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Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920G;18:3ff) introduces the final phase of Freud's metaphysical, epistemological, and metapsychological views. The essence of this work is suggested in a paragraph of his earlier paper, "The Uncanny" (1919H,17:218ff), which was published in the autumn of 1919 but did not contain an allusion to the death instinct. Freud withheld *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* for another year. It is not always recognized what a deeply pessimistic work this monograph is, and even Freud himself modified the pessimism somewhat in later writings.

Written in his sixty-third year, this remarkable monograph is primarily a philosophical treatise. Balogh (1971) explains, "Perhaps more than in any other of his books one can see in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* Freud's cool, clear, relaxed and supremely scientific mode of thought. One is shown how he conducted arguments, first with himself and then with colleagues. One gets a glimpse of the width of his reading in biology as well as among poets, philosophers and collectors of myths" (p. 97). Robert (1966) remarks on the echo of Nietzsche in the title and on how this monograph begins with a few remarks of limited clinical interest, and "then soars almost immediately into a realm of pure speculation."

As against the death instinct, Freud places Plato's *Eros*, which he

describes as exactly the same in its origin, function, and connection with sexuality as the erotic energy or "libido" of psychoanalysis. In what Robert calls "the dominant theme of this [Freud's] grandiose vision," *Eros* and the death instinct wage a confused struggle against one another and, at least as long as life persists, without any decisive outcome. Freud's followers quickly named the death instinct *Thanatos* and referred to the energy of the death instinct as *destrudo* or *mortido*, in contrast to *Eros* and its energy, libido. Freud's view at this point is clearly that *Thanatos*, with its sole aim of leading all living matter back to the inorganic state, is the most primordial instinct, and that *Eros* fights an inevitably losing holding action. Even the earlier essay, "The Uncanny" (1919H;17:218ff), contains an echo from *Also Sprach Zarathustra* where Freud discusses the uncanny aspect of the well-known psychological theme of "the double," which includes the apparent and constant recurrence of the same thing, a phrase borrowed from Nietzsche (Chessick 1983). In Freud's discussion of the fate neuroses in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* a similar phrase—"perpetual recurrence of the same thing"—appears.

All commentators agree that the speculative hypotheses in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* were put forward many years earlier in "Project for a Scientific Psychology" (discussed in chapter 20) and here Freud returns, as in the "Project," to Fechner. Fechner distinguished three forms of stability: (l) absolute, which implies permanent immobility; (2) full stability, in which the

parts of the whole are moved in such a way that each returns to the same place at regular intervals; and (3) approximate stability, in which each part returns to more or less the same place at regular intervals. Ellenberger (1970) contends that Fechner's system inspired the framework of Freud's ideas: "To the pleasure- unpleasure principle he added the death instinct (a return to Fechner's full stability) and the repetition compulsion, as intermediate between approximate and absolute stability".

Furthermore, the notion of the death instinct, as a destructive or self--destructive instinct, follows a nineteenth-century tradition often attributed to Hobbes and also propounded by Nietzsche. The classical pairs of opposites have been *Eros-Neikos* (love-strife) and *Bios-Thanatos* (life-death). Freud brought forth his philosophical concept of *Eros-Thanatos*, which became more and more fixed in his mind as a firm factual belief, as is clear from his later writings. Even early critics pointed out that there was no biological support for the notion of death instinct, and much of Freud's argument for it confuses *Finis* (termination) and *Telos* (final aim) of life.

This confusion is even apparent in Freud's statement that Schopenhauer presented a similar philosophy: "For him death is the 'true result and to that extent the purpose of life' while the sexual instinct is the embodiment of the will to live" (p. 50). When Schopenhauer calls death the "true result and to that extent the purpose of life," he makes clear the differentiation between

the termination of life and a definition of the purpose of life. Freud assumes that the termination of life is the same as the purpose of life. As I (1977a) explained elsewhere, Schopenhauer did postulate that sexuality was a manifestation of the will to live, but he did not set against this some force in the opposite direction. In a much more empirical fashion he saw sexuality and procreation as an effort by man to immortalize himself in spite of what he frequently called man's inevitable doom—termination. He did not, as Freud postulated, see any secret purpose or force driving man constantly toward death. So the similarity between these two philosophies is extremely superficial, far less than what many commentators have claimed.

It is worthwhile to examine *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in detail. The year after its publication the diagnosis of cancer was made on Freud and he endured his first surgery; by this time some obvious physical deterioration had taken place. The first section of the work begins as a metapsychological treatise. The next two sections present some clinical observations and the rest of the work is openly admitted to be philosophical speculation.

The closeness of the earlier sections to Freud's "Project for a Scientific Psychology," drafted by Freud twenty-five years earlier in 1895, is immediately apparent in the first section. According to Freud, the lowering of the quantity of excitation is perceived as pleasurable by the organism, so the organism tries to keep this level low or constant. So Freud begins with

Fechner's Principle of Constancy, which he considers another way of stating the pleasure principle—the work of the mental apparatus is directed toward keeping the quantity of excitation low, and anything that increases that quantity is felt as unpleasurable. This is a special case of Fechner's principle of the tendency towards stability. The tendency of the organism to seek pleasure conflicts with countertendencies under the dominance of the reality principle which arise from the need for self-preservation. This tendency was described by Freud in an earlier work, "Two Principles of Mental Functioning" (1911B; 12:215ff).

In the second section Freud raises the problem posed by the dreams of patients suffering from traumatic neuroses, which have the characteristic of repeatedly bringing the patient back into the situation of the trauma, often resulting in nightmares. In such conditions either the wish-fulfilling function of the dream is disturbed or "we may be driven to reflect on the mysterious masochistic trends of the ego" (p. 14). He deliberately leaves this unresolved and goes on to offer his famous example of his one-and-a-half-year-old grandson playing a game of disappearance-and-return with a toy tied to a piece of string. The child threw the toy over the edge of his cot and then pulled it back in by the string, hailing its reappearance with a joyful exclamation. Thus the second section introduces clinical data of the dreams of patients with traumatic neuroses, and child's play, both of which seem to contain elements that militate superficially against the pleasure principle.

These clinical phenomena as well as the compulsion to repeat (discussed in chapter 12) can be explained in two ways.

The first of these ways, which was Freud's original idea, represents these phenomena as part of the urge toward mastery. In this view the impulsion to relive and experience is for the purpose of mastery of unpleasure, and the greater integration of the experience and the anxiety it involves is clearly a manifestation of the life force. For example, by the game in which Freud's grandson acts out the omnipotent fantasy that instead of being passive and helpless he can make mother return, the child is trying to overcome the sense of helplessness he experiences when mother goes away. Throwing away the object also satisfies the child's revenge impulse toward the mother for going away.

