudes and emotions towards one's fellowmen could disappear without a foregoing fundamental change in child-rearing customs and without this change then making itself felt in the adult ego in members of the groups or classes reared according to new and different norms.

I shall leave this question open for the moment. If I may remind you of the hypothesis set up by the French ethnologist Marcel Mauss (1968), according to which all social relationships are governed by, or at least can be explained by, the laws of give and take, then one can probably state that my Swiss patient had learned and accepted that form of give

and take handed down in the social stratum from which he came. His ego simply provides him with functional reaction-formations for this give-and-take process present in every social group. On the whole it can be regarded as certain, though perhaps not yet clear in all details, that a change in the social situation alone will not bring about a change in constant acquired psychical

traits, just as a change in the accepted methods of child-rearing cannot be expected to produce a predictable, let alone a rapid change in the social situation.

At this point, ethnopsychoanalysis can help us to advance a bit farther. We know from our studies of the Dogon and from similar studies that under certain circumstances the functions of emotionally significant forms of give and take, essential to existence in any social group, can be carried out by quite different --namely oral --functions, i.e., those acquired and established in the ego during the oral phase. Theoretically, the ego of our Swiss subject seems to be doubly bound to his environment; first, during his anal development phase, it was bound to the child-rearing methods employed by his parents, resulting in the fixation on the feces-money-person equation mentioned before, and second, it is bound to his broader cultural area as a Western European, an area dominated by a capitalist economic order. But at the same time, precisely in these countries it is impossible to develop well differentiated oral ego functions in the field of social give and take, because the molding of such functions requires a longer duration of the oral relationship than is possible according to the child-rearing methods prevailing here.

For members of all classes, Western mores put an end to the "oral" development of the ego towards the end of the first year of life at the latest by means of "age specific" frustrations. (This statement is based on the assumption that the classical developmental phases of the libido and the ego are triggered off by maturation processes, which are biologically determined in whole or in part, but that the course and duration of a phase are dependent upon environmental influences [Hartmann 1939].) The Dogon prolong the oral ego-formation period not only by not weaning the child and separating him from his mother until the fourth year of life, but also by placing him, after weaning, in a collectively hierarchical group which is orally satisfying and thus fulfills the "maternal" role.

These examples can neither substantiate nor refute the postulate that every "culture" brings with it a form of socialization which produces in its members the pre-genital needs specific to it. They were merely intended to demonstrate that this approach enables us to compare the psychology of different peoples and groups. In doing so, though we have used a specific step towards socialization –the “"conservative factor”, as we called it above --as our point of departure, at the same time we have also had to consider social institutions of the most varied types and the

laws that govern them. Procedures based on this approach have proved their value in ethnopsychoanalysis; the researcher proceeds according to a working hypothesis, but does not expect the answer he finds to provide the core of a theory. He treats his hypothesis as one

formulation of the problem (or one standpoint) among many possible ones. As soon as it proves to be fruitless, it must be supplemented by others.

In order to organize and interpret its observations, comparative psychoanalysis makes use of a method analogous to that of classical psychoanalysis. As is well known, the latter views each phenomenon from six different points of view: developmental or genetic, topographical, dynamic, economic, structural, and adaptational. Three additional points of view are included for the purposes of therapy: transference, resistance, and counter-transference. Depending upon the problem at hand, one can choose from among these points of view, and in fact can even afford to draw up a one-sided presentation based on only one of them; in each case, of course, one must bear in mind that any correct psychoanalytical explanation in principle would have to agree with all the points of view enumerated.

Ethnopsychoanalysis tries to follow this method in its observations. The individual problem formulations or points of view usually refer to "interactions" according to Spiegel's (1971) definition, i.e., the reciprocal effects of two systems on one another. With the help of the procedure described, each observation and each step in the process of explanation is embedded in a multitude of “transactions”, resulting in a network of influences and effects of greater or smaller significance. In a frame of reference of this kind, what is typical --for example, the attitudes of an average Swiss in connection with money and the value of money described above --is not necessarily what occurs most frequently from the statistical point of view; instead, what is "typical" is derived from the relevance of dynamic references between biographical data and events, and psychical and social processes and structures. It must be borne in mind that the majority of the generally valid insights of psychoanalysis which have come to be considered typical were gained from the observation of a very small number of subjects (including Sigmund Freud himself).

In this connection, let us not forget that comparative psychoanalysis must not accept macrostructural influences as simple phenomena, but must uncover their latent structures, functions, and intentions before it examines them in confrontation with the results of psychological research. Nor are the psychoanalytical points of view from which the analyst can operate any longer identical with the simple basic assumptions of metapsychology. They are approaches which have proved to be more or less promising in recording so-called social influences on the individual. Each approach, however, must be treated like the "points of

view" of psychoanalysis. If one approach is presented, to the exclusion of the others, as the only explanation, the results are bound to be erroneous and one-sided.

