BEYOND THE CHAINS OF ILLUSION

My Encounter with Marx and Freud

BY

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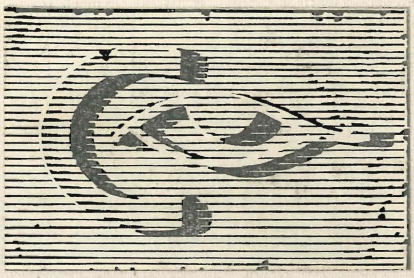

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pared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent. But they are founded either on the immature development of man individually, *who has not yet severed the umbilical cord that unites him with his fellow man in a primitive tribal community,* or upon direct relations of subjection. They can arise and exist only when the development of the productive power of labor has not risen beyond a low state, and when, therefore, the social relations within the sphere of material life, between man and man, and between man and nature, are correspondingly narrow. This narrowness is reflected in the ancient worship of Nature, and in the other elements of the popular religions. The religious reflex of the real world can, in any case, only then finally vanish when the practical relations of everyday life offer to man none but perfectly intelligible and reasonable relations with regard to his fellow men and to nature. The life-process of material production does not strip off its mystical veil until it is treated as production by freely associated men, and is consciously regulated by them in accordance with a settled plan. This, however, demands for society a certain material groundwork or set of conditions of existence which in their turn are the spontaneous product of a long and painful process of development." [1]

Man, as a race, slowly emancipates himself from mother nature through the process of work, and in this process of emancipation he develops his intellectual and emotional powers and grows up, becomes an independent and free man. When he will have brought nature under his full and rational control, and when society will have lost its antagonistic class character, "prehistory" will have ended, and a truly human history will begin in which free men plan and organize their exchange with nature, and in which the aim and end of all social life is not work and produc-

[1] *Capital* I., pp. 91-2 (My italics, E.F.).

What does Marx mean by alienation (or "estrangement")? The essence of this concept, which was first developed by Hegel, is that the world (nature, things, others, and he himself) have become alien to man. He does not experience himself as the subject of his own acts, as a thinking, feeling, loving person, but he experiences himself only in the things he has created, as the object of the externalized manifestations of his powers. He is in touch with himself only by surrendering himself to the products of his creation.

Hegel, taking God as the subject of history, had seen God in man, in a state of self-alienation and in the process of history God's return to himself.

Feuerbach turned Hegel upside down;[1] God, so he thought, represented man's own powers transferred from man, the owner of these powers, to a being outside of him, so that man is in touch with his own powers only by his worship of God; the stronger and richer God is, the weaker and poorer becomes man.

Marx was deeply stirred and influenced by Feuerbach's thought. In his introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (written toward the end of 1843) he followed Feuerbach in his analysis of alienation. In his Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts (1844) Marx pro-

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position that alienation and the task of overcoming it is the center of Marx's socialist humanism and the aim of socialism; furthermore that there is a complete continuity between the young and the mature Marx, in spite of changes in terminology and emphasis (to this group belong, to mention only a few, Rubel, Goldman, Bottomore, Fromm, Petrovic, Markovic, Vranicki, Bloch, Lukacs.) Other authors like D. Bell, L. Feuer, and to some extent C. W. Mills have taken the position that alienation is either not a useful, or a central theme in Marx.

[1] Cf. the discussion on alienation in R. Tucker's *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx.* Cambridge University Press, 1961, pp. 85 ff.

ceeded from the phenomenon of *religious alienation* to that of the *alienation of labor*. Parallel to Feuerbach's analysis of religious alienation Marx wrote: "The worker becomes poorer, the more wealth he produces and the more his production increases in power and extent." [1] And a few paragraphs later he wrote: "All these consequences follow from the fact that the worker is related to the *product of his labor* as to an *alien* object. For it is clear on this presupposition that the more the worker expends himself in work, the more powerful becomes the world of objects which he creates in face of himself, the poorer he becomes in his inner life and the less he belongs to himself; it is just the same as in religion. The more of himself man attributes to God the less he has left in himself. The worker puts his life into the object and his life then belongs no longer to himself but to the object. The greater his activity, therefore, the less he possess . . . The *alienation* of the worker in his product means not only that his labor becomes an object, assumes an external existence, but that it exists independently, outside himself that it stands opposed to him as an autonomous power. The life which he has given to the object sets itself against him as an alien and hostile force." [2] But, so Marx goes on to say, the worker is not only alienated from the products which he creates; "alienation appears not only in the result, but also in the *process,* of production, within *productive activity* itself." [3] And again he returns to the analogy of aliena-

[1] *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* p. 95. It may not be too farfetched to speculate that Marx was influenced in his erroneous theory of the increasing impoverishment of the worker in the process of capitalistic evolution by this analogy between religious and economic alienation even though his economic assumption *seems* to be nothing but the logical outcome of his economic theory of labor, value, and other factors.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 95-6.

[3] *Ibid.,* p. 99.

tion in labor with alienation in religion, "Just as in religion the spontaneous activity 'Selbsttaetigkeit' of human fantasy, of the human brain and heart, reacts independently as an alien activity of gods and devils upon the individual, so the activity of the worker is not his own spontaneous activity." [1]

From the concept of alienated work, Marx proceeds to the concept of man's alienation from himself, his fellowman, and from nature. He defines labor in its original and nonalienated form as "life activity, productive life "Lebenstaetigkeit, das produktiv Leben"," and then proceeds to define the species character of man as "free, conscious activity." ('freie bewusste Taetigkeit') In alienated labor the free and conscious activity of man becomes distorted into alienated activity and thus "Life itself appears only as a *means of life.*" [2]

As the previous statement shows, Marx is by no means only concerned with the alienation of man from his product nor only with the alienation of work. He is concerned with man's alienation from life, from himself, and from his fellowman. This idea is expressed in the following: "Thus alienated labor turns the *species life of man,* and also nature as his mental species-property, into an *alien* being and into a *means* for his *individual existence.* It alienates from man his own body, external nature, his mental life, and his *human* life. A direct consequence of the alienation of man from the product of his labor from his life activity and from the species life is that man is *alienated* from other *men.* When man confronts himself he also confronts *other* men. What is true of man's relationship to his work, to the product of his work, and to himself, is also true of his relationship to other men, to their labor, and to the objects of their labor. In general,

[1] *Ibid.,* p. 101.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 101.

the statement that man is alienated from his species life means that each man is alienated from others, and that each of the others is likewise alienated from human life." [1]

I must add to this presentation of Marx's concept of alienation as he expressed it in his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* that the concept, although not the word, remains of central significance throughout his whole later main work, including *The Capital.* In the *German Ideology* Marx wrote: "As long as a cleavage exists between the particular and the common interest man's own deed becomes an alien power opposed to him, which enslaves him instead of being controlled by him." [2] And later: "This crystallization of social activity, this consolidation of what we ourselves produce into an objective power above us, growing out of our control, thwarting our expectations, bringing to naught our calculations, is one of the chief factors in historical development up to now." [3] Here follow some of the many statements in Capital dealing with alienation: "In handicraft and manufacture, the workman makes use of a tool; in the factory the machine makes use of him. There the movements of the instruments of labor proceed from him; here it is the movement of the machines that he must follow. In manufacture, the workmen are part of a living mechanism; in the factory, we have a lifeless mechanism, independent of the workman, who becomes its mere living appendage." [4, 5] Or (education of the future will) "com-

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[2] *German Ideology*, p. 220.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

[4] *Capital I*, pp. 461-462.

[5] The whole problem of the continuity of the concept of alienation in Marx's thought has been treated excellently in R. Tucker's book *Philosophy and Myth* in Karl Marx. Cf. also the chapter on the continuity in Marx's thought in my *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1961).

the moral, is independent from the other, "each is concentrated upon a specific area of alienated activity and is itself alienated from the other." [1]

Marx foresaw with amazing clarity how the needs of man in an alienated society would be perverted into true weaknesses. In capitalism, as Marx sees it, "Every man speculates upon creating a *new* need in another in order to force him to a new sacrifice, to place him in a new dependence, and to entice him into a new kind of pleasure and thereby into economic ruin. Everyone tries to establish over others an *alien* power in order to find there the satisfaction of his own egoistic need. With the mass of objects, therefore, there also increases the realm of alien entities to which man is subjected. Every new product is a new *potentiality* of mutual deceit and robbery. Man becomes increasingly poor as a man; he has increasing need of *money* in order to take possession of the hostile being. The power of *money* diminishes directly with the growth of the quantity of production, i.e., his need increases with the increasing *power* of money. The need for money is therefore the real need created by the modern economy, and the only need which it creates. The *quantity* of money becomes increasingly its only important quality. Just as it reduces every entity to its abstraction, so it reduces itself in its own development to a *quantitative* entity. Excess and immoderation become its true standard. This is shown subjectively, partly in the fact that the expansion of production and of needs becomes an *ingenious* and always *calculating* subservience to inhuman, depraved, unnatural, and *imaginary* appetites. Private property does not know how to change crude need into *human* need; its *idealism* is *fantasy, caprice* and *fancy*. No eunuch flatters his tyrant more shamefully or seeks by more infamous means to stimulate his jaded appetite, in

[1] *Ibid.*

order to gain some favor, than does the eunuch of industry, the entrepreneur, in order to acquire a few silver coins or to charm the gold from the purse of his dearly beloved neighbor. (Every product is a bait by means of which the individual tries to entice the essence of the other person, his money. Every real or potential need is a weakness which will draw the bird into the lime. As every imperfection of man is a bond with heaven, a point at which his heart is accessible to the priest, so every want is an opportunity for approaching one's neighbor with the air of friendship, and saying, 'Dear friend, I will give you what you need, but you know the *conditio sine qua non.* You know what ink you must use in signing yourself over to me. I shall swindle you while providing your enjoyment.' All this constitutes a universal exploitation of human communal life.) The entrepreneur accedes to the most depraved fancies of his neighbor, plays the role of pander between him and his needs, awakens unhealthy appetites in him, and watches for every weakness in order, later, to claim the remuneration for this labor of love." [1] The man who has thus become subject to his alienated needs is "a *mentally* and *physicaly dehumanized* being . . . the *self-conscious* and *self-acting commodity*." [2] This commodity-man knows only one way of relating himself to the world outside, by having it and by consuming (using) it. The more alienated he is, the more the sense of having and using constitutes his relationship to the world. "The less you *are,* the less you express your life, the more you *have,* the greater is your *alienated* life and the greater is the saving of your alienated being." [3]

Discussing Marx's concept of alienation, it might be of some interest to point to the close connection between the

[1] *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* pp. 140–2.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 111.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 144.

phenomenon of alienation and the phenomenon of transference which is one of the most fundamental concepts in Freud's system. Freud had observed that the psychoanalytic patient tended to fall in love with the analyst, to be afraid of him, or to hate him, and all this quite without regard to the reality of the analyst's personality. Freud believed that he had found the theoretical explanation to this phenomenon by the assumption that the patient transferred the feelings of love, fear, hate, he had experienced as a child toward father and mother, to the person of the analyst. In the "transference," so Freud reasoned, the child in the patient relates himself to the person of the analyst as to his father or mother. Undoubtedly, Freud's interpretation of the transference phenomenon has much truth in it, and is supported by a good deal of evidence. Yet it is not a complete interpretation. The grown-up patient *is not* a child, and to talk about the child in him, or "his" unconscious, is using a topological language which does not do justice to the complexity of the facts. The neurotic, grown-up patient is an alienated human being; he does not feel strong, he is frightened and inhibited because he does not experience himself as the subject and originator of his own acts and experiences. He is neurotic *because* he is alienated. In order to overcome his sense of inner emptiness and impotence, he chooses an object onto whom he projects all his own human qualities: his love, intelligence, courage, etc. By submitting to this object, he feels in touch with his own qualities; he feels strong, wise, courageous, and secure. To lose the object means danger of losing himself. This mechanism, idolatric worship of an object, based on the fact of the individual's alienation, is the central dynamism of transference, that which gives transference its strength and intensity. The less alienated person may also transfer some of his infantile experience to the analyst, but there would be little intensity

I just quoted. "History," he wrote in *The Holy Family,* "does *nothing,* it possesses no colossal riches, it fights *no* battles! It is rather man, actual and living man, who does all this; 'history' does not use man as a means for *its* purposes as though it were a person apart; it is *nothing* but the activity of man pursuing his ends."