Alternatively, the repetitive dreams of patients with traumatic neuroses, certain aspects of children's play, and the compulsion to repeat could be explained by "a mysterious masochistic force of the ego." In this view, although the compulsion to repeat often leads to unpleasure, it is an innate tendency of the human psyche.

In the third section Freud points out the great clinical importance of the compulsion to repeat, both as manifested in the transference and as found in numerous clinical instances of self-defeating repetitive acting-out, as, for

example, the criminal returning to the scene of the crime and other such repetitive self-defeating behaviors. He states that the greater part of what we re-experience under the compulsion to repeat must cause the ego unpleasure and memories of past experiences which include no possibility of pleasure either now or even long ago.

In discussing the so-called fate neuroses, Freud cleverly carries the argument one step further by describing the compulsion to repeat as a "daemonic power" which, of course, sets the stage for his attributing an enormous and overwhelming importance to this clinical material. The question is whether the compulsion to repeat indicates an intrinsic quality in the psyche toward pain, later to be defined as a death instinct, or a desire to avoid greater pain from, for example, helplessness, by active mastery behavior. Although Freud originally held the latter or mastery explanation, in the present work he shifts to the former explanation.

The fourth section, a monumental genesis of Freud's system of ego psychology, is also a crucial presentation of his metaphysical and epistemological beliefs. He begins, "What follows is speculation, often far-fetched speculation, which the reader will consider or dismiss according to his individual predilection" (p. 24). The opening of the discussion postulates that the system Pcpt.-Cs. lies on the borderline between the outside world and the inside of the psyche, and is turned toward the external world. This system, or

the eye of the conscious, is responsible for our awareness or consciousness of mental phenomena, but no memory traces can be found in this system; thus experience is separate from the storage of it.

This notion, which began in the "Project" of 1895 (1950A; Part 1, Section III), is enlarged in a later paper on the "Mystic Writing-pad" (1925A;19:226ff). Clearly, if memory traces were stored in the system Pcpt.-Cs., no room would be left for anything else, so the elsewhere-stored stimuli only become conscious in the system Pcpt.-Cs., and energy can be discharged in this way. When it is a memory trace, psychic energy is bound; when discharged, it is unbound.

Besides the reception of stimuli from within and without, system Pcpt.-Cs. has another extremely important function: to serve as a protective shield against stimuli which are disruptively overwhelming. Freud thinks of the protective shield as supplied with its own store of energy and endeavoring to protect against overwhelming external stimuli by taking in these stimuli in small selected doses, which he defines as "samples" of the external world. He flatly continues that there can be no such shield against the inside or internal stimuli, a notion which also comes from the "Project" and which he later modified.

At this point Freud places himself in the tradition of the Kantian theory,

that time and space are necessary forms of experience. He explains that although unconscious mental processes are in themselves timeless, "Our abstract idea of time seems to be wholly derived from the method of working of the system Pcpt.-Cs. and to correspond to a perception on its own part of that method of working. This mode of functioning may perhaps constitute another way of providing a shield against stimuli" (p. 28).

When internal stimuli are very intense and too great, unpleasure is felt, but the internal excitations can be treated as though they were acting not from the inside but from the outside, so that the shield against external stimuli can be brought into operation as a means of defense against them. This is the origin of the notion of projection. It is an excellent definition of this term, since it applies to a time before a repression barrier has been consolidated. Repression is ineffective against overwhelming internal stimuli, and the defense discussed by Freud is essentially an extrusion of these stimuli, which are then treated as if they originate from the outside. The price of this defense is a breakdown of the boundary between the self and the outside world.

Freud next turns to the question of what happens when intense *external* stimuli break through the shield so that the ego is flooded. The success of the ego binding the external stimuli is determined by (a), the degree of energy of the external stimuli, and (b), how much bound energy is available in the ego

systems to form a bond for the energy from the external stimuli. Freud believes that the ego uses ego-libido to do this. It forms an anticathexis "on a grand scale," borrowing energy from all sides. This borrowing leaves less energy for binding fresh and new external stimuli. Thus a healthy person has a lot of ego-libido, with plenty of libido left over both for further attachment to objects and for binding the inevitable traumata of life. It should be noted that in this complex discussion of energies Freud moves very far away from the notion of energy as it is used in physics. His notion reminds one more of the early explanation of heat in terms of a fluid called "caloric."

In the traumatic neuroses, Freud postulates that trauma is so great and so swift that the extra energy is not brought up in time. Thus the ego is unable to feel anxious—here, anxiety is thought of as extra energy which heightens ego-integration—and is essentially unprepared. Thus under ordinary circumstances the ego first generates anxiety, a condition that Freud calls a state of hypercathexis, and with this greater energy, integration and defenses take place in the normal situation. In the traumatic neuroses the preparedness is lacking and the ego-integrative system cannot bind the external stimuli. So the ego's function and direction is to feel anxious and painful in order to keep trying to mobilize sufficient energy to bind the trauma.

Freud maintains that this process is beyond the pleasure principle. In it

the first aim of the organism is to achieve anxiety. That is to say, in traumatic neuroses the aim of the organism is to once again achieve the anxiety that was not present when the trauma occurred. Once this anxiety has been created it is utilized for defense and integration. Freud's point is that the original need to achieve the unpleasant sensation of anxiety contradicts the pleasure principle and is prior to and beyond it. He writes that the need to develop anxiety "seems to be more primitive than the purpose of gaining pleasure and avoiding unpleasure" (p. 32). In this view there was once a time before the purpose of dreams was the fulfillment of wishes, a time before the whole of mental life had accepted the domination of the pleasure principle. The implication is that the need to endure pain and self-destruction is prior in time to and more fundamental than the need to seek pleasure and avoid unpleasure.

This argument rests on making the generation of anxiety an end in itself. The obvious alternative argument is to view the generation of anxiety as a means to an end, as part of a continuum based on the pleasure principle and leading to mastery of the trauma. This argument implies there is nothing beyond the pleasure principle.

In section five Freud brings his arguments together in the fashion of a true philosophical treatise. The manifestations of the compulsion to repeat, now described as exhibiting to a high degree an instinctual character, are

thought of as giving the appearance of a demonic force at work. Children repeat unpleasurable experiences as a manifestation of the need for repetition, which Freud now wishes to connect to the predicate of being "instinctual." A sharp definition of instinct is now presented: "*It seems, then, that an instinct is an urge apparent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things*"(p. 36). "An earlier state of things" implies the powerful expression of inertia inherent in organic life. This is quite different than Freud's previous notion of instincts as impelling toward change and development. It follows from this that since inanimate things existed first, the aim of all organic life is to return to the earlier inanimate state, and so the aim of all life is death.