This procedure does not disregard the adaptational viewpoint developed by Heinz Hartmann (1939), but applies it far more selectively than is usual. Hartmann developed this aspect on the basis of average expected environment, which is regarded as given by nature and on the whole not susceptible to alteration by the individual. Thus the ego, probably in contradiction to Hartmann' s intention, is often interpreted as a static structure of appositional origin and reduced to the status of an adaptational apparatus. In our system the ego, together with its functions, remains a dynamic structure.

It would go far beyond the framework of this paper to attempt a critical evaluation or even a complete enumeration of all the approaches which have been tried in an effort to define the connection between social and psychological processes. In the following paragraphs, which do not claim to be either systematic or exhaustive, we shall comment on a number of approaches which are especially useful in illustrating the possibilities and limitations inherent in each point of view from which a given problem can be examined.

Freud described censorship, later the super-ego, as the representative of the social environment within the psychical apparatus. Subsequently, the dependence of this instance on the circumstances of its genesis during childhood moved into the foreground, and it was soon demonstrated that, in a situation of cultural change, the super-ego may make extremely contradictory demands, all of them originating in the environment, on the ego. Finally, it could be demonstrated that this seemingly so rigid, firmly established instance under certain circumstances could remain effective only in interchange with very specific social institutions and their representatives ("clan conscience"), that one of its components is capable of opposing another, of blocking or replacing it. Modern sociological therories (Parsons 1961) which are based on the description of accepted value systems (Florence Kluckhohn 1961) have taken up this idea. But they encounter certain difficulties: How are these socially accepted values internalized? What is the relationship between an ego which has been socialized in accordance with these systems and the super-ego? And finally, what is the relationship between the pressure of external reality, which is organized according to the accepted values, and internalized value conceptions, which are highly cathected with instinctual energy?

The last of the above questions also restricts the area for which the aspect of identity (in Erikson's [1950; 1959] definition) can provide useful information. This psychosocial concept, so far probably the best-known and most generally accepted by analysts. views the adult in-

dividual as the product of a development process. The "progressive" factor mentioned earlier is accorded due importance in determining the course of socialization. In Erikson's theory, however, it loses its importance as a structuring psychological factor once identity has been established. At an early date analysts became interested in unconscious collective fantasies, which form the basis of myths, legends, and fairy-tales and which are organized in the form of cults and rituals. But in most cases it was impossible to present the interpretations of these phenomena to those who cherished the fantasies. In other words, no use could be made of the ideal method of verifying psychoanalytical constructions and reconstructions, thus of the psychoanalytical process as such. But since these social phenomena may serve the most varied ends, since they are subject in whole or in part not only to historical but also to psychological changes in function, and since the "cathexis" of collective fantasies in particular can alter drastically from individual to individual and during the course of time, the value of such psychosocial analysis is often slight. Sometimes the allegedly psychoanalytical explanation of myths is rather like an ingenious intellectual puzzle, which gives no real information about either the social function of a myth or its psychological meaning.

Among the members of different cultures, the dissolution of the Oedipus conflict is characterized by very specific patterns. This has led to attempts (Parin 1972) to utilize the transition from the dyad (mother-child) to the triad (mother-child-father) as a tertium comparationis rather than pre-oedipal fixations (such as the anal fixations described in the three earlier examples). Naturally, due consideration must be given to the pre-oedipal steps in development, together with their most important object representations and the libidinal and aggressive cathexes growing out of these phases. This is the moment at which the child usually enters into an entirely different relationship to his social environment from the one which characterized the dyad period. It marks the end of early childhood and the beginning of the period during which the psychological guidelines for future development are laid down. As a rule it is precisely at this point that the child establishes lasting identifications which then become anchored in the structure of the ego and the superego.

These viewpoints open the way to still others. Since the ego, as regards its most important qualities, is based on sequential identifications with traits of the persons of reference, it was believed that these identifications must include all those environmental influences on the individual which are decisive for structuralization (Parsons 1961). This approach soon proves to be too restricted. The question arises as to just why an individual should identify with precisely these and not other traits of his parents, idealized persons, enemies, and friends; other approaches

are required for the study of both the influences for change exerted by the individual on his environment and the transformation of the individual psyche by mechanisms other than identification.