The phenomenon of alienation has other clinical aspects, which I can discuss only briefly. Not only are all forms of depression, dependence and idol worship (including the "fanatic") direct expressions of, or compensations for, alienation; the phenomenon of the failure to experience one's identity which is a central phenomenon at the root of psychopathological phenomena is also a result of alienation. Precisely because the alienated person has transformed his own functions of feeling and thought to an object outside he is not himself, he has no sense of "I," of identity. This lack of a sense of identity has many consequences. The most fundamental and general one is that it prevents integration of the total personality, hence it leaves the person disunited within himself, lacking either capacity "to will one thing" [1] or if he seems to will one thing his will lacks authenticity.

In the widest sense, every neurosis can be considered an outcome of alienation; this is so because neurosis is characterized by the fact that one passion (for instance, for money, power, women, etc.) becomes dominant and separated from the total personality, thus becoming the ruler of the person. This passion is his idol to which he submits even though he may rationalize the nature of his idol and give it many different and often well-sounding names. He is ruled by a partial desire, he transfers all he has left to this desire, he is weaker the stronger "it" becomes. He has

[1] Cf. S. Kierkegaard, *Purity of Heart is to Will One Thing,* Torch Books.

become alienated from himself precisely because "he" has become the slave of a part of himself.

Seeing alienation as a pathological phenomenon must, however, not obscure the fact that Hegel and Marx considered it a *necessary* phenomenon, one which is inherent in human evolution. This is true with regard to the alienation of reason as well as of love. Only when I can distinguish between the world outside and myself, that is, only if the world outside becomes an *object,* can I grasp it and make it my world, become one with it again. The infant, for whom the world is not yet conceived as "object," can also not grasp it with his reason and reunite himself with it. Man has to become alienated in order to overcome this split in the activity of his reason. The same holds true for love. As long as the infant has not separated himself from the world outside he is still part of it, and hence cannot love. In order to love, the "other" must become a stranger, and in the act of love, the stranger ceases to be a stranger and becomes me. Love presupposes alienation—and at the same time overcomes it. The same idea is to found in the prophetic concept of the Messianic Time and in Marx's concept of socialism. In Paradise man still is one with nature, but not yet aware of himself as separate from nature and his fellowman. By his act of disobedience man acquires self-awareness, the world becomes estranged from him. In the process of history, according to the prophetic concept, man develops his human powers so fully that eventually he will acquire a new harmony with men and nature. Socialism, in Marx's sense, can only come, once man has cut off all primary bonds, when he has become completely alienated and thus is able to reunite himself with men and nature without sacrificing his integrity and individuality.

The concept of alienation has its roots in a still earlier phase of the Western tradition, in the thought of the Old

Testament prophets, more specifically in their concept of *idolatry*. The prophets of monotheism did not denounce heathen religions as idolatrous primarily because they worshiped several gods instead of one. The essential difference between monotheism and polytheism is not one of the *numbers* of gods, but lies in the fact of alienation. Man spends his energy, his artistic capacities on building an idol, and then he worships this idol, which is nothing but the result of his own human effort. His life forces have flowed into a "thing," and this thing, having become an idol, is not experienced as a result of his own productive effort, but as something apart from himself, over and against himself, which he worships and to which he submits. As the prophet Hosea says (XIV, 8): "Assur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, you are our gods; for in thee the fatherless finds love." Idolatrous man bows down to the work of his own hands. *The idol represents his own life-forces in an alienated form.*

The principle of monotheism, in contrast, is that man is infinite, that there is no partial quality in him which can be hypostatized into the whole. God, in the monotheistic concept, is unrecognizable and indefinable; God is not a "thing." Man being created in the likeness of God is created as the bearer of infinite qualities. In idolatry man bows down and submits to the projection of one partial quality in himself. He does not experience himself as the center from which living acts of love and reason radiate. He becomes a thing, his neighbor becomes a thing, just as his gods are things. "The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. They that make them are like them; so is everyone that trusts in them." (Psalm 135)

the market who are united by their mutual interest in exchange. For Marx, man is primarily a social being. He is in need of his fellow man, not as a means to satisfy his desires, but because he is only he, he is only complete as a man, if he is related to his fellow men and to nature.[1]

The independent, free man in Marx's sense is, at the same time, the active, related, productive man. Spinoza, who had considerable influence on Marx, as he had on Hegel and Goethe, held activity *vs.* passivity to be central concepts for the understanding of man. He differentiated between active and passive emotions. The former (fortitude and generosity) originate in the individual, and they are accompanied by adequate ideas. The latter rule over man; he is the slave of passions and they are connected with inadequate, irrational ideas. This connection between knowledge and affect has been enriched by Goethe and Hegel in their emphasis on the nature of true knowledge. Knowledge is not obtained in the position of the split between subject and object, but in the position of relatedness. As Goethe put it: "Man knows himself only inasmuch as he knows the world. He knows the world only within himself, and he is aware of himself only within the world. Each new object, truly recognized, opens up a new organ within ourselves." [2] In his *Faust,* Goethe gave the most outstanding expression to this concept of the "ever striving" man. Neither knowledge nor power nor sex can give an ultimately satisfactory answer to the question which man is asked by the fact of his very existence. Only the free and productive man, united to his fellow man, can give the right answer to man's existence, Marx's concept of man was a dynamic one. Human passion is, he said, "the

[1] It was Alfred Adler who emphasized the fundamental social nature of man, even though he has not given the concept the depth it has in Marx and in German enlightenment thinking.

[2] *Conversations with Eckermann,* January 29, 1826.

essential power of man striving energetically for its object." Man's own powers develop only in the process of relatedness to the world. "The eye has become a *human* eye when its *object* has become a *human,* social object, created by man and destined for him. The senses have therefore become directly theoreticians in practice. They relate themselves to the thing for the sake of the thing, but the thing itself is an *objective human* relation to itself and to man and vice versa. Need and enjoyment have thus lost their *egoistic* character, and nature has lost its mere *utility* by the fact that its utilization has become *human* utilization. (In practice I can only relate myself in a human way to a thing when the thing is related in a human way to man.)" [1]

Just as our senses develop and become human senses in the process of their productive relatedness to nature, our relatedness to man, says Marx, becomes human relatedness in the act of loving. "Let us assume *man* to be *man,* and his relation to the world to be a human one. Then love can only be exchanged for love, trust for trust, etc. If you wish to enjoy art you must be an artistically cultivated person; if you wish to influence other people you must be a person who really has a stimulating and encouraging effect upon others. Every one of your relations to man and to nature must be a *specific expression,* corresponding to the object of your will, of your *real individual* life. If you love without evoking love in return, i.e., if you are not able, by the *manifestation* of yourself as a loving person, to make yourself a *beloved person,* then your love is impotent and a misfortune." [2]

The fully developed, and thus the healthy, man, is the productive man, the man who is genuinely interested in the world, responding to it; he is the rich man. In contrast to

[1] *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* p. 132.
[2] *Ibid.,* p. 168.

this fully developed man, Marx paints the picture of man under the system of capitalism. "The production of too many useful things results in too many *useless* people." [1] In the present system man *has* much, but he *is* little. The fully developed man is the wealthy man who *is* much. "Communism," for Marx, "is the *positive* abolition of *private property,* [2] of *human self-alienation,* and thus the real *appropriation* of human nature through and for man. It is, therefore, the return of man himself as a *social,* i.e., really human being, a complete and conscious return which assimilates all the wealth of previous development. Communism as a fully developed naturalism is humanism and, as a fully developed humanism, is naturalism. It is the *definitive* resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man. It is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution." [3]

[1] *Ibid.,* p. 145.

[2] By "private property" as used here and in other statements, Marx never refers to the personal property of things for use (such as a house, table, etc.). He refers to the property of the "propertied classes," that is, of the capitalist who, because he owns the means of production, can hire the property-less individual to work for him, under conditions the latter is forced to accept. "Private property" in Marx's usage, then, always refers to private *property within capitalist class society* and thus is a *social and historical category;* the term does not refer to things for use, to "personal property."

[3] *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,* p. 127.

VIII

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL CHARACTER

MARX postulated the interdependence between the economic basis of society and the political and legal institutions, its philosophy, art, religion, etc. The former, according to Marxist theory, determined the latter, the "ideological superstructure." But Marx and Engels did not show, as Engels admitted quite explicitly, *how* the economic basis is translated into the ideological superstructure. I believe that by using the tools of psychoanalysis, this gap in Marxian theory can be filled, and that it is possible to show the mechanisms through which the economic basic structure and the superstructure are connected. One of these connections lies in what I have called the *social character,* the other in the nature of the *social unconscious* to be dealt with in the next chapter.

In order to explain the concept of "social character" we must first survey one of the most significant of Freud's discoveries: his *dynamic* concept of character. Until Freud, character traits were considered by the behavioristically oriented psychologists to be synonymous with behavior traits. From this standpoint, character is defined as "the pattern of behavior characteristic for a given individual," [1] while other authors like William McDougall, R. G. Gordon,

[1] Leland E. Hinsie and Jacob Shatzky, *Psychiatric Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940).

and Kretschmer have emphasized the conative and dynamic element of character traits.