In this view, only conflict keeps us from achieving death, and there is no instinct toward development or perfection of the individual or the species. Freud's pessimistic theory may be thought of as the polar opposite of the rational optimism of the Greeks—as in contrast, for example, to Aristotle's viewpoint. For Freud in this monograph the sexual or life instincts oppose death by simply prolonging the journey toward death. The instinctual force toward death becomes paramount and,

> Seen in this light, the theoretical importance of the instincts of self-preservation, of self-assertion, and of mastery greatly diminishes. They are component instincts whose function it is to assure that the organism shall follow its own path to death, and to ward off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those which are immanent organism itself (p. 39).

What we are left with, continues Freud gloomily, is the fact that "the organism wishes to die only in its own fashion'' (ibid). Freud recognized that his view was extreme. Notice that even the life instincts are conservative in that they function mainly to bring the organism to death in its own way. Freud quotes Plato's famous myth in the *Symposium* to show how the sexual instincts drive toward an earlier state, even though prolongation of life is their basic function.

In section seven it is apparent that for Freud death is simply the termination of individual development, and is the end purpose of life. Death is not the result of some sort of decay or downtrend in the organism. Some complex biological arguments are presented to demonstrate that there is no biological evidence against the death instinct.

Freud is aware that at this point he is clearly in the area of philosophy, and he reminds us of what he calls "ancient Greek natural philosophies with their four elements—earth, air, fire, and water." He recognizes his affinity to the pre-Socratic philosophers, and his insistence on a dualistic instinct theory has similar evidence behind it to that presented by pre-Socratic philosophers in their various theories of the hidden structure of the world. The objection may be raised that Freud is talking here about forces, whereas the pre-Socratic philosophers were talking about substance, but even a brief acquaintance with the history of philosophy reminds us that Leibniz, in

composing his famous windowless monads, was able to substitute the notion of force or energy for the notion of substance. In his metaphysics, which is primarily what Freud's theory at this point becomes, Freud is in the tradition of the pre-Socratic philosophers and the continental rationalists, especially Leibniz. In a later work he remarks on the similarity of his life-death dualism with that of the theory of Empedocles of Acragas (see Chessick 1977a).

By introducing a mysterious masochistic trend or a primary death instinct, Freud moved away significantly from empirical clinical data on which previous instinct theories rested. This departure from tradition stimulated endless and tedious debate of the same nature that took place among the continental rationalists, and led to despair that by reason alone one could arrive at an understanding of the secret or mysterious substance that made up the world. Although Freud insisted repeatedly on his aversion to professional philosophy, he certainly became a philosopher at this point. At the end of this work he claims he is not convinced of the truth of his own theories, and in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920G; 18:59) he writes: "I do not know how far I believe in them." Later, however, he came to regard his speculations as proven facts. As he admits, "Unfortunately, however, people are seldom impartial where ultimate things, the great problems of science and life, are concerned. Each of us is governed in such cases by deep-rooted internal prejudices, into whose hands our speculation unwittingly plays" (p. 59).

In the final section Freud makes the curious point that, "The pleasure principle seems actually to serve the death instincts" (p. 63), and he leaves the remainder of the discussion as "unfinished." What Freud calls the nirvana principle is represented by the fact that the dominating tendency in mental life is the effort to reduce, keep constant, or remove internal tension due to stimuli. This tendency finds expression in the pleasure principle, and Freud also uses the nirvana principle as an argument for the existence of the death instinct. Modern psychological and neurophysiological research has clearly indicated that this fundamental principle is simply wrong (see the next chapter).

Attempts to attach these arguments to physics or biology, such as comparing the death instinct with the second law of thermodynamics, have been easily refuted by pointing out that such a comparison rests on a misconception of the kind of system to which the laws of thermodynamics apply. No support has been obtained from the realm of biology either, and most thinkers have simply ignored or given up Freud's notion of a death instinct. But Jones (1957) lists Melanie Klein, Karl Menninger, and Herman Nunberg as famous psychoanalysts who did employ this concept, and there is much to be said for it (Chessick 1989,1992b).

It must be recognized that Freud at this point was becoming increasingly preoccupied with the problem of human aggression and human

destructiveness. From this stage of his life to the end, undoubtedly stimulated by the political and social events around him, Freud became increasingly pessimistic. Certainly the self-destructive behavior of our species cannot be denied; the all-pervasive aggression and destructiveness in humans is now beyond question.

The terms "life instinct" and "sexual instinct" on the one hand, and "death instinct" and "destructive instinct" on the other, are used thereafter by Freud synonymously and without any distinction. In his later *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1933A; 22:3ff) he arbitrarily and without significant further argument gives these two sets of instincts equal power and force. The attractiveness of this metaphysical system is that it produces two parallel forces of equivalent importance in human life. Similarly, a parallel series can be arranged for the energies of these instincts. For example, we begin with libido, the energy of the sexual instincts directed at the self in primary narcissism. This can be aimed outward, forming object relations, and taken back, forming secondary narcissism. The energy of the death instinct or destrudo is originally aimed at the self in the mysterious primary masochistic trend of the ego. It is turned outward in aggressiveness against others and can be brought back as secondary destructiveness in suicidal behavior. The death instinct can, by definition, never be directly demonstrated, but it is clear that this theory offers a unified view of self-destructive and aggressive manifestations and therefore has heuristic value.

Perhaps the best way to see how Freud moved from science to philosophy is to recognize that his final theory of life and death instincts is founded on an essentially changed concept of instincts. In the earlier view, instinct was a tension of energy which impinged upon the mental sphere, a tension which arose from an organic force, the biochemical state of the body, and which aimed at removing the state of excitation in the organ in which it originated. In the new theory, instinct becomes a mysterious directive which guides life processes in a certain direction. The emphasis is no longer on the production of energy but only upon a mysterious function determining a direction.

Criticism of "Beyond the Pleasure Principle." Schur (1972) attacks the very argument of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. He insists that the nirvana principle and repetition compulsion are taken as proof of the death-instinct concept, which in turn is used as an explanation for these same principles, "a classical example of circular reasoning." Freud had already arrived at his hypothesis of the death instinct and was using various aspects of un-pleasurable repetitiveness to confirm it, while at the same time using this hypothesis to explain the observed phenomena. Schur argues strongly on the side of interpreting these phenomena as part of the urge for mastery of trauma based on the pleasure principle, not beyond it, the alternative view discussed above. He characterizes the ambiance in which Freud accepted the death instinct as follows : "Postwar Vienna was utterly gloomy, accentuated

for Freud by worry about his sons and by the painful necessity of seeing his young patient-friend 'shrink' to death, followed only a few days later by the loss of his daughter Sophie." Jones (1957) claims, to the contrary, that the work was written before the death of Sophie and the onset of Freud's cancer.