During the last few years it has been primarily the progress made in the field of ego psychology which has contributed --to a greater degree than the investigation of unconscious fantasies or of the instinctual domain -to an enrichment of the views of ethnopsychoanalysis. The organization of defense mechanisms especially has been studied with a view to determining its cultural specificity. Sometimes individual character traits established in the ego seemed to correspond to social institutions; then again, individual defense mechanisms or a certain selection of them were tested for their effectiveness in a social environment or in certain situations until ultimately social institutions seemed to assume the status of collective defenses. The formulation of the concepts "group ego“ and "clan conscience" (Parin and Morgenthaler 1971) belongs in this context.

We are not in a position to set up generally valid rules pertaining to the way in which the macrosociety must be analyzed in each individual case in order to coordinate it with the ethnopsychoanalytical approach, or concerning just what aspects of power structure and production processes will be decisive in connection with members of the people, class, or social stratum to be investigated. When one first begins to study a new ethnic group within the framework of a comparative psychoanalytical investigation, one cannot even predict what social institution will turn out to be most important. At least as far as socialization is concerned, the importance of the so-called nuclear family and all kinship institutions such as marriage, household, extended family, tribe, lineage, clan, etc. is generally recognized. It is equally certain, however, that the researcher cannot confine himself to these institutions, even though he may be interested only in the very first phases of socialization, during which the specific culture (in the broadest sense of the word) is "transmitted" to the infant and small child. The example of the ghetto children mentioned earlier demonstrates that macrostructural forces do exert a direct influence on the child, an influence which cannot be derived from the behavior of the "transmitters" or the structure of the corresponding social institutions. In principle, every ethnopsychological investigation must extend beyond the institution of the family, as this example will show.

In almost every society, so-called vertical and horizontal social structures can be defined. In the case of the black ghetto children described above and in the African societies with which we are familiar, the structure of ego identifications becomes understandable only when one considers the

factor of change in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood in connection with the individuals' relationship to two

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differing social structures, a relationship which develops dialectically with time and which leads to different and often mutually contradictory identification series --identification with the hierarchic-vertical organization represented by the family and often repeated and perpetuated in social institutions, and, in contrast to this, identification with "horizontal" institutions such as the peer group, the gang, and the age group. So far psychoanalysis has accorded far too little significance to these relationships, which are decisive in the typical formation of ego and super-ego. (2)

The reason for this neglect is our all too uncritical acceptance of the hierarchical structure of the family as the only socially relevant and proper structure and the de facto isolation of the child from members of his age group in the small families of the urban middle class. The Dogon have a neatly paradoxical saying: „A Dogon is not like any other Dogon“ and “No Dogon is any different from another Dogon of the same age group." The first half refers to the organization of the patriarchal extended family, and the second to the class of young people (the tumo) who have reached maturity and been circumcised together. The boys or men belonging to age groups on the one hand, and the girls and women on the other, are considered to be "equal" to others of their own sex.

What we have said so far, as well as a review of the literature in the field of comparative psychoanalysis, may all too easily create the erroneous impression that ethnopsychoanalysis is a suitable instrument only for the study of exotic peoples or perhaps of individuals belonging to groups, strata, or classes far removed from those of the investigator. This is not the case. Even the experience to be gained in a fairly typical middle-class practice for therapeutic psychoanalysis (Zurich) can lead far beyond the isolation and individualization of the "couch" situation.

For years I have been treating both male and female patients from Switzerland, West Germany, Austria, France, and Italy, whose social and family backgrounds corresponded exactly to what Theodor Adorno and his co-workers described as characteristic of the "authoritarian personality“ (Adorno et al. 1950) in their broadly conceived study. In fact, however, only some of these patients had developed the typical traits of this personality, while they were absent in others. One factor above all seemed to be responsible for this. Wherever the narcissistic cathexis of the self had been imperfect or subject to serious disturbance during childhood or adolescence, secondary identifications with authority-connected structures, especially secondary identifications with an

aggressive-repressive super-ego, had regularly established themselves and could no longer be reversed without gravely undermining the functional effectiveness of the ego and psychical homeostasis. These persons displayed an “authoritarian personality.”

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Others, whose self-esteem was relatively high --an indication of more or less undisturbed narcissistic cathexis of the self --had not developed an “authoritarian personality”, although apparently the same preconditions had obtained, or were at least able to give up the typical behavioral manifestations of such personality with relative ease. It seems to be the relationship and the internal psychical interplay of forces between cathexis of the self and identification with aggressively charged introjects (originally identification with the aggressor) that determine whether an authority-structured environment will result in an authoritarian personality or not. We were often able to reconstruct the educational factors and developmental steps responsible for the disturbance of narcissistic development. Briefly, and in order of their importance, they are the following: first, inadequate ability on the part of the mother to love or admire her child without recourse to the restrictions felt to be necessary to rearing it successfully, especially during the individuation period (the second 18 months of life, according to Mahler); second, the lack of an ideal of the same sex and associated with positive emotions at the beginning of the latency period, thus immediately after the dissolution of the oedipal conflict; third, disequilibrium between the emotional bindings to persons in the horizontal and vertical social structures during the years of psychical development, particularly during and after puberty.