Freud developed not only the first but also a most consistent and penetrating theory of character as a system of strivings which underlie, but are not identical with, behavior. In order to appreciate Freud's dynamic concept of character, a comparison between behavior traits and character traits will be helpful. Behavior traits are described in terms of actions which are observable by a third person. Thus, for instance, the behavior trait "being courageous" would be defined as behavior which is directed toward reaching a certain goal without being deterred by risks to one's comfort, freedom, or life. Or parsimony as a behavior trait would be defined as behavior which aims at saving money or other material things. However, if we inquire into the motivation and particularly into the unconscious motivation of such behavior traits, we find that the *behavior* trait covers numerous and entirely different *character* traits. Courageous behavior may be motivated by ambition so that a person will risk his life in certain situations in order to satisfy his craving for being admired; it may be motivated by suicidal impulses which drive a person to seek danger because, consciously or unconsciously, he does not value his life and wants to destroy himself; it may be motivated by sheer lack of imagination so that a person acts courageously because he is not aware of the danger awaiting him; finally, it may be determined by genuine devotion to the idea or aim for which a person acts, a motivation which is conventionally assumed to be the basis of courage. Superficially the behavior in all these instances is the same in spite of the different motivations. I say "superficially" because if one can observe such behavior minutely, one finds that the difference in motivation results also in subtle yet significant differences in behavior. An officer in battle, for instance, will behave quite differently in different situations

if his courage is motivated by devotion to an idea rather than by ambition. In the first case he would not attack in certain situations if the risks are in no proportion to the tactical ends to be gained. If, on the other hand, he is driven by vanity, this passion may make him blind to the dangers threatening him and his soldiers. His behavior trait of "courage" in the latter case is obviously a very ambiguous asset. Another illustration is parsimony. A person may be economical because his economic circumstances make it necessary; or he may be parsimonious because he has a stingy character which makes saving an aim for its own sake, regardless of the realistic necessity. Here, too, the motivation would make some difference with regard to behavior itself. In the first case, the person would be very well able to discern a situation where it is wise to save from one in which it is wiser to spend money. In the latter case he will save regardless of the objective need for it. Another factor which is determined by the difference in motivation refers to the prediction of behavior. In the case of a "courageous" soldier motivated by ambition we may predict that he will behave courageously only if his courage can be rewarded. In the case of the soldier who is courageous because of devotion to his cause, we can predict that the question of whether or not his courage will find recognition will have little influence on his behavior.

Freud had recognized something that the great novelists and dramatists had always known: that, as Balzac put it, the study of character deals with "the forces by which man is motivated," that the way a person acts, feels, and thinks is to a large extent determined by the specificity of his character and is not merely the result of rational responses to realistic situations. Freud recognized the dynamic quality of character traits, and that the character structure of a person represents a particular form in which energy is canalized in the process of living.

Freud tried to account for this dynamic nature of character traits by combining his characterology with his libido theory. By a number of complicated and brilliant assumptions, he explained different character traits as "sublimations" of, or "reaction formations" against, the various forms of the sexual drive. He interpreted the *dynamic nature* of character traits as an expression of their *libidinous source.*

The character orientation, in Freud's sense, is the source of men's actions and of many of his ideas. Character is the equivalent of the animal's instinctive determination which man has lost. Man acts and thinks according to his character, and it is precisely for this reason that "character is man's fate," as Heraclitus put it. Man is motivated to act and to think in certain ways by his character, and at the same time he finds satisfaction in the very fact that he does so.

The character structure determines action, as well as thoughts and ideas. Let us take a few examples: for the anal-hoarding character, the ideal of saving is most attractive and, in fact, he tends to regard saving as one of the major virtues. He will like a way of life in which saving is encouraged and waste prohibited. He will tend to interpret situations in terms of his dominant striving. A decision, for instance, of whether to buy a book, go to a movie, or what to eat, will mainly be made in terms of "what is economical," quite regardless of whether his own economic circumstances warrant such a principle of choice or not. He also will interpret concepts in the same way. Equality means to him that everybody has exactly the same share of material goods and not, as it would mean to others of a different character, that men are equal inasmuch as no man must be made the means for the purposes of another.

A person with an oral-receptive character orientation

feels "the source of all good" to be outside, and he believes that the only way to get what he wants—be it something material, be it affection, love, knowledge, pleasure—is to receive it from that outside source. In this orientation the problem of love is almost exclusively that of "being loved" and not that of loving. Such people tend to be indiscriminate in the choice of their love objects, because being loved by anybody is such an overwhelming experience for them, that they "fall for" anybody who gives them love or what looks like love. They are exceedingly sensitive to any withdrawal or rebuff they experience on the part of the loved person. Their orientation is the same in the sphere of thinking. If intelligent, they make the best listeners, since their orientation is one of receiving, not of producing, ideas; left to themselves, they feel paralyzed. It is characteristic of these people that their first thought is to find somebody else to give them needed information, rather than to make even the smallest effort of their own. If religious, these persons have a concept of God in which they expect everything from God and nothing from their own activity. If not religious, their relationship to persons or institutions is very much the same; they are always in search of a "magic helper." They show a particular kind of loyalty, at the bottom of which is the gratitude for the hand that feeds them and the fear of ever losing it. Since they need many hands to feel secure, they have to be loyal to numerous people. It is difficult for them to say no, and they are easily caught between conflicting loyalties and promises. Since they cannot say no, they love to say yes to everything and everybody, and the resulting paralysis of their critical abilities makes them increasingly dependent on others. They are dependent not only on authorities for knowledge and help but also on people in general for any kind of support. They feel lost when alone because they feel that they

cannot do anything without help. This helplessness is especially important with regard to those acts which, by their very nature, can only be done alone—making decisions and taking responsibility. In personal relationships, for instance, they ask advice from the very person with regard to whom they have to make a decision.

The exploitative orientation, like the receptive, has as its basic premise the feeling that the source of all good is outside, that whatever one wants to get must be sought there, and that one cannot produce anything oneself. The difference between the two, however, is that the exploitative type does not expect to receive things from others as a gift, but to take them by force or cunning. This orientation extends to all spheres of activity. In the realm of love and affection, these people tend to grab and steal; they tend to fall in love with a person attached to someone else. We find the same attitude with regard to thinking and intellectual pursuits. Such people will tend not to produce ideas but to steal them. This may be done directly in the form of plagiarism or, more subtly, by repeating in different phraseology the ideas voiced by others and insisting they are new and their own. It is a striking fact that frequently people with great intelligence proceed in this way, although if they relied on their own gifts they might well be able to have ideas of their own. The lack of original ideas or independent production in otherwise gifted people often has its explanation in this character orientation, rather than in any innate lack of originality. The same statement holds true with regard to their orientation in material things. Things which they can take from others always seem better to them than anything they can produce themselves. They use and exploit anybody and anything from whom or from which they can squeeze something. Their motto is "Stolen fruits are sweetest." Because they want to use and exploit people, they "love" those

who, explicitly or implicitly, are promising objects of exploitation, and get "fed up" with persons whom they have squeezed dry. An extreme example is the kleptomaniac who enjoys things only if he can steal them, although he has the money to buy them.

It was necessary to describe in detail Freud's dynamic concept of character in order to prepare the ground for the discussion of the social character.

Individuals within a given society differ, of course, in their personal characters; in fact it is no exaggeration to say that if we are concerned with minute differences, there are no two people whose character structure is identical. Yet if we disregard minute differences, we can form certain types of character structures which are roughly representative for various groups of individuals. Such types are the receptive, the exploitative, the hoarding, the marketing, the productive, character orientations.[1] The problem of character structure gains in importance far beyond the individual, if it can be shown that nations or societies or classes within a given society have a character structure which is characteristic for them, even though individuals differ in many specific ways, and even though there will be always a number of individuals whose character structure does not fit at all into the broader pattern of the structure common to the group as a whole. I have named this character which is typical for a society the "social character."

Like the individual character, the "social character" represents the specific way in which energy is channelized; it follows that if the energy of most people in a given society is channelized in the same direction, their motivations are the same, and furthermore, that they are receptive to the same ideas and ideals. I shall try to show in the follow-

[1] Cf. the detailed discussion of these orientations in E. Fromm, *Man for Himself* (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947).

ing pages that "social character" is an essential element in the functioning of a society, and at the same time the transmission belt between the economic structure of society and the prevailing ideas.

What is the social character? I refer in this concept to *the nucleus of the character structure which is shared by most members of the same culture,* in contradistinction to the *individual character in which people belonging to the same culture differ from each other.* The concept of social character is not a statistical concept in the sense that it is simply the sum total of character traits to be found in the majority of people in a given culture. It can be understood only in reference to the *function* of the social character which we shall now proceed to discuss.[1]

Each society is structuralized and operates in certain ways which are necessitated by a number of objective conditions. These conditions include methods of production which in turn depend on raw materials, industrial techniques, climate, size of population, and political and geographical factors, cultural traditions and influences to which the society is exposed. There is no "society" in general, but only specific social structures which operate in different and ascertainable ways. Although these social structures do change in the course of historical development, they are relatively fixed at any given historical period; any society can exist only by operating within the framework of its particular structure. The

[1] In the following pages I have drawn on my paper, "Psychoanalytic Characterology and its Application to the Understanding of Culture," in *Culture and Personality,* ed. by G. S. Sargent and M. Smith, Viking Fund, 1949, pp. 1-12. The concept of the social character was developed originally in my "The Evolution of the Dogma of Christ," Intern. Psychoanalytischer Verlag, Vienna, 1931, and in "Die psychoanalytische Charakterologie und ihre Bedeutung für die Soziologie" in *Zeitsschrift für Sozialforschung,* I. Hirschfeld, Leipzig, 1932.

members of the society and/or the various classes or status groups within it have to behave in such a way as to be able to function in the sense required by the social system. It is the function of the social character to shape the energies of the members of society in such a way that their behavior is not a matter of conscious decision as to whether or not to follow the social pattern, but one of *wanting to act as they have to act* and at the same time finding gratification in acting according to the requirements of the culture. In other words, it is the social character's function *to mold and channel human energy within a given society for the purpose of the continued functioning of this society*.

Modern, industrial society, for instance, could not have attained its ends had it not harnessed the energy of free men for work in an unprecedented degree. Man had to be molded into a person who was eager to spend most of his energy for the purpose of work, who had the qualities of discipline, orderliness and punctuality, to a degree unknown in most other cultures. It would not have sufficed if each individual had to make up his mind consciously every day that he wanted to work, to be on time, etc., since any such conscious deliberation would lead to many more exceptions than the smooth functioning of society can afford. Nor would threat and force have sufficed as a motive since the highly differentiated tasks in modern industrial society can, in the long run, only be the work of free men and not of forced labor. The social *necessity* for work, for punctuality, and orderliness had to be transformed into an inner *drive*. This means that society had to produce a social character in which these strivings were inherent.