The best formal refutation of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is found in an earlier monograph by Schur (1966). The essence of his refutation is that the phenomena Freud designated as beyond the pleasure principle can be explained within the framework of the unpleasure-pleasure principle, and that it is not necessary to postulate a nirvana principle at all. The attribute *daemonic* is not appropriate to the characteristic of repetitiveness that pervades human behavior, since it begs the question in the meaning of the term, which is derived from *daemon,* which postulates a malevolent motivating force. Schur (1966, p. 169) explains, "The tragic fact that such patterns, instead of serving survival, end in the destruction of the phenotype, does not denote the presence of an instinct whose aim it would be to achieve this fatal goal."

Ethologists such as Lorenz view species-specific repetitive behavior patterns as the result of evolution, with eminent survival value for the species. Even the repetitive dreams of patients with traumatic neuroses can be understood as representing the ego's wish to undo the traumatic situation and to master it, a process which has survival value based on the pleasure

principle. No daemonic force needs to be postulated. In fact, Schur, basing his arguments on the work of the ethologists, prefers to substitute the term "compulsive (stereotyped) repetitiveness" for the term "repetition compulsion."

Bibring (1936) arrives at a complete impasse when he attempts to justify the theory of the death instinct. A vast and unsatisfactory literature has grown up on this topic, engendered by the error of moving instinct theory far from clinical data and into the realm of pre- Socratic speculation. Dropping the notion of *Eros* and *Thanatos* as causal explanatory hypotheses involving mysterious forces, it is generally agreed, in no way vitiates the daily work of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Dropping this notion simply leaves the theoretical aspects involving instincts and psychic energies in a state of disarray, which offends our natural tendency to neatness and order. The entire history of science has shown that for the progress of science to continue, it is not necessary to postulate mysterious entities as causal explanatory hypotheses. Thus the origins of human destructiveness and of human narcissism will remain highly debated, but clinically speaking, the energies of narcissism, sex, and destructiveness can be observed undergoing various transformations and combinations in the life of any person, and we can delineate developmental stages from more primitive to more mature transformations of such energies. From the point of view of scientific and therapeutic work that is sufficient. An identical attitude is maintained in

physics, where transformations of energy are commonly studied even in classical mechanics. The metaphysical question "What is energy?" is usually not asked. Some philosophers, notably Wittgenstein, would characterize the very question as an improper use of language, akin to the question "What is substance?" which preoccupied philosophers of the eighteenth century and before. The abstraction of an operationally defined term into an entity seems to be a common human tendency which invariably leads us into serious metaphysical difficulties.

Freud's Later Epistemology Freud's final major theoretical work, written in his sixties, and described as a "further development" of his thoughts in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* is *The Ego and the Id* (l923B; 19:3ff). Parts of this work have a curious although unintended resemblance to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason.*

The term *id* was chosen to translate the German *es* (it), an impersonal term Freud used to designate the nonpersonal part of the mind as distinct from the ego or self. A clear distinction between ego and self is never made by Freud. The term *es* was used extensively by Nietzsche, but Freud's choice of the term was influenced by the work of the brilliant internist Groddeck.[i]

The concept of *it* fits more naturally within the German language, where it is grammatically correct to say, for example, "It dreamed to me," usually

translated into English as "I dreamed". (The presence of this grammatical "middle voice" partly underlies Heidegger's repeated arguments in favor of German and Greek as the only appropriate languages for philosophy.)

The Ego and the Id presents what is now known as the structural theory of the human mind. This new theory became necessary for two major reasons (discussed later in greater detail). Freud realized that the unconscious contains more than repressed infantile sexual wishes, and that a large section of psychic functioning, especially involving defenses and resistances, goes on in the unconscious mind. In addition, the clinical discovery of patients with an unconscious need for punishment and failure required the postulation of a moral and punitive agency, at least a part of which is also unconscious.

The parallel between Freud's notion of this moral agent, or superego, and Nietzsche's discussion of "bad conscience" is emphasized by Jones (1957). He quotes at length from Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* to demonstrate the parallel.

The ego, when defined as an entity through which the individual becomes conscious of his or her own existence and the existence of the external world, is also a historic philosophical concept. Ellenberger (1970) reminds us that this definition of the ego is almost identical to that postulated by Fichte. Freud's definition of the ego as "the coordinated organization of

mental processes in a person" is strikingly reminiscent of Kant's understanding of the mind as an active ordering process. For Kant the mind is not a "thing" at all, it is the ordering process itself (Jones 1969).

In the opening paragraphs of this work Freud writes, "To most people who have been educated in philosophy the idea of anything psychical which is not also conscious is so inconceivable that it seems to them absurd and refutable simply by “logic”" (p. 13). As Kohut and Seitz 1963) point out, he cleverly overcame an ingrained prejudice about the mind "in order to define consciousness as merely a sensory organ and to recognize not only that mental processes may occur outside of consciousness but that consciousness is not, at any time, an essential quality of mental activities" (p. 117).

At several points in his writings Freud makes derogatory comments about philosophy, and claims that he deliberately cut himself off from conscious study of philosophy, fearing to be influenced by philosophical speculation. For example, philosophers are supposed by Freud to propose that the Pcs. and the Ucs. should be described as two species or stages of "psychoid," here again implying that the philosophers can recognize perhaps a gradient of access to the consciousness but not the notion of unconscious mental phenomena.

In the first section the ego is defined as a coherent organization of

mental processes and it is pointed out that the unconscious does not coincide with the repressed: "It is still true that all that is repressed is Ucs., but not all that is Ucs. is repressed. A part of the ego, too—and Heaven knows how important a part—may be Ucs., undoubtedly is Ucs." (p. 18).

Moving from what are essentially definitions in the first section, we come in the second section to a discussion remarkably reminiscent of Kant. Freud begins by asking "What does it mean when we say 'making something conscious'? How can that come about?" (p. 19). He then refers us to a discussion (already summarized in chapter 20) in his paper "The Unconscious," where it has been explained that mnemic residues emerge from the unconscious to the preconscious by becoming connected with word-presentations. Once this connection has taken place, the eye of the conscious can focus upon these word- presentations, at which point they become conscious. (see chapter 20).