The question of the psychical consequences of alienation, which confronts the ethnopsychologist everywhere in our Western cultural area, is one which has not been adequately considered so far. For those persons affected by it, alienation in the economic realm always seems to result, among other things, in a particular, psychologically relevant inner conflict. The individual's acquired ego identity, as described and analyzed by Erikson, comes into conflict with the role identification permitted and demanded by society in the family, in the job situation, and --specifically --with the roles imposed by the class to which the individual belongs. In other words, psychical development and its result, successful socialization, stand in contradiction to the demands of life within the group, fixed psychical needs are frustrated, and the ego's organization of defense mechanisms becomes inadequate.

The mechanisms which I have summarized under the heading of role identification appear to be of decisive importance to psychical functioning and to emotional well-being. While the alienated individual has forfeited his influence on the social production process and on the process of

consumption, he still continues to lead a psychical and social life. But an impoverishment of gratification and damage to the acquired ego apparatus seem to occur regularly and in keeping with laws which have not yet been sufficiently investigated. In other words, the person concerned continues inexorably to play his social roles, but his relations

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to the object world are distorted, unsatisfying; an undesirable merging of libidinal and aggressive goals takes place, and --particularly important -narcissistic withdrawals occur as compensation in order to guarantee psychical homeostasis and socio-material existence in spite of the distorted or restricted object relations. A certain gratification in the sense of the ' 'positive emotional response“ defined by American sociologists seems to be essential if one is not to fail socially, i.e., to become psychically disturbed.

It is not exclusively --and perhaps not even primarily -psychologically definable processes, of course, that play a compensatory role in countering alienation. The Anyi, with their identity, have evolved a pressing need for social prestige. If they are unable to achieve it, they are unhappy and become ill, i.e., vital ego functions succumb to disturbances and regressive distortions. The Anyi combat alienation from the capitalistically organized plantation economy first of all by transforming their psychologically useless, hard-earned money into psychologically satisfying prestige values by buying gold jewelry and by indiscriminately enlarging the scope of traditional festivities and holding them more frequently, which, of course, is financially ruinous.

But psychoanalytical observations, too, occasionally offer fairly clear answers to our questions -- to the following one, for example: What inadequately mastered ego conflicts can be traced back to the social state of alienation?

Conflicts of this type were identified in three quite dissimilar young men from the German-speaking part of Switzerland. One thing they had in common was the fact that they had not become psychically disturbed until they were adults. From the social standpoint, their illness manifested itself in their inability to continue fulfilling the requirements of their roles (two were students, the third a metal-worker), i.e., in their inability to carry out their assigned jobs. It could be demonstrated that alienation from their social situation had led to neurotic disintegration of their personalities, despite the fact that their psychical development had been relatively satisfactory prior to the onset of the disturbance.

Moreover, in all three cases the oedipal conflict, the transition from the mother-child dyad to the mother-child-father and/or society triad, the internalization of social behavioral patterns in approximately the fifth year of life and in puberty, had been more or less successfully resolved. In

the domain of phallic competition, all three of these young men, equipped with aggressive-competitive and anal-retentive or oral-submissive fixations, had developed into fairly typical and --thanks to their vitality and intelligence --fairly imposing examples of the efficient male in the hierarchical and competition-oriented structure of our economic system. Nevertheless, for different and specific reasons in all three cases, none of them had been able to overcome the discrepancy

between the ego identity whose basis had already been established and the actual roles offered by society. In short, their inner conflicts had become pathogenic.

In Peter, one of the students, the socially “"wrong“ ideals of a supremely powerful super-ego, a parent introject with which he was constantly forced to identify, had led to narcissistic withdrawal, to almost complete abandonment of object representations, with the resultant apparently psychotic fragmentation of the self and an inhibition of already autonomous ego functions.

Marco, the other student, had actually become ill as a result of frustration, because his ego/super-ego development made him inordinately dependent upon achieving satisfying results in whatever he did, while his job, outside his own field of interests, failed to bring him adequate satisfaction in spite of massive anal fixations. He had directed the whole of the considerable sadism of his super-ego and all the aggressiveness of his ego against himself. The result was an intense and constant longing for suicide, a life "aimed at death."