While the need for punctuality and orderliness are traits necessary for the functioning of any industrial system, there are other needs which differ, say, in nineteenth-

century capitalism, as against contemporary capitalism. Nineteenth-century capitalism was still mainly occupied with the accumulation of capital, and hence with the necessity of saving; it had to fortify discipline and stability by an authoritarian principle in the family, religion, industry, state and church. The social character of the nineteenth-century middle class was precisely one which in many ways can be called the "hoarding orientation." Abstention from consumption, saving, and respect for authority were not only virtues but they were also satisfactions for the average member of the middle classes; his character structure made him like to do what, for the purposes of his economic system, he had to do. The contemporary social character is quite different; today's economy is based not on restriction of consumption, but on its fullest development. Our economy would face a severe crisis if people—the working and the middle classes—were not to spend most of their income on consumption, rather than to save it. Consuming has become not only the passionate aim of life for most people, but it has also become a virtue. The modern consumer—the man who buys on installments—would have appeared an irresponsible and immoral waster to his grandfather, just as the latter would appear an ugly miser to his grandson. The nineteenth-century social character is to be found today only in the more backward social strata of Europe and North America; this social character can be defined as one for whom the principal aim was *having;* the twentieth-century social character is one for whom the aim is *using.*

A similar difference exists with regard to the forms of authority. In this century, at least in the developed capitalistic countries of the West, there is enough material satisfaction for all, and hence less need for authoritarian control. At the same time control has shifted into the hands of bureaucratic élites which govern less by enforcing

obedience than by eliciting consent, a consent, however, which is to a large degree manipulated by the modern devices of psychology and a "science" called "human relations."

As long as the objective conditions of the society and the culture remain stable, the social character has a predominantly stabilizing function. If the external conditions change in such a way that they no longer fit the traditional social character, a *lag* arises which often changes the function of character into an element of disintegration instead of stabilization, into dynamite instead of a social mortar, as it were.

In speaking of the socio-economic structure of society as molding one's character, we speak only of one pole in the interconnection between social organization and man. The other pole to be considered is man's nature, molding in turn the social conditions in which he lives. The social process can be understood only if we start out with the knowledge of the reality of man, his psychic properties as well as his physiological ones, and if we examine the interaction between the nature of man and the nature of the external conditions under which he lives, and which he has to master if he is to survive.

While it is true that man can adapt himself to almost any conditions, he is not a blank sheet of paper on which the culture writes its text. Needs like the striving for happiness, belonging, love, and freedom are inherent in his nature. They are also dynamic factors in the historical process. If a social order neglects or frustrates the basic human needs beyond a certain threshold, the members of such a society will try to change the social order so as to make it more suitable to their human needs. If this change is not possible, the outcome will probably be that such a society will collapse, because of its lack of vitality, and its destructiveness. Social changes which lead to a

IX

THE SOCIAL UNCONSCIOUS

THE social character which makes people act and think as they have to act and think from the standpoint of the proper functioning of their society is only one link between the social structure and ideas. The other link lies in the fact that each society determines which thoughts and feelings shall be permitted to arrive at the level of awareness and which have to remain unconscious. Just as there is a social character, there is also a *"social unconscious."*

By "social unconscious" I refer to those areas of repression which are common to most members of a society; these commonly repressed elements are those contents which a given society cannot permit its members to be aware of if the society with its specific contradictions is to operate successfully. The *"individual unconscious"* with which Freud deals refers to those contents which an individual represses for reasons of individual circumstances peculiar to his personal life situation. Freud deals to some extent with the "social unconscious" when he talks about the repression of incestuous strivings as being characteristic of all civilization; but in his clinical work, he mainly deals with the individual unconscious, and little attention is paid by most analysts to the "social unconscious."

Before I can begin to discuss the "social unconscious," it is necessary to present briefly the concept of the unconscious as Freud developed it, and the corresponding concept in Marx's system.

There is, indeed, no more fundamental discovery of Freud's than that of the unconscious. Psychoanalysis can be defined as a system which is based on the assumption that we repress the awareness of the most significant experiences; that the conflict between the unconscious reality within ourselves and the denial of that reality in our consciousness often leads to neurosis, and that by making the unconscious conscious, the neurotic symptom or character trait can be cured. While Freud believed that this uncovering of the unconscious was the most important tool for the therapy of neurosis, his vision went far beyond this therapeutic interest. He saw how unreal most of what we think about ourselves is, how we deceive ourselves continuously about ourselves and about others; he was prompted by the passionate interest to touch the reality which is behind our conscious thought. Freud recognized that *most of what is real within ourselves is not conscious, and that most of what is conscious is not real.* This devotion to the search for inner reality opened up a new dimension of truth. The person who does not know the phenomenon of the unconscious is convinced he says the truth if he says what he knows. Freud showed that we all deceive ourselves to a larger or smaller degree about the truth. Even if we are sincere with regard to what we are aware of, we are probably still lying because our consciousness is "false," it does not represent the underlying real experience within ourselves.

Freud started out with observation on an individual scale. Here are some random examples: a man may have a secret pleasure in looking at pornographic pictures. He does not admit any such interest to himself but is con-

vinced, consciously, that he considers such pictures to be harmful and that it is his duty to see to it that they are not exhibited anywhere. In this way he is constantly concerned with pornography, looks at such pictures as part of his campaign against them, and thus satisfies his desire. But he has a very good conscience. His real desires are unconscious, and what is conscious is a rationalization which hides completely what he does not want to know. Thus he is enabled to satisfy his desire without sensing the conflict with his moral judgment. Another example would be that of a father with sadistic impulses, who tends to punish and mistreat his children. But he is convinced that he beats them because that is the only way to teach them virtue and to protect them from doing evil. He is not aware of any sadistic satisfaction—he is only aware of the rationalization, his idea of duty and of the right method of bringing up children. Here is still another example: a political leader may conduct a policy which leads to war. He may be motivated by a wish for his own glory and fame, yet he is convinced that his actions are determined exclusively by his patriotism and his sense of responsibility to his country. In all these instances the underlying and unconscious desire is so well rationalized by a moral consideration that the desire is not only covered up, but also aided and abetted by the very rationalization the person has invented. In the normal course of his life, such a person will never discover the contradiction between the reality of his desires and the fiction of his rationalizations, and hence he will go on acting according to his desire. If anyone would tell him the truth, that is to say, mention to him that behind his sanctimonious rationalizations are the very desires which he bitterly disapproves of, he would sincerely feel indignant or misunderstood and falsely accused. This passionate refusal to admit the existence of what is repressed, Freud

called "resistance." Its strength is roughly in proportion to the strength of the repressive tendencies.

Naturally, while every kind of experience can be repressed, it follows from Freud's theoretical frame of reference that in his view the strivings which are most severely repressed are the sexual ones which are incompatible with the norms of civilized man, and first of all the incestuous strivings. But according to Freud, hostile and aggressive strivings also are repressed inasmuch as they are in conflict with the existing mores and the superego. Whatever the specific contents of the repressed strivings are, in Freud's view they represent always the "dark" side of man, the antisocial, primitive equipment of man which has not been sublimated, and which is in contrast to what man believes to be civilized and decent. It must be stressed again that in Freud's concept of the unconscious, repression means that the *awareness* of the impulse has been repressed, not the impulse itself; in the case of sadistic impulses, for instance, this means that I am not aware of my wish to inflict pain on others. However, this does not necessarily mean that I do not inflict pain upon others, provided that I can rationalize it as duty, or that I inflict pain on others without being aware that they suffer from my actions. There is also the possibility that the impulse is not acted upon precisely because I could not prevent myself from being aware of it, nor find a fitting rationalization. In this case the impulse will still exist, but the repression of its awareness will lead to its suppression as far as acting upon it is concerned. In any case, repression means a distortion in man's consciousness, it does not mean the removal of forbidden impulses from existence. It means that the unconscious forces have gone underground and determine man's actions behind his back.

What, according to Freud, causes repression? We have

said already that those impulses are prevented from becoming conscious which are incompatible with existing social or family mores. This statement refers to the *contents* of repression; but what is the *psychological mechanism* through which the act of repression is possible? According to Freud, this mechanism is *fear*. The most representative example in Freud's theory is that of the repression of the boy's incestuous strivings toward his mother. Freud assumes that the little boy becomes afraid of his rival—father—and, specifically, that father will castrate him. This fear makes him repress the awareness of the desire and helps him channel his desires in other directions, although the scar of the first fright never entirely disappears. While "castration fear" is the most elementary fear leading to repression, other fears such as that of not being loved or of being killed or abandoned can, according to Freud, have the same power as the original castration fear, namely, to force man to repress his deepest desires.

While in individual psychoanalysis, Freud would look for the individual factors of repression, it would nevertheless be erroneous to assume that his concept of repression is to be understood only in individual terms. On the contrary, Freud's concept of repression also has a social dimension. The more society develops into higher forms of civilization, the more instinctive desires become incompatible with the existing social norms, and thus the more repression must take place. Increasing civilization, to Freud, means increasing repression. But Freud never went beyond this quantitative and mechanistic concept of society and he did not examine the specific structure of a society and its influence on repression.

If the forces which cause repression are so powerful, how did Freud ever hope to make the unconscious conscious, to "derepress" the repressed? It is well known that

the psychoanalytic therapy he devised serves precisely this end. By analyzing dreams, and by understanding the "free associations," the uncensored and spontaneous thoughts of the patient, Freud attempted to arrive, with the patient, at knowing what the patient did not know before: his unconscious.

What were the theoretical premises for this use of the analysis of dreams and of free association for the discovery of the unconscious?

Doubtlessly in the first years of his psychoanalytic research, Freud shared the conventional rationalistic belief that knowledge was intellectual, theoretical knowledge. He thought that it was enough to explain to the patient why certain developments had taken place, and to tell him what the analyst had discovered in his unconscious. This intellectual knowledge, called "interpretation," was supposed to effect a change in the patient. But soon Freud and other analysts had to discover the truth of Spinoza's statement that *intellectual* knowledge is conducive to change only inasmuch as it is also *affective* knowledge. It became apparent that intellectual knowledge as such does not produce any change, except perhaps in the sense that by intellectual knowledge of his unconscious strivings a person may be better able to control them—which, however, is the aim of traditional ethics, rather than that of psychoanalysis. As long as the patient remains in the attitude of the detached self-observer, he is not in touch with his unconscious, except by *thinking* about it; he does not *experience* the wider, deeper reality within himself. Discovering one's unconscious is, precisely, *not* only an intellectual act, but also an affective experience, which can hardly be put into words, if at all. This does not mean that thinking and speculation may not precede the act of discovery; but the act of discovery is not an act of thinking but of *being aware* and, still better perhaps, simply

of *seeing*. To be aware of experiences, thoughts or feelings which were unconscious, does not mean thinking *about* them, but *seeing* them, just as being aware of one's breathing does not mean to *think* about it. Awareness of the unconscious is an experience which is characterized by its spontaneity and suddenness. One's eyes are suddenly opened; oneself and the world appear in a different light, are seen from a different viewpoint. There is usually a good deal of anxiety aroused while the experience takes place, while afterward a new feeling of strength is present. The process of discovering the unconscious can be described as a series of ever-widening experiences, which are felt deeply and which transcend theoretical, intellectual knowledge.