In a turgid paragraph Freud turns to the old philosophical question of distinguishing between a vivid memory and an external perception on the one hand, and a hallucination on the other. His description of mental functioning at this point must be regarded as pure philosophy, in the tradition of the *Critique of Pure Reason.* Arlow and Brenner (1964) in addition point out a clinical root to Freud's painstaking distinction between nonverbal memory traces in the system Ucs. and their connection with word-presentations in the

system Pcs. Freud believed that the infantile wishes remain unchanged in the system Ucs. and give rise to symptom formation when they press too hard on the repression barrier. These infantile wishes could gain access to the consciousness when they can be verbalized in the analytic situation, at which point the symptom disappears. "It was in correspondence with these clinical findings that he was led to assume that memory traces of the system Ucs. are nonverbal, while those of the Pcs. are verbal" (p. 17). In this way we see that Freud's hypotheses are different than those of speculative metaphysics, for they are formed out of that combination of creativity and experimental results that constitute hypothesis formation in science. It is possible to argue that Kant's theory of mental functioning could be characterized as arising from a process similar to Freud's, a combination of his creative genius and his own introspective study of his own mental functioning.

In the psychotic patient there is not simply the barring of certain mnemic images from gaining access to a connection with word-presentations in the system Pcs. In neurotic repression these mnemic images still retain their libidinal excitation and indeed may be strongly cathected with libido and may bring about a failure of repression by the force of this libido, with the consequent formation of a neurotic symptom. However, in psychoses there is an actual decathexis of the repressed nonverbal mnemic images, a withdrawal of the libidinal excitation which was formally attached to them. Arlow and Brenner (1964) explain, "They are without libidinal charge and, as a

consequence, the objects of the environment to which they correspond are deprived of their former importance and meaning to the individual. They have lost all emotional significance. They no longer exist for him" (p. 153). In the psychoses, on Freud's theory, if this detached libido is directed toward the patient's self, hypochondriasis develops; if it is directed toward the patient's ego, psychotic grandiosity and megalomanic symptoms follow.

Freud explains delusions and hallucinations as attempts to recathect object representations, and thus are characteristic of a second or restitutive phase of the psychotic patient's illness. However, as previously explained, this re-cathexis is postulated by Freud as limited to word-presentations in the system Pcs. and not possible of being attached once again to the mnemic images in the system Ucs. Therefore, because delusions and hallucinations are derived entirely from a hypercathexis of auditory and visual components of word-presentations in the system Pcs., they have a distinctly different quality from vivid memories and external perceptions. Freud later modified this approach by introducing the concept of "reality testing" as an important ego function, as we shall see in discussion of a later paper, but he apparently retained his original thesis that the initial phase of psychoses is one of decathexis of the mnemic images in the system Ucs.

The implication here is that thinking in pictures stands nearer to unconscious processes than does thinking in words, and as Freud writes, "It is

unquestionably older than the latter both ontogenetically and philogenetically" (p. 21). Recent research with infants and young children does not support this hypothesis.

An additional complication is introduced on the question of feelings or affects. No satisfactory psychoanalytic theory of affects has been developed. For example, the entire Jerusalem Congress of the International Psychoanalytic Association of 1977 was devoted to this subject (see the *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* (vol. 58). Freud's position, as described in the last chapter, is that whereas with unconscious mnemic images, connecting links with verbal presentations must be created before they can become conscious, feelings from the unconscious are transmitted directly and there is no distinction between Cs. and Pcs. where feelings are concerned. So here the Pcs. drops out, and feelings are either conscious or unconscious. "Even when they are attached to word-presentations, their becoming conscious is not due to that circumstance, but they become so directly" (p. 23).

In a philosophical conclusion Freud explains that the role of word-presentations is to bring unconscious mnemic images into conscious perceptions. "It is like a demonstration of the theorem that all knowledge has its origin in external perception." Although this statement seems to place Freud in the empirical tradition, he immediately continues, "When a

hypercathexis of the process of thinking takes place, thoughts are *actually* perceived—as if they came from without—and are consequently held to be true" (ibid). This depiction of the end products of an experiential world is clearly in the tradition of Kant, rather than pure empiricism, since it makes perception so dependent on mental processes.

In the next section of *The Ego and the Id* Freud somewhat casually presents a moral philosophy. For example, he postulates that religion, morality, and a social sense, as well as science and art, are "the chief elements in the higher side of man," and that the first three of these were originally one and the same thing. Religion and moral restraints, he says, come about through the process of mastering the Oedipus complex, with the subsequent formation of the superego. Social feeling comes about through the necessity of overcoming the rivalry that remains between the members of the younger generation. The superego is the heir of the Oedipus complex, and the formation of the ego ideal demonstrates that the ego has mastered the Oedipus complex. The ego ideal:

> answers to everything that is expected of the higher nature of man. As a substitute for a longing for the father, it contains the germ from which all religions have evolved. The self-judgment which declares that the ego falls short of its ideal produces the religious sense of humility to which the believer appeals in his longing. As a child grows up, the role of father is carried on by teachers and others in authority; their injunctions and prohibitions remain powerful in the ego ideal and continue, in the form of conscience, to exercise the moral censorship. The tension between the demands of the conscience and the actual performances of the ego is

> experienced as a sense of guilt. Social feelings rest on identifications with other people on the basis of having the same ego ideal (p. 37).

This is Freud's answer to Kant's wonder about the origins of “the moral law within.”

But as Freud continues in the remaining sections of *The Ego and the Id* he moves away from a Kantian orientation to the language of the humanistic imagination (Chessick 1971, 1974, 1992c). A curious Aristotelian teleology and anthropomorphism creeps, perhaps unconsciously, into his discussion of the ego. For example, he compares the ego to the well-known homunculus of the cerebral cortex, known to neuroanatomists as the projection of motor neurons from the body. The homunculus is usually shown in neuroanatomy textbooks as a distorted picture of a little human being and indeed, Freud describes the ego as a little human being inside the head. This "poor creature" (p. 56), the little man within the man—the ego—is placed in the limelight of psychoanalysis.

In addition to a further discussion of the life and death instincts already presented in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, *The Ego and the Id* bears an important relationship to the existentialist question of the fear of death. According to Freud’s extremely important formulation, the more a person controls his or her aggressiveness, the more intense becomes that person’s ego ideal's inclination to aggressiveness against his or her own ego. So, for

Freud, the superego has a direct link to the id and can borrow destructiveness and turn it against the ego. Even ordinary normal morality, Freud points out, has a harshly restraining, coolly prohibiting quality. "It is from this, indeed, that the conception arises of a higher being who deals out punishment inexorably" (p. 54).