Psychologically, Fritz, the metal-worker, had become a victim of the frustration of his libidinal phallic and competitive needs at the time he began to play the economic and family role expected of an adult male. For some years he had tried to achieve gratification of his libidinal needs with the help of the functioning components of his ego. But the satisfactions accessible to his class were all too few. The only way open to him was recourse to regressive pre-genital possibilities, i.e., he developed an asocial behavior pattern easily recognizable as neurotic and subject to repetition compulsion. Accordingly, the referring psychiatrist diagnosed his case as follows: wayward impulsive psychopath with polymorphous perverse tendencies. In his case, as in those of the two students, adequate working through of the inner conflict sufficed to bring out a normal personality, which of course still suffered from the social condition of alienation, but was free of serious impairment of the ego functions.

The tentative and necessarily still incomplete answer to the question of the psychical consequences of alienation is that the conflict between the result of a psychical development and

the available role patterns in an alienated situation affects the psychical apparatus in such a way that ego functions are impaired. This leads in turn to a neurosis which, though its symptoms may differ idiosyncratically and individually, is initiated and sustained by the general social situation. The choice of these three examples may suggest that a change in the psychological consequences of alienation can be brought about as a rule only by the psychoanalytical working through of inner conflicts. This is not the case, however. The choice of examples is determined by the method of observation employed, the psychoanalytical treatment of psychically deeply disturbed persons. Ethnopsychoanalysis, which tries

to confine its investigations to normal, i.e., to smoothly functioning and well integrated members of a social group, must refrain from making observations during periods in which the group concerned is going through violent or revolutionary upheavals, which result in a widespread rejection of the enforced social roles. Theoretically mastering the emotional consequences of alienation can come about through any process in which individuals manage the rejection of the social role or roles imposed. A slow structural change within the society may facilitate this inner restructuring for many of its members. Or even just an active protest or struggle of a single individual against external constraints experienced as being intolerable can relax internal conflicts that have taken on pathological form and can banish compensatory symptoms. Such processes are not only possible in theory but are also frequently observed in reality. Presumably one would find developments of this kind among parents of the "highly competent" black ghetto children who decked out their offspring with symbols of black pride.

In closing, we may ask just how far the confrontation between psychoanalysis and the macrosociety has led to date. What future developments are possible?

Change in the psychical model specific to a certain culture or social class, thus change in a typical pattern of psychical behavior, takes place only slowly, because the traditional methods of child-rearing change only slowly and because their effects are lasting, influencing generations to come. One can expect more rapid and more spectacular consequences (in persons whose psychological structure is comparable) as a result of changes taking place in the power structure and in the living conditions of a social group, a class, or a people. These processes are complementary and must be assumed to affect one another, but the laws of their interaction are not yet clarified. In particular we are not able to determine under what circumstances changes in educational mores and/or in social conditions bring about historical, that is, continuing and socially effective consequences instead of merely leading to an increase in pathological patterns and social misery.

Ethnopsychoanalysis is capable of providing insights into internal conflicts in terms of their relationship to contradictions and tensions in the social structure, conflicts which cannot be elucidated by the analysis of individuals only. To be sure, its most important method of observation is individual psychoanalysis. But ethnopsychoanalysis can view the result and the origin of inner conflicts in the context of social conditions and historical processes.

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1) The system of coordinates described above contains contradictions which

impress the observer as exceptions to the rule, in that they seem to assign to socialization certain functions of change and to social conditions certain conservative functions. For example, the super-ego, a product of socialization, may press for change as a result of its specific contents. In a relatively stable social group, the process of socialization itself may provide a powerful impulse towards change; for example, education in the mission schools of the African colonies, for many of the pupils exposed to it, set in motion the change in traditional *as well as* in colonial social structures. Social institutions such as family, church, and state may exert a stabilizing influence on psychical processes, either directly or indirectly. Certain social institutions, rituals for example, have often been described as collective defense mechanisms; as such they have a stabilizing effect on the ego functions of those participating in them.

These and other exceptions must and can be taken into account without reversing the system of reference. A reversal of the system would be possible only if one were willing to deny the material foundations of social conditions. In that case society would have to remain at its status quo until the advent of a child gifted with the spirit of Prometheus, which demands change. This view is typical of those idealistic philosophies which conceive of the psyche as the source of, or the mind as the creator of social structures. These philosophies reverse the system of coordinates as a whole; the conservative function is assigned to social conditions, the function of change to socialization.

2) The double aspect of the super-ego (super-ego and ego-ideal), its formation and the vicissitudes of its precursors as well as the inner representatives of cultural elements are not to be discussed in detail in this paper. (See Freeman et al. 1976.)

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