In the question of the possibility of making the unconscious conscious, it is of the foremost importance to recognize factors which obstruct this process. There are many factors which make it difficult to arrive at insight into the unconscious. Such factors are mental rigidity, lack of proper orientation, hopelessness, lack of any possibility to change realistic conditions, etc. But there is probably no single factor which is more responsible for the difficulties of making the unconscious conscious than the mechanism which Freud called "resistance."

What is *resistance?* Like so many discoveries, it is so simple that one might say anyone could have discovered it—yet it required a great discoverer to recognize it. Let us take an example: your friend has to undertake a trip of which he is obviously afraid. You know that he is afraid, his wife knows it, everyone else knows it, but *he* does not know it. He claims one day that he does not feel well, the next day that there is no need to make the trip, the day after that that there are better ways to achieve the same result without traveling, then the next day that your persistence in reminding him of the trip is an attempt to force

him, and since he does not want to be forced, he just won't make the trip, and so on, until he will say that it is now too late to go on the trip, anyway, hence there is no use in thinking any further about it. If, however, you mention to him, even in the most tactful way, that he might not want to go because he is afraid, you will get not a simple denial, but more likely a violent barrage of protestations and accusations which will eventually drive you into the role of having to apologize, or even—if *you* are now afraid of losing his friendship—of declaring that you never meant to say that he was afraid and, in fact, ending up with enthusiastic praise of his courage.

What has happened? The real motivation for not wanting to go is fear. (What he is afraid of is of no significance for the purposes of this discussion; suffice it to say, that his fear could be objectively justified or the reason for his fear merely imagined.) This fear is unconscious. Your friend, however, must choose a "reasonable" explanation for his not wanting to go—a "rationalization." He may discover every day a new one (anyone who has tried to give up smoking knows how easily rationalizations come) or stick to one main rationalization. It does not matter, in fact, whether the rationalization as such is valid or not; what matters is that it is not the effective or sufficient cause for his refusal to go. The most amazing fact, however, is the violence of his reaction when we mention the real motive to him, the intensity of his resistance. Should we not rather expect him to be glad, or even grateful for our remark, since it permits him to cope with the real motive for his reluctance? But whatever we think about what he should feel, the fact is that *he* does not feel it. Obviously he cannot bear the idea of being afraid. But why? There are several possibilities. Perhaps he has a narcissistic image of himself of which lack of fear is an integral part, and if this

image is disturbed, his narcissistic self-admiration and, hence, his sense of his own value and his security would be threatened. Or perhaps his super-ego, the internalized code of right and wrong, happens to be such that fear or cowardice are bitterly condemned; hence to admit fear would mean to admit that he has acted against his code. Or, perhaps, he feels the need to save for his friends the picture of a man who is never frightened because he is so unsure of their friendship, that he is afraid they would cease liking him if they knew he was afraid. Any of these reasons may be effective, but *why* is it that they are so effective? One answer lies in the fact that his sense of identity is linked with these images. If they are not "true"—then who is he? What *is* true? Where does he stand in the world? Once these questions arise, the person feels deeply threatened. He has lost his familiar frame of orientation and with it his security. The anxiety aroused is not only a fear of something specific as Freud saw it, like a threat to the genitals, or to life, etc.; but it is also caused by the threat to one's identity. Resistance is an attempt to protect oneself from a fright which is comparable to the fright caused by even a small earthquake—nothing is secure, everything is shaky; I don't know who I am nor where I am. In fact, this experience feels like a small dose of insanity which for the moment, even though it may last only for seconds, feels more than uncomfortable.

More will be said later about resistance and the fears which produce repression, but we must first return to the discussion of some other aspects of the unconscious.

In psychoanalytic terminology, which by now has become quite popular, one speaks of "the unconscious" as if it were a place inside the person, like the cellar of a house. This idea has been reinforced by Freud's famous division of the personality into three parts: the Id, the

Ego, and the super-ego. The Id represents the sum total of instinctual desires, and at the same time, since most of them are not permitted to arrive at the level of awareness, it can be identified with the "unconscious." The Ego, representing man's organized personality inasmuch as it observes reality and has the function of realistic appreciation, at least as far as survival is concerned, may be said to represent "consciousness." The super-ego, the internalization of father's (and society's) commands and prohibitions, can be both conscious and unconscious, and hence does not lend itself to being identified with the unconscious or the conscious respectively. The topographical use of the unconscious has certainly been stimulated further by the general tendency in our time to think in terms of *having,* which will be discussed later on in this chapter. People say that they *have* insomnia, instead of *being* sleepless, or of *having* a problem of depression, rather than of *being* depressed; thus they *have* a car, a house, a child, as they have a problem, a feeling, a psychoanalyst—and an unconscious.

This is the reason why so many people today prefer to speak of the "subconscious"; it is still more clearly a region, rather than a function; while I can say I am unconscious of this or that, one could not say, "I am subconscious of it." [1] Another difficulty in the Freudian concept of the unconscious lies in the fact that it tends to identify a certain *content,* the instinctual strivings of the Id, with a certain *state of awareness/unawareness,* the unconscious, although Freud was careful to keep the concept

[1] Jung's use of the term "unconscious" has not helped to discourage the topographical usage of this concept. While for Freud the unconscious is the cellar full of vices, Jung's unconscious is rather a cave filled with man's original but forgotten treasures of wisdom (although not exclusively so), laid over by intellectualizations.

of the unconscious separate from that of the Id. One must not lose sight of the fact that one is dealing here with two entirely distinct concepts; one deals with certain instinctual impulses—another with a certain state of perception—unawareness or awareness. It so happens that the average person in our society is unaware of certain instinctual needs. But the cannibal is quite aware of his desire to incorporate another human being, the psychotic is quite aware of that or other archaic desires, and so are most of us in our dreams. It will clarify the understanding of "the" unconscious if we insist on the separation between the concept of archaic contents and that of the state of unawareness, or unconsciousness.

The term "the unconscious" is actually a mystification (even though one might use it for reasons of convenience, as I am guilty of doing in these pages). There is no such thing as *the* unconscious; there are only experiences of which we are aware, and others of which we are not aware, that is, *of which we are unconscious*. If I hate a man because I am afraid of him, and if I am aware of my hate but not of my fear, we may say that my hate is conscious and that my fear is unconscious; still, my fear does not lie in that mysterious place: "the" unconscious.

But we repress not only sexual impulses or affects such as hate and fear; we repress also the awareness of facts provided they contradict certain ideas and interests which we do not want to have threatened. Good examples for this kind of repression are offered in the field of international relations. We find here a great deal of simple repression of factual knowledge. The average man, and even policy makers, forget conveniently facts which do not fit into their political reasoning. For instance, while discussing the Berlin question in the spring of 1961 with a very intelligent and knowledgeable newspaperman, I mentioned the fact that in my opinion we had given

Khrushchev reason to believe that we were willing to compromise on the Berlin question in terms which had been dealt with in the Foreign Ministers' conference in Geneva in 1959, those of symbolic troop reduction and cessation of anticommunist propaganda from West Berlin. The newspaperman insisted that there had been no such conference, and that there was never a discussion of such terms. He had completely repressed the awareness of facts which he had known less than two years before. Not always is the repression as drastic as it was in this case. More frequent than the repression of a well-known fact is the repression of the "potentially known" fact. An example for this mechanism is the phenomenon that millions of Germans, including many leading politicians and generals, claimed not to have known of the worst Nazi atrocities. The average American was (I say "was" because at the time of this writing the Germans are our closest allies, and hence all these things are looked at in a different way than they were at the time when the Germans were still "the enemy") prone to say that they must be lying, since they hardly could have helped seeing the facts in front of their eyes. Those who said this forgot, however, man's capacity of not observing what he does not want to observe; hence, that he may be sincere in denying a knowledge which he would have, if he wanted only to have it. (H. S. Sullivan coined the very appropriate term "selective inattention" for this phenomenon.) Another form of repression lies in remembering certain aspects of an event and not others. When one speaks today of the "appeasement" of the thirties, one remembers that England and France, being afraid of a rearmed Germany, tried to satisfy Hitler's demands, hoping that these concessions would induce him not to demand more. What is forgotten, however, is that the conservative government in England under Baldwin as well as that under Chamber-

lain, was sympathetic to Nazi Germany as well as to Mussolini's Italy. Had it not been for these sympathies, one could have stopped Germany's military development long before there was any need for appeasement; official indignation with Nazi ideology was the result of the political rift, and not its cause. Still another form of repression is the one in which not the fact is repressed but its emotional and moral significance. In a war, for instance, cruelties committed by the enemy are experienced as just another proof of his devilish viciousness; the same or similar acts committed by one's own side are felt to be regrettable though understandable reactions; not to speak of the many who will find the enemy's actions devilish, and the same actions, when performed on their own side, not even regrettable but perfectly justified.

To sum up: the center of Freud's thought was that man's *subjectivity* is, in fact, determined by *objective* factors—objective as far as man's own consciousness is concerned—which act behind man's back, as it were, determining his thoughts and feelings, and thus indirectly his actions. Man, so proud of his freedom to think and to choose is, in fact, a marionette moved by strings behind and above him which in turn are directed by forces unknown to his consciousness. In order to give himself the illusion that he acts according to his own free will, man invents rationalizations which make it appear as if he does what he has to do because he has chosen to do so for rational or moral reasons. But Freud did not end on a note of fatalism confirming man's utter helplessness against the powers which determine him. He postulated that man can become aware of the very forces which act behind his back—and that in becoming aware of them he enlarges the realm of freedom and is able to transform himself from a helpless puppet moved by unconscious forces to a self-aware and free man who determines his own destiny.

Freud expressed this aim in the words, "Where there is Id there shall be Ego."

The concept of unconscious forces determining man's consciousness, and the choices he makes, have a tradition in Western thought going back to the seventeenth century. The first thinker who had a clear concept of the unconscious was Spinoza. He assumed that men "are conscious of their own desire, but are ignorant of the causes whereby that desire has been determined." In other words, the average man is not free, but he lives under the illusion of being free because he is motivated by factors unconscious to him. For Spinoza this very existence of unconscious motivation constitutes human bondage. But he did not leave it at that. The attainment of freedom, for Spinoza, was based on an ever-increasing awareness of the reality inside and outside of man.

The idea of unconscious motivation was expressed in a very different context by A. Smith, who wrote that economic man "is led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention." [1]

Again in a different context we find the concept of the unconscious in Nietzsche's famous saying: "My memory says I have done this. My pride says I have not done it; my memory yields."