The fear of death, described by existentialists as an important aspect of man's being-in-the-world, is attributed by Freud to an intrapsychic interaction between the ego and the superego. This interaction has to do with the fear of loss of love, of the withdrawal of love by the superego, which is given the function of protecting and saving in the role of a father, Providence, or God. Underlying the fear of death, says Freud, is the infantile anxiety and longing due to the separation from the protecting mother. This linkage between existential dread and the longing for the mother is discussed in my (1969, 1996a, 2009a) previous writings.

Freud's *The Ego and the Id* represents in a condensed form a philosophical position remarkably analogous to that of Kant. It begins with the topographic theory of the processes of mental functioning and shifts to the structural theory, partly in order to explain problems of morality and religion. A great similarity is found in the philosophy of Kant, who begins in the *Critique of Pure Reason* to delimit man as a phenomenal creature bound by the laws of chemistry and physics and hemmed in due to restrictions in his

knowledge by the nature of his mental functioning itself. Kant then moves to man as a noumenal creature—to the language of the humanistic imagination —in order to make room for faith, morality, and religion. He does this in spite of the fact that he previously defines the noumenal world as unknowable by us. It is true that Freud and Kant end up with different explanations for man as a noumenal creature as they attempt to account for his or her sense of free will and need for morality and religion. Kant says these explanations are consistent since any statements about man as a noumenal creature are "regulative." Since such explanations cannot be developed from direct experience it is necessary to appeal to homunculi, teleological explanations, and metaphysical causal explanatory hypotheses. So in the final period of his life (he was sixty-seven when this book was published), Freud has moved into the realm of philosophy. (In a later work, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* [1933A; 22:3ff] he summarizes the first three sections of *The Ego and the Id*.)

In "The Economic Problem of Masochism" (1924C; 19:157) Freud states flatly, "Kant's categorical imperative is thus the direct heir of the Oedipus complex." In Freud's view, moral laws within us can be explained by personality development rather than by Kant's regulative concepts of God and the self. Freud maintains that the Oedipus complex is the source of our individual ethical sense and our morality.

Perhaps this is why Freud reluctantly concludes:

> So it comes about that psychoanalysis derives nothing but disadvantages from its middle position between medicine and philosophy. Doctors regard it as a speculative system and refuse to believe that, like any other natural science, it is based on a patient and tireless elaboration of facts from the world of perception; philosophers, measuring it by the standard of their own artificially constructed systems, find that it starts from impossible premises and reproach it because its most general concepts (which are only now in process of evolution) lack clarity and precision (1925E; 19:217).

Rapaport (1951) reminds us that philosophical psychology, the predecessor of scientific psychology, was a subsidiary of epistemology in that its major question was: How do we acquire our knowledge of the world of reality? The famous philosophical publications in this area, such as Bacon's *Novum Organum,* Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy,* Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding,* Hume's An *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding,* as well as many others, deal primarily with this important question.

Freud repeatedly postulates that attention is the function of the system Cs. Thus for Freud, to obtain attention-cathexis and to become conscious are synonymous. In "A Note Upon the Mystic Writing Pad" (1925A; 19:226ff) he follows a tradition established by Plato in the *Theatetus,* in which the mind is considered as containing a block of wax on which perceptions and thoughts are imprinted as a real block of wax receives the impression from the seal of a

ring.

The well-known mystic writing pad contains a slab of wax over which is laid a thin transparent sheet, the top of which is firmly secured to the wax slab. The transparent sheet is made up of two layers which are detachable: the top layer is a transparent piece of celluloid, while the bottom layer is translucent waxed paper. Using a pointed stylus, one writes on the celluloid.

To destroy what has been written the double covering sheet is peeled back from the wax slab. Although such a pad provides a surface that can be used over and over again, the wax slab retains permanent traces of what has been written.

The celluloid portion of the covering sheet represents the protective shield against external stimuli mentioned by Freud in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.* It is the task of this aspect of the perceptual apparatus of the mind to diminish the strength of the incoming excitations. Writing on the celluloid sheet leaves no trace on the celluloid if it is raised from the wax slab.

The bottom layer of the covering sheet, the surface receiving the pressure of the stylus through the celluloid, is the system Pcpt.-Cs. Here, too, no permanent trace of the writing remains when the two-layer covering sheet is lifted from the wax. Thus the system Pcpt.-Cs. receives perceptions but retains no permanent trace of them; hence, it can act as a clean sheet to every

new perception. The permanent traces of the excitations are preserved in the unconscious series of mnemic systems lying behind the perceptual system—the wax slab of the mystic writing pad.

Cathected innervations are sent out and withdrawn in rapid periodic impulses from within into the system Pcpt.-Cs. This cathexis is necessary from within in order for that system Pcpt.-Cs. to function and receive perceptions which attain consciousness. Thus the system Ucs. periodically extends toward the system Pcpt.-Cs. by periodically cathecting it, making it possible for the latter to receive impressions from the outside world. This periodic recathexis of the system Pcpt.-Cs. enables it to have energy to function. Those periods during which the system Pcpt.-Cs. is not cathected from within are compared to the breaking of contact in the mystic writing pad, when the top sheets are separated from the wax.

According to Freud, this periodic non-excitability of the perceptual system, leading to a discontinuous method of functioning of this system Pcpt.-Cs., forms the basis of our concept of time, another extremely important philosophical issue. Furthermore, the system Pcpt.-Cs. can use the energy available to it either for forming a countercathexis, or for a periodic hypercathexis toward the environment, which results in a focusing of attention on the environment. This periodic flickering-up due to fluctuation in the distribution of attention cathexis is called "the notational function of

attention" by Freud. Thus the system Pcpt.-Cs. sends out periodic focus on the environment in a way analogous to the periodic cathexis of the system Pcpt.-Cs. sent out from the system Ucs.

We see how close Freud's view at times is to Kant's view, in which time is the a priori formal condition of all appearances whatsoever. All representations, whether or not they have external things as their objects, must be subject to the formal condition of our inner sense of intuition, namely, time (see Copleston 1964).

Freud therefore presents a definitive epistemological viewpoint on conscious mentation. The eye of consciousness is a sense organ for the perception of psychic qualities. This sense organ is excitable by psychic qualities but devoid of memory. Conscious mentation is the effect of the attention-cathexis, and this attention-cathexis represents energy at its disposal. Early in development this energy is distributed according to the pleasure principle, and later by the reality principle. The energy may be utilized either as counter-cathexis to establish and maintain repression or as hyper-cathexis to produce consciousness.

Having discussed the nature of consciousness and our sense of time, Freud, in the tradition of a true epistemologist, turns in the brief paper "Negation" (1925H; 19:234ff), to the nature of judgment. For Freud, judgment

either affirms or disaffirms "the possession by a thing of a particular attribute" or "it asserts or disputes that a presentation has an existence in reality" (p. 236). The most primitive form of judgment attempts to decide by motor activity what is "me" and what is "not me", or what is internal and what is external. The next but still primitive form of judgment attempts to accept only the pleasurable and to reject painful excitations both from the internal and external world. Furthermore, at the beginning of mental development "what is bad, what is alien to the ego and what is external are, to begin with, identical" (p. 237).

We discover in our clinical work that negation is a way of making conscious what is repressed. The content of a repressed mnemic trace makes its way up into consciousness on the condition that it is negated. So after an interpretation the patient may deny the existence of a repressed idea which he or she has just admitted into consciousness. A negative judgment is the intellectual substitute for a repression and this leads Freud to the whole issue of the function of judgment, another famous issue in philosophy, as in, for example, Kant's (1987) *Critique of Judgment,* first published in 1790.

When the ego has come under the sway of the reality principle, says Freud, the major function of judgment shifts to the question of the real existence of a presentation, a situation that we call reality-testing. This represents a step forward in maturation.

He contends that all presentations originate from perception. Thinking possesses the capacity to bring before the mind once more something that has once been perceived, by reproducing it as a presentation without the external object having still to be there. Freud writes, "What is unreal, merely a presentation and subjective, is only internal; what is real is also there *outside"* (p. 237). Thus the function of judgment is to discern whether a perception is *merely* internal or whether there is in reality a counterpart to the perception. Reality-testing, therefore, consists of convincing oneself that the object which is being perceived is still really out there. Furthermore, it must decide whether a given perception is faithful or whether it has been modified and distorted. Consistent with modern cybernetics, reality-testing or judgment seems to be a scanning procedure in which a given perception is compared with previous perceptions in an effort to form a sense of conviction that the perception is actually coming from outside one's self.

Freud continues by defining judging as an intellectual act which decides the choice of motor action; it "puts an end to the postponement due to thought and which leads over from thinking to acting" (p. 238). This description of judgment comes from the "Project for a Scientific Psychology" which, as has been explained, rests primarily on psychophysical parallelism. At this point Freud clearly is not worrying about the philosophical inconsistencies in his position but is trying to establish how the function of judgment develops from the primitive functions of distinguishing between the internal and the

external world, as well as from the incorporation of the pleasurable and extrusion of the unpleasurable.

A final sudden change is also introduced in his theory. In this paper Freud conceives of the *ego* as periodically sending out cathexes to the system Pcpt-Cs., in contrast to his earlier notion, discussed above, of these cathexes coming from the system Ucs. This view is more consistent with his later structural theory of the mental apparatus.

Freud's work was clearly in the Kantian tradition of investigating epistemology through a focus on our thought processes. The task of integrating psychoanalytic metapsychology with Kantian epistemology was attempted by Rapaport in four major books (1951, 1960, 1961, 1967). Copleston (1964) points out that for Kant, the metaphysics of the future should be a transcendental critique of human experience and knowledge. Such a critique represents what might be called a scientific metaphysics. For Kant, the human mind's reflective awareness of its own spontaneous formative activity is the science of metaphysics or at least approximates a scientific procedure. Kant's concept provides a modest idea of the scope and power of metaphysics, especially if one compares it, for example, to the fantastic inflation of the same concept into a metaphysics of "reality" by such Absolute Idealists as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

On the whole, Freud followed a similar procedure. Of course he reached different conclusions. For example, in a fragment published posthumously he writes, "Space may be the projection of the extension of the psychical apparatus. No other derivation is probable. Instead of Kant's *a priori* determinants of our physical apparatus. Psyche is extended; knows nothing about it" (1941F; 23:300).

It is not fair to criticize this quotation since it is only a brief note and was never developed by Freud. Although unsupported by arguments, it serves to illustrate that Kant's approach was on Freud's mind to the end.

Certain other discussions in Freud's last published works indicate that toward the end of his life he was beginning to grapple with direct epistemological problems. For example, he begins *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1940A; 23:141ff) with what he calls a basic assumption "reserved to philosophical thought." This assumption is that we know two kinds of things about our mental life: its bodily organ, the brain, and our acts of consciousness "which are immediate data and cannot be further explained by any sort of description." Everything that lies between, according to Freud, is unknown to us, "and the data do not include any direct relation between these two terminal points of our knowledge." He further assumes that mental life is the functioning of an apparatus "to which we ascribe the characteristics of being extended in space and of being made up of several portions," but nothing is

known of the localization of this psychical apparatus in the organ of mind (brain). According to Freud, the extension of the mental apparatus in space, when projected, gives us our notion of space. Thus whereas Kant extracts our notion of space from experiential data, Freud attributes this notion to a projection of the extension of our mental apparatus in space.

A philosophical discussion is briefly continued in the same work on pages 196-7. Freud compares psychoanalytic psychology to that of other sciences such as physics, and he proclaims that in all sciences the problem is the same; behind the phenomena or qualities of the object under examination presented directly by perception:

> We have to discover something else which is more independent of the particular receptive capacity of our sense organs and which approximates more closely to what may be supposed to be the real state of affairs. We have no hope of being able to reach the latter itself, since it is evident that everything new that we have inferred must nevertheless be translated back into the language of our perceptions, from which it is simply impossible for us to free ourselves. But herein lies the very nature and limitation of our science (p. 196).

Thus for Freud, "reality" remains unknowable, and the yield from scientific work on our sense perceptions consists of an insight into connections and dependent relationships as they manifest themselves in the phenomenal world. He believes that this approach gives us an insight into connection and dependent relationships present in the world of "reality"—that which he calls the external world. In order to reach this understanding we have to infer a

number of processes which are in themselves "unknowable" and interpolate them in the phenomena of our conscious perception.

Here Freud falls into the same error made by Kant. Kant also assumed that the "real" world, the noumenal world, was unknowable, and yet he spoke of it as being causally efficacious. By Kant's own philosophy the notion of causality cannot be applied to the noumenal world because "causality" is an a priori condition of our experience of the phenomenal world, and outside of this it has no meaning. Freud's use of the unconscious is more like Kant's use of the regulative principles to which we are forced in order to explain certain phenomena, but which can never be proven by the method of science. For example, one could never "prove" that our notion of space stems from the projection of our mental apparatus that exists in space, as the unfinished fragment from Freud suggests. Because Kant at least attempts to extract our notion of space from phenomenal experience, he appears to be closer to a scientific procedure than Freud in his contention about space.