Actually the whole trend of thought which was concerned with uncovering the objective factors determining human consciousness and behavior is to be looked upon as part of the general trend to grasp reality rationally and scientifically, which has characterized Western thought

[1] A. Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,* The Modern Library, New York, 1937, p. 423. This quote as well as the suggestion of A. Smith's role in the development of the concept of the unconscious I owe to Robert Tucker's excellent analysis of this problem in *Philosophy and Myth of Karl Marx,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1961, p. 66.

since the end of the Middle Ages. The medieval world had been well ordered and seemed to be secure. Man had been created by God and was watched over by him; man's world was the center of the universe; man's consciousness was the last mental, indubitable entity, just as the atom was the smallest, indivisible physical entity. Within a few hundred years this world broke to pieces. The earth ceased to be the center of the universe, man was the product of an evolutionary development starting with the most primitive forms of life, the physical world transcended all concepts of time and space which had seemed to be secure even a generation before, and consciousness was recognized as an instrument for hiding thought, rather than being the bastion of truth.

The writer who made the most significant contribution to the overthrow of the dominant position of consciousness, aside from Spinoza before him and Freud after him, was Marx. He was probably influenced by Spinoza, whose *Ethics* he had studied thoroughly. More importantly, Hegel's philosophy of history had a decisive influence on Marx's thought and contained the concept of man serving the aims of history without his own knowledge. According to Hegel it is the "cunning of reason" (die List der Vernunft") which makes man an agent of the absolute idea while he is subjectively driven by his own conscious goals and individual passions. The individual man and his consciousness, in Hegel's philosophy is the marionette on the stage of history while the Idea (or God) pulls the strings.

Marx, descending from the heaven of Hegel's Idea to the earth of human activity, was able to give a much more concrete and precise expression to the idea of the function of human consciousness and the objective factors influencing it.

In the *German Ideology* Marx wrote: "Not consciousness

determines life but life determines consciousness," and in this difference he sees the decisive difference between Hegel's and his own thinking. "It is not the consciousness of men," Marx wrote later, "that determines his existence, but on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines consciousness." [1] While man believes that his thoughts mold his social existence, the facts are the reverse: his social reality molds his thought. "The production of ideas," wrote Marx, "of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux from their material behavior. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc.—real, active men, as they are conditioned by the definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness can never be anything else than conscious existence, and the existence of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their circumstances appear upside down as in a *camera obscura,** this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process." [2] More specifically, applying Hegel's theories of the "cunning of reason" to his concept of social classes, Marx stated

[1] *Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy.*

* An instrument perfected in the late Middle Ages, to throw by means of mirrors an image of a scene on a plane surface. It was widely used by artists to establish the correct proportions of a natural object or scene. The image appeared on the paper inverted, though the later use of a lens corrected this.

[2] *German Ideology,* pp. 13-4.

in the German Ideology that the class achieves an independent existence over and against individuals whose existence and personal development are predetermined by their class.

Marx observed the connection between consciousness and language and emphasized the social nature of consciousness: "Language is as old as consciousness, language is practical consciousness, as it exists for other men, and for that reason is really beginning to exist for me personally as well; for language, like consciousness, only arises from the need, the necessity of intercourse with other men. Where there exists a relationship, it exists for me: the animal has no 'relations' with anything, cannot have any. For the animal, its relation to others does not exist as a relation. Consciousness is therefore from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all. Consciousness is at first, of course, merely consciousness concerning the immediate sensuous environment and consciousness of the limited connection with other persons and things outside the individual who is growing self-conscious. At the same time it is consciousness of nature, which first appears to man as a completely alien, all-powerful, and unassailable force, with which men's relations are purely animal and by which they are overawed like beasts; it is thus a purely animal consciousness of nature [natural religion]." [1]

While Marx already used the term *"repression* (Verdraengung) of the ordinary natural desires" in the *German Ideology,*[2] Rosa Luxemburg, one of the most bril-

[1] *German Ideology,* p. 19.

[2] MEGA I, 5, p. 423. I am grateful to Maximilien Rubel for calling my attention to this sentence. Rubel quotes the passage in his Karl Marx, *Essai de Biographie Intellectuelle,* Librairie Marcel Riviere et Cie., Paris 1957, p. 225. Rubel makes in the same context some very interesting remarks on the connection between Marx's theory and psychoanalytic thinking.

liant Marxists in the pre-1914 period, expressed the Marxist theory of the determining effect of historical process on man in straight psychoanalytic terminology. "The unconscious," she wrote, "comes before the conscious. The logic of the historic process comes before the subjective logic of the human beings who participate in the historic process." [1] This formulation expresses the Marxian thought in full clarity. Man's consciousness, that is, his "subjective process," is determined by "the logic of the historic process," which R. Luxemburg equates with the "unconscious."

At this point the Freudian and the Marxian "unconscious" may seem not to denote more than a common word. Only if we pursue Marx's ideas on this problem further shall we discover that there is more common ground in their respective theories, even though they are by no means identical.

Marx has given a good deal of thought to the role of consciousness in the life of the individual in a passage which precedes the one just quoted where he uses the word "repression." He speaks about the fact that it is nonsense if one believes "that one could satisfy one passion, separate it from all the others, without satisfying oneself, the whole living individual. If this passion assumes an abstract, separate character, hence if the satisfaction of the individual occurs as the satisfaction of a single passion . . . the reason is not to be found in *consciousness,* but in *being;* not in thinking, but in living; it is to be found in the empirical development and self-expres-

[1] Rosa Luxemburg, *Leninism or Marxism* (first published in 1904 in the Russian *Iskra* and the German *Neue Zeit* under the original title of *Organizational Questions of the Russian Social Democracy*) recently published *The Russian Revolution and Leninism or Marxism?* Ann Arbor, Mich.: the University of Michigan Press, 1961, p. 93.

sion of the individual, which, in turn, depends on the conditions of the world in which he lives. (die wiederum von der Weltverhältnissen abhängt.)" [1] In this passage Marx establishes the polarity between thinking and living which is parallel to that between consciousness and being. The social constellation of which he spoke before molds, so he says here, the being of the individual and thus, indirectly, his thinking. (The passage also is interesting because Marx develops here a most significant idea on a problem of psychopathology. If man satisfies only one alienated passion, he, the total man, remains unsatisfied; he is, as we would say today, neurotic, precisely because of the fact that he has become the slave of the one alienated passion and has lost the experience of himself as a total and alive person.) Marx, like Freud, believed that man's consciousness is mostly "false consciousness." Man believes that his thoughts are authentic and the product of *his* thinking activity while they are in reality determined by the objective forces which work behind his back; in Freud's theory these objective forces represent physiological and biological needs, in Marx's theory they represent the social and economic historical forces which determine the being and thus indirectly the consciousness of the individual.

Let us think of an example: The industrial method of production as it has developed in the last decades is based on the existence of large centralized enterprises which are controlled by a managerial elite, and in which hundreds of thousands of workers and clerks work together, smoothly and without friction. This bureaucratic industrial system shapes the character of the bureaucrats as well as that of the workers. It also shapes their thoughts. The bureaucrat is conservative and adverse to taking risks. His

[1] MEGA I, 5, p. 242 (My translation, E.F.).

main desire is to advance, and he can best do so by avoiding risky decisions and by allowing himself to be led by the interest in the proper functioning of the organization as his guiding principle. The workers and clerks, on their side, tend to feel satisfied in being a part of the Organization provided their material and psychological rewards are sufficient to justify this. Their own trade union organizations resemble in many ways that of their industry: large-scale organizations, bureaucratic and well-paid leadership, little active participation of the individual member. The development of large-scale industry is accompanied by the development of large-scale centralized government and armed services, both of which follow the same principles which guide the industrial corporations.[1] This type of social organization leads to the formation of elites, the business, government, and miltary elites and, to a degree, to the trade union elites. The business, government, and military elites are closely interwoven in personnel, in attitudes, and in ways of thinking. In spite of the political and social differences between the "capitalist" countries and the "communist" Soviet Union, the way of feeling and thinking among their respective elites is similar, precisely because the basic mode of production is similar. [2]

[1] It is an ironical fact that those conservatives who are opposed to big government (or at least pretend to be) are usually not opposed to big business or to big military establishments.

[2] C. Wright Mills called these elites *"The Power Elite"* and analyzed them in a masterful book of this title. He did not however, fully recognize that these power elites are the product of a specific way of production and social organization and, hence, that their existence confirms the basic Marxian assumption, rather than contradicts it. In his last brilliant book, *"The Marxists"* (Dell Publishing Corporation, New York, 1962), he criticizes Marxist economic determinism and suggests that military and political determinism are equally valid assumptions (p. 126). I believe these elites and their role can be best understood precisely from the standpoint of the Marxian model.

The consciousness of the members of the elites is a product of their social existence. They consider their way of organization and the values that are implied in it as being in "the best interests of man," they have a picture of human nature which makes this assumption plausible, they are hostile to any idea or system which questions or endangers their own system; they are against disarmament if they feel that their organizations are threatened by it, they are suspicious and hostile of a system in which their class has been replaced by a different and new class of managers. Consciously they honestly believe that they are motivated by patriotic concern for their country, duty, moral and political principles, and so on. The elites on both sides are equally caught in thoughts and ideas which follow from the nature of their mode of production and they are both sincere in their conscious thoughts. Precisely because they are sincere, and because they are not aware of the real motivations behind their thoughts, it is difficult for them to change their minds. These people are not driven by an overwhelming greed for power, money, or prestige. To be sure, such motives exist too; but the people in whom this is the all-consuming motive are the exception rather than the rule. Personally the members of all the elites would be just as willing to make sacrifices and to renounce certain advantages as anybody else. The motivating factor is that their social function forms their consciousness, and hence their conviction that they are right, that their aims are justified and, in fact, beyond doubt. This explains also another and very puzzling phenomenon. We see that the elites of the two great blocs are on a collision course and that there are great difficulties in coming to an arrangement which will secure peace. There is no doubt that nuclear war would mean the death of most members of the elites, of most

of their families, and the destruction of most of their organizations. If they were driven mainly by lust for money and power, how could one understand that this greed would not yield to the fear of death, except in the case of exceptionally neurotic individuals? The point lies precisely in the difficulty to change their viewpoint. Because to them, theirs is the rational, decent, honorable way of thinking—and if the nuclear holocaust will destroy everybody—it cannot be helped since there is no other course of action besides that of "reason," "decency," and "honor."