Freud picks this problem up again in an unfinished fragment "Some Elementary Lessons in Psychoanalysis" (1940B; 23:280ff), where he discusses the nature of the "psychical." He brings us back to the same problem that Kant was trying to solve, by explaining that equating what is mental with what is conscious has the unwelcome result of separating psychical processes from the general context of events and the universe and

setting them in complete contrast to all others—in other words, another version of Cartesian dualism. He makes the classic criticism against Cartesian dualism, pointing out how we know that psychical phenomena are dependent to a high degree upon somatic processes but we cannot, in the Cartesian system, account for interaction between the psychic and the physical. He reminds us that psychophysical parallelism, as a result of this criticism foundered on the impossibility of explaining the intermediaries in the reciprocal relationship of body and mind.

Freud offers his solution of the Cartesian dualism by redefining what is psychical. Consciousness is not the essence of what is psychical for Freud; it is only an inconstant quality of what is psychical, far more often absent than present. He writes, "The psychical, whatever its nature may be, is in itself unconscious and probably similar in kind to all the other natural processes of which we have obtained knowledge" (p. 283). Although Freud does not acknowledge explicitly the fact, these views lead him to a monistic materialist ontology most resembling that of Hobbes. "The core of our being," Freud writes in *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1940A; 23:197), "is formed by the obscure *id*, which has no direct communication with the external world and is accessible even to our own knowledge only through the medium of another agency." For Freud, the id plays the role that the noumenal world plays for Kant. Freud then proceeds to tell us about this obscure, unknowable id in his discussion of the primal organic instincts, as he calls them, which operate

within it (Eros and Destructiveness).

In "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" (1937C; 23:211ff), he compares his view, as I mentioned above, to that of the pre- Socratic philosopher Empedocles, who postulated two powers, similar to Freud's, that operate on the four primal elements. One strives to agglomerate the primal particles of the four elements into a single unity, while the other, on the contrary, seeks to undo those fusions and to separate primal particles of the elements from one another. Freud insists that Empedocles' theory is a cosmic fantasy, while he claims biological validity for his theory.

Freud was not a professional philosopher. He seems unaware that by redefining the mental as psychical events which may or may not—usually not —possess the quality of consciousness, he is not eliminating the mind-brain problem. By insisting that mental events at their base have an organic or materialist nature, he runs into the same problem faced by Hobbes: how one moves from this obscure material base to the conscious phenomena of perception. In order to explain this problem, Hobbes was forced to introduce his doctrine of phantasms, which was completely inconsistent with his own philosophy.

Freud deals with the problem by ignoring it. From the obscure material base in the id ruled by the two primal organic instincts, to the psychic mnemic

representations in the id or the unconscious, there is a crucial conceptual leap. Nothing is said in all Freud's writings about how this leap takes place. His work begins not with the organic "reality" in the id, which is unknowable, but with the primitive mnemic representations in the unconscious. He extends our conception of the mental, but it remains mental rather than organic. After making this extension of our concept of the mental, which is justifiable on the basis of the clinical data, he studies mental functioning in a manner very similar to Kant's approach in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and from it he draws certain principles of mental functioning which are at times similar to Kant's a priori principles of the understanding.

The argument about the therapeutic validity of psychoanalysis does not rest on Freud's failure to solve the mind-body problem, as it is perfectly possible to drop the organic aspect of the id as well as Freud's famous life and death instincts and carry on an effective clinical science of psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

The great debate in science regarding psychoanalysis concerns the issue of Freud's inference of unconscious mental processes filling in the gaps of our conscious perception of events. Allowing Freud to fill in the gaps in our conscious mental phenomena with his notion of unconscious processes permits psychoanalysis to study the data of mental processes in a manner akin to any natural science. It also permits Freud to make higher-level

abstractions such as the pleasure principle or reality principle, and even higher level abstractions such as the ego and superego, which are epistemological premises determined by a method similar to that of Kant when he established his a priori principles of the understanding.

Although in his approach Freud followed a time-honored procedure in classical science, he does not escape, any more than does any other field of scientific investigation, the philosophical problems underlying the scientific method. What weakens psychoanalysis with respect to the other natural sciences is that some of the data investigated cannot be directly perceived or measured except by their effects, and must be inferred. It is Freud's correct point that granting this inference, psychoanalysis may proceed in the manner of a natural science.

It is only when he attempts to discuss the obscure nature of the id and the primitive life and death instincts that Freud falls into the error of Kant who, after eliminating the noumenal world from our understanding, proceeds to discuss it as if it were a world of presentational objects or "things." The same tension exists in the philosophy of Freud as exists in the philosophy of Kant. So that he could establish his preconceived pietistic moral viewpoints, Kant attempted to limit the sphere of reason in order to make room for faith. Somewhat similarly, Freud constantly finds himself involved in the language of the humanistic imagination with its anthropomorphizing concepts such as

the ego or the life and death instincts, concepts which run counter to his philosophy of psychic determinism of the most rigid nature.

Many authors, as we shall see in the next chapter, have pointed out two fundamental weaknesses of psychoanalysis, first in the metaphysical area and second in its epistemological foundations. In the realm of the metaphysical, the notion of the id and life and death instincts belongs to the noumenal world. In the realm of the epistemological, as mentioned above, an inference from consciously perceived data to the "data" of unconscious mental events makes psychoanalysis different fundamentally from the other natural sciences, both in the nature of the data studied and in the difficulties of verification. This is why Popper (1965), for example, rejects psychoanalysis as a science, since there is no crucial experiment upon which the basic hypotheses stand or fall. Inferred data can always be invoked to maintain the validity of almost any hypotheses. For the same reason Wittgenstein (1967) also condemned psychoanalysis as "a mythological system." Fortunately, these theoretical weaknesses do not affect the clinical day-to-day practice of psychoanalysis and intensive psychotherapy, which can be highly efficacious and related methods of treatment.

In a way, Aristotle is more sympathetic to the psychoanalytic approach than are modern philosophers. For example, Copleston (1962) reminds us of the beginning of *De Anima* where Aristotle explains that the problem of

investigating the soul is very difficult because it is not easy to ascertain the right method to be employed; the speculative philosopher and the naturalist have different standpoints and so frame their definitions differently. Copleston explains, "It is not every thinker that has recognized that different sciences have their different methods, and that because the particular science cannot employ the method of the chemist or natural scientist, it does not follow that all its conclusions must necessarily be vitiated" (p. 69).

[i] This remarkably intuitive physician achieved excellent results in psychosomatic disorders and published his approach in *The Book of the It* (1961). He correctly considered himself a wild analyst and there is a curious mysticism to his notion of the "it" that is more reminiscent of Schopenhauer than of Freud. Grossman (1965) reviews his life and work.

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