Thus far I have tried to show how in Marx's thought social existence determines consciousness. But Marx was not a "determinist," as it often is stated. His position is very much the same as Spinoza's: we are determined by forces outside of our conscious selves, and by passions and interests which direct us behind our backs. Inasmuch as this is the case, we are not free. *But* we can emerge from this bondage and enlarge the realm of freedom by becoming fully aware of reality, and hence of necessity, by giving up illusions, and by transforming ourselves from somnabulistic, unfree, determined, dependent, passive persons into awakened, aware, active, independent ones. Both for Spinoza and for Marx the aim of life is liberation from bondage, and the way to this aim is the overcoming of illusions and the full use of our active powers. Freud's position is essentially the same; he spoke less of freedom versus bondage than of mental health versus mental sickness. He, too, saw that man is determined by objective factors (the libido and its fate) but he thought that man can overcome this determination by overcoming his illusions, by waking up to reality, and by becoming aware of what is real but unconscious. Freud's principle as a therapist was that awareness of the unconscious is the way to the cure

of mental illness. As a social philosopher he believed in the same principle: only if we become aware of reality and overcome our illusions can we attain the optimal strength to cope with life. Freud expressed these ideas perhaps most explicitly in *The Future of an Illusion.* "Perhaps," he wrote, "those who do not suffer from the neurosis will need no intoxicant to deaden it. They will, it is true, find themselves in a difficult situation. They will have to admit to themselves the full extent of their helplessness and their insignificance in the machinery of the universe; they can no longer be the center of creation, no longer the object of tender care on the part of a beneficent Providence. They will be in the same position as a child who has left the parental house where he was so warm and comfortable. But surely infantilism is destined to be surmounted. Men cannot remain children forever; they must in the end go out into 'hostile life.' We may call this *'education to reality.'* " [1] And further: "Our God, Logos, is perhaps not a very almighty one, and he may only be able to fulfill a small part of what his predecessors have promised. If we have to acknowledge this we shall accept it with resignation. We shall not on that account lose our interest in the world and in life . . . no, our science is no illusion. But an illusion it would be to suppose that what science cannot give us we can get elsewhere." [2]

For Marx, awareness of illusions is the condition for freedom and human action. He expressed this idea brilliantly in his early writings, in the context of his analysis of the function of religion: *"Religious* distress is at the

[1] S. Freud, *The Future of an Illusion,* The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, The Hogarth Press, London, 1961, Vol. XXI, p. 49.

[2] *Ibid.,* pp. 54-6.

same time the *expression* of real distress and the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of an unspiritual situation. It is the *opium* of the people.

"The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is required for their *real* happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the *demand to give up a condition which needs illusions.* The criticism of religion is therefore *in embryo the criticism of the vale of woe, the halo* of which is religion.

"Criticism has plucked the imaginary flowers from the chain not so that man will wear the chain without any fantasy or consolation, but so that he will shake off the chain and cull the living flower. The criticism of religion disillusions man, to make him think and act and shape his reality like a man who has been disillusioned and has come to reason, so that he will revolve round himself and therefore round his true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun, which revolves round man as long as he does not revolve round himself." [1]

How can man attain the goal of freeing himself from illusions? Marx thought his goal could be achieved by *reform of consciousness.* "The *reform of consciousness* consists exclusively in the fact that one lets the world become aware of its consciousness, that one awakens the world from the dream it is dreaming about itself, that one *interprets* its own actions to the world . . . our motto must be: reform of consciousness, not through dogmas

[1] From *Toward the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (Zur Kritik der Hegelschen Rechtsphilosophy, MEGA I, 1, pp. 607-8). Translation quoted from Lewis S. Feuer, *Marx & Engels,* a Doubleday Anchor Original, New York, 1959, p. 263.

but by analyzing the mystical self-confused consciousness, whether it has a political or a religious content. One will see, then, that the world has possessed already for a long time the dream of something, of which it must only have consciousness in order to possess it in reality. One will see that we are not dealing with a big hiatus between past and present but with the *realization* (Vollziehung) of the thoughts of the past. Eventually one will see that mankind does not begin any new task but accomplishes its old task with consciousness . . . this is a confession, nothing else. In order to have its sins forgiven, mankind has only to explain them for what they are." [1]

To sum up this confrontation between Marx's and Freud's concept of the unconscious: both believe that most of what man thinks consciously is determined by forces which operate behind his back, that is, without man's knowledge; that man explains his actions to himself as being rational or moral and these rationalizations (false consciousness, ideology) satisfy him subjectively. But being driven by forces unknown to him, man is not free. He can attain freedom (and health) only by becoming aware of these motivating forces, that is of reality, and thus he can become the master of his life (within the limitations of reality) rather than the slave of blind forces. The fundamental difference between Marx and Freud lies in their respective concept of the nature of these forces determining man. For Freud they are essentially physiological (libido) or biological (death instinct and life instinct). For Marx they are the historical forces which pass through an evolution in the process of man's socio-economic development. For Marx man's consciousness is determined by his being, his being by his practice of life,

[1] K. Marx, *Letter to R.*, September 1843, MEGA I, 1, p. 575 (My translation, E.F.).

his practice of life by his mode of producing his livelihood, that is, by his mode of production and the social structure, mode of distribution and consumption resulting from it.[1]

Marx's and Freud's concepts are not mutually exclusive. This is so precisely because Marx sets out from the real active men and on the basis of their real life-process, including, of course, their biological and physiological conditions. Marx recognized the sexual drive as one existing under all circumstances which can be changed by social conditions only as far as form and direction are concerned.

Yet while the Freudian theory might be incorporated in some fashion into that of Marx, there remain two fundamental differences. For Marx, man's being and his consciousness are determined by the structure of the society of which he is a part; for Freud, society only influences his being by greater or lesser repression of his innate physiological and biological equipment. From this first difference follows the second: Freud believed that man can overcome repression without social changes. Marx on the other hand was the first thinker who saw that the realization of the universal and fully awakened man can occur only together with social changes which lead to a new and truly human economic and social organization of mankind.

Marx has only stated in general terms his theory of the determination of consciousness by social forces. In the fol-

[1] Karl Manheim was the first to point out that the socialist doctrine possessed "new intellectual weapons" in the capacity of the "unmasking of the unconscious" (their opponents'). He also saw that the "collective unconscious and the activity impelled by it serve to disguise certain aspects of social reality . . ." (Karl Manheim, *Ideology and Utopia,* a Harvest Book, Harcourt, Brace and Co. New York, p. 33ff.)

lowing I try to show how this determination operates concretely and specifically.[1]

For any experience to come into awareness, it must be comprehensible in accordance with the categories in which conscious thought is organized. I can become aware of any occurrence, inside or outside of myself, only when it can be linked with the system of categories in which I perceive. Some of the categories, such as time and space, may be universal, and may constitute categories of perception common to all men. Others, such as causality, may be a valid category for many, but not for all forms of conscious perception. Other categories are even less gen-

[1] *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious.* Pantheon Books, New York, 1959, p. 47.

Since there are certain similarities between the concepts used here and those used by Jung, a word of explanation seems indicated. First of all it should be mentioned that Jung emphasizes the social character of neurosis more than Freud did. He believed that "neuroses are in most cases not just private concerns but social phenomena . . ." He furthermore held that underneath the personal unconscious is a deeper layer, the "collective unconscious," which "is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche it has contents and mores of behavior that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substitute of a superpersonal nature which is present in every one of us." I agree with Jung in the very central issue of the universal character of the psychic substance present in every one of us. The difference between Jung's term "collective unconscious" and the "social unconscious" as employed here is this: "collective unconscious" directly denotes the universal psyche, much of which cannot even become conscious. The concept of the social unconscious starts out with the notion of the repressive character of society and refers to that specific part of human experience which a given society does not permit to reach awareness; it is that part of humanity in man which his society has estranged from him; the social unconscious is the socially repressed part of the universal psyche.

eral and differ from culture to culture. For instance, in a pre-industrial culture people may not perceive certain things in terms of their commercial value, while they do so in an industrial system. However this may be, experience can enter into awareness only under the condition that it can be perceived, related, and ordered in terms of a conceptual system [1] and of its categories. This system is in itself a result of social evolution. Every society, by its own practice of living and by the mode of relatedness, of feeling and perceiving, develops a system, or categories, which determines the forms of awareness. This system works, as it were, like a *socially conditioned filter:* experience cannot enter awareness unless it can penetrate this filter.[2]

The question, then, is to understand more concretely how this "social filter" operates, and how it happens that it permits certain experiences to be filtered through while others are stopped from entering awareness.

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[1] The same idea was first expressed by E. Schachtel (in an illuminating paper on "Memory and Childhood Amnesia," in *Psychiatry,* Vol. X, No. 1, 1947) with regard to the amnesia of childhood memories. As the title indicates, he is concerned there with the more specific problem of childhood amnesia, and with the difference between the categories ("schematas") employed by the child and those employed by the adult. He concludes that "the incompatibility of early childhood experience with the categories and organization of adult memory is to a large extent due to . . . the conventionalization of the adult memory." In my opinion, what he says about childhood and adult memory holds true, but we find not only the differences between childhood and adult categories, but also those between various cultures and, furthermore, the problem is not only that of memory, but also that of consciousness in general.

[2] In the following I have drawn on my discussion of thtis subject in *"Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis"* by D. T. Suzuki, E. Fromm, R. de Martino, Harper Bros., New York, 1960.

First of all, we must consider that many experiences do not lend themselves easily to being perceived in awareness. Pain is perhaps the physical experience which best lends itself to being consciously perceived; sexual desire, hunger, etc., also are easily perceived; quite obviously, all sensations which are relevant to individual or group survival have easy access to awareness. But when it comes to a more subtle or complex experience, like *"seeing a rosebud in the early morning, a drop of dew on it, while the air is still chilly, the sun coming up, a bird singing"*— this is an experience which, in some cultures, easily lends itself to awareness (for instance, in Japan), while in modern Western culture this same experience will usually not come into awareness because it is not sufficiently "important" or "eventful" to be noticed. Whether or not subtle effective experiences can arrive at awareness depends on the degree to which such experiences are cultivated in a given culture. There are many affective experiences for which a given language has no word, while another language may be rich in words which express these feelings. In a language in which different affective experiences are not expressed by different words, it is almost impossible for one's experiences to come to clear awareness. Generally speaking, it may be said that an experience rarely comes into awareness for which the language has no word.

This fact is of special relevance with regard to such experiences which do not fit into our intellectual rational scheme of things. In English, for instance, the word "awe" (like in Hebrew "nora") means two different things. Awe is the feeling of intense fright as it is still indicated in "awful": and awe also means something like intense admiration, as we still find it in awesome (and in awed by). From a standpoint of conscious rational thought, fright and admiration are distinct feelings, hence they cannot

be denoted by the same word; and if there is one word like awe, it is used in the one *or* the other sense, and the fact is forgotten that it actually means fright *and* admiration. In our *feeling* experience, however, fright and admiration are by no means mutually exclusive. On the contrary, as a visceral experience, fear and admiration are frequently part of one complex feeling, which, however, modern man is usually not aware of as such. It seems that the language of peoples who emphasized less than we do the intellectual aspect of experience, has more words which expressed the feeling as such, while our modern languages tend to express only such feelings which can stand the test of our kind of logic. Incidentally, this phenomenon constitutes one of the greatest difficulties for dynamic psychology. Our language just does not give us the words which we need to describe many visceral experiences which do not fit our scheme of thoughts. Hence psychoanalysis has really no adequate language at its disposal. It could do what some other sciences have done and use symbols to denote certain complex feelings. For instance, $\frac{a}{t}$ could stand for that complex feeling of admiration and terror which was once expressed by one word. Or xy could stand for the feeling of "aggressive defiance, superiority, accusation + hurt innocence, martyrdom, being persecuted and falsely accused." Again, this latter feeling is not a synthesis of different feelings, as our language would make us believe, but one specific feeling which can be observed in oneself and in others once one transcends the barrier of the assumption, that nothing can be felt which cannot be "thought." If one does not use abstract symbols, the most adequate, paradoxically enough, scientific language for psychoanalysis is actually that of symbolism, poetry or reference to themes of mythology. (Freud often chose the latter way.)

But if the psychoanalyst thinks he can be scientific by using technical terms of our language to denote emotional phenomena, he deceives himself and speaks of abstract constructs which do not correspond to the reality of felt experience.

But this is only one aspect of the filtering function of language. Different languages differ not only by the fact that they vary in the diversity of words they use to denote certain affective experiences, but also by their syntax, their grammar, and the root-meaning of their words. The whole language contains an attitude of life, is a frozen expression of experiencing life in a certain way.[1]

Here are a few examples. There are languages in which the verb form "it rains," for instance, is conjugated differently depending on whether I say that it rains because I have been out in the rain and have got wet, or because I have seen it raining from the inside of a hut, or because somebody has told me that it rains. It is quite obvious that the emphasis of the language on these different *sources* of experiencing a fact (in this case, that it rains) has a deep influence on *the way* people experience facts. (In our modern culture, for instance, with its emphasis on the purely intellectual side of knowledge, it makes little difference how I know a fact, whether from direct or indirect experience, or from hearsay.) Or, in Hebrew, the main principle of conjugation is to determine whether an activity is complete (perfect) or incomplete (imperfect), while the time in which it occurs—past, present, future—is expressed only in a secondary fashion. In Latin both principles (time and perfection) are used together, while

[1] Cf. the pathfinding contribution of Benjamin Whorf in his *Collected Papers on Metalinguistics* (Washington, D.C.: Foreign Service Institute, 1952).

in English we are predominantly oriented in the sense of time. Again it goes without saying that this difference in conjugation expresses a difference in experiencing.[1]

Still another example is to be found in the different uses of verbs and nouns in various languages, or even among different people speaking the same language. The noun refers to a "thing"; the verb refers to an activity. An increasing number of people prefer to think in terms of *having things,* instead of *being* or *acting;* hence, they prefer nouns to verbs.

Language, by its words, its grammar, its syntax, by the whole spirit which is frozen in it, determines which experiences penetrate to our awareness.

The second aspect of the filter which makes awareness possible is the *logic* which directs the thinking of people in a given culture. Just as most people assume that their language is "natural" and that other languages only use different words for the same things, they assume also that the rules which determine proper thinking are natural and universal ones; that what is illogical in one cultural system is illogical in any other because it conflicts with "natural" logic. A good example of this is the difference between Aristotelian and paradoxical logic.

Aristotelian logic is based on the law of identity which states that A is A, the law of contradiction (A is not non-A), and the law of the excluded middle (A cannot be A *and* non-A, neither A *nor* non-A). Aristotle stated it: "It is impossible for the same thing at the same time to belong and not to belong to the same thing in the same

[1] The significance of this difference becomes quite apparent in the English and German translations of the Old Testament. Often when the Hebrew text uses the perfect tense for an emotional experience like loving, meaning, "I love fully," the translator misunderstands and writes, "I loved."

respect. . . . This, then, is the most certain of all principles." [1]

In opposition to Aristotelian logic is what one might call *paradoxical logic,* which assumes that A and non-A do not exclude each other as predicates of X. Paradoxical logic was predominant in Chinese and Indian thinking, in Heraclitus' philosophy, and then again under the name of dialectics in the thought of Hegel and Marx. The general principle of paradoxical logic has been clearly described in general terms by Lao-tse: "Words that are strictly true seem to be paradoxical." [2] And by Chuang-tzu: "That which is one is one. That which is not-one, is also one."

Inasmuch as a person lives in a culture in which the correctness of Aristotelian logic is not doubted, it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, for him to be aware of experiences which contradict Aristotelian logic, hence which from the standpoint of his culture are nonsensical. A good example is Freud's concept of ambivalence, which says that one can experience love and hate for the same person at the same time. This experience, which from the standpoint of paradoxical logic is quite "logical," does not make sense from the standpoint of Aristotelian logic. As a result it is exceedingly difficult for most people to be aware of feelings of ambivalence. If they are aware of love, they cannot be aware of hate—since it would be utterly nonsensical to have two contradictory feelings at the same time toward the same person.[3]

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[1] Aristotle, *Metaphysics,* Book Gamma, 1005b 20. Quoted from Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* translated by R. Hope (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952).

[2] Lao-tse, *The Tâo Teh King, The Sacred Books of the East,* ed. by F. Max Mueller, Vol. XXXIX (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), p. 120.

[3] Cf. my more detailed discussion of this problem in *The Art of Loving,* World Perspective Series (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956) p. 72ff.

While language and logic are parts of the social filter which makes it difficult or impossible for an experience to enter awareness, the third part of the social filter is the most important one for it is the one that does not *permit* certain feelings to reach consciousness and tends to expel them from this realm if they have reached it. It is made up by the social taboos which declare certain ideas and feelings to be improper, forbidden, dangerous, and which prevent them from even reaching the level of consciousness.

An example taken from a primitive tribe may serve as an introduction to the problem indicated here. In a tribe of warriors, for instance, whose members live by killing and robbing the members of other tribes, there might be an individual who feels a revulsion against killing and robbing. Yet it is most unlikely that he will be aware of this feeling since it would be incompatible with that of the whole tribe; to be aware of this incompatible feeling would mean the danger of being completely isolated and ostracized. Hence an individual with such an experience of revulsion would probably develop a psychosomatic symptom such as vomiting, instead of letting the feeling of revulsion penetrate to his awareness. Exactly the contrary would be found in the case of a member of a peaceful agricultural tribe who has the impulse to go out and kill and rob members of other groups. He also would probably not permit himself to become aware of his impulses, but instead would develop a symptom—maybe intense fright.

Still another example, one from our own civilization: there must be many shopkeepers in our big cities who have a customer who badly needs, let us say, a suit of clothes, but who does not have sufficient money to buy even the cheapest one. Among those shopkeepers (especially the well-to-do ones) there must be a few who

would have the natural human impulse to give the suit to the customer for the price that he can pay. But how many will permit themselves to be aware of such an impulse? I assume very few. The majority will repress it, and we might find among them quite a few who will have a dream during the following night which might express the repressed impulse in one form or another.

Another example: the modern "organization man" might feel that his life makes little sense, that he is bored by what he is doing, that he has little freedom to do and think as he sees fit, that he is chasing after an illusion of happiness which never comes true. But if he were aware of such feelings, he would be greatly hindered in his proper social functioning. Hence such awareness would constitute a real danger to society as it is organized; and as a result, the feeling is repressed.

Or, there must be many people who sense that it is irrational to buy a new car every two years and who might even have a feeling of sadness when they have to part from a car they have been using, one that has "grown on them." Yet if many were aware of such feelings, there would be danger that they would act on them—and where would our economy be, which is based on relentless consumption? Then again, is it possible that most people should be so lacking in natural intelligence that they do not see with how much incompetence many of their leaders—whatever the method by which they came to the top—perform their functions? Yet where would social cohesion and unified action be if such facts became conscious to more than a tiny minority? Is reality in this respect any different from what happens in Andersen's fairy tale of the emperor without clothes? Although the emperor is naked, only a little boy perceives this fact, while the rest of the people are convinced that the emperor is wearing beautiful clothes.

The irrationalities of any given society result in the necessity for its members to repress the awareness of many of their own feelings and observations. This necessity is the greater in proportion to the extent to which a society is not representative of all its members. Greek society did not pretend to fulfill the interests of all its people. The slaves, even according to Aristotle, were not full-fledged human beings; hence neither the citizens nor the slaves had to repress much in this respect. But for societies which pretend to care for the welfare of all, this problem does exist if they fail to do so. Throughout human history, with the exception, perhaps, of some primitive societies, the table has always been set only for a few, and the vast majority received nothing but the remaining crumbs. If the majority had been fully aware of the fact that they were being cheated, a resentment might have developed which would have endangered the existing order. Hence such thoughts had to be repressed and those in whom this process of repression did not take place adequately were in danger of their lives or freedom.

The most revolutionary change in our times lies in the fact that all the peoples of the world have opened their eyes and are aware of their desire for a dignified material life, and that man has discovered the technical means for the fulfillment of this aspiration. In the Western world and in the Soviet Union it will take only a relatively short while until this stage is achieved, even though it will take much longer in the nonindustrialized countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Does this mean that in the rich industrial countries there is almost no longer any need for repression? This is, indeed, a widespread illusion among most people; yet it is not a fact. These societies, too, exhibit many contradictions and irrationalities. Does it make sense to spend millions of dollars on storing agricultural surpluses while

millions of people in the world are starving? Does it make sense to spend half of the national budget on weapons which, if and when they are used, will destroy our civilization? Does it make sense to teach children the Christian virtues of humility and unselfishness and, at the same time, to prepare them for a life in which the exact opposites of these virtues are necessary in order to be successful? Does it make sense that we fought the last two world wars for "freedom and democracy," ending them with the demilitarization of the "enemies of freedom," and that only a few years later we are rearming again for "freedom and democracy," except that the former enemies of freedom are now its defenders, and the former allies are the enemies? Does it make sense to be deeply indignant against systems which do not grant freedom of speech and of political activity, while we call the very same systems, and even more ruthless ones, "freedom-loving" if they have a military alliance with us? Does it make sense that we live in the midst of plenty, yet have little joy? Does it make sense that we are all literate, have radio and television, yet are chronically bored? Does it make sense that . . . We could go on for many more pages, describing the irrationalities, fictions, and contradictions of our Western way of life. Yet all these irrationalities are taken for granted and are hardly noticed by anybody. This is by no means due to the lack of critical capacity; we see these same irrationalities and contradictions quite clearly in our opponents—we only refuse to apply rational and critical judgment to ourselves.

The repression of the awareness of facts is, and must be, supplemented by the acceptance of many fictions. The gaps which exist because we refuse to see many things around us must be filled so that we may have a coherent picture. What are these ideologies which are fed into us? Since there are so many I will mention only a few of

them: We are Christians; we are individualists; our leaders are wise; we are good; our enemies (whoever these happen to be at the moment) are bad; our parents love us and we love them; our marriage system is successful; and so on, and so on. The Soviet states have constructed another set of ideologies: That they are Marxists; that their system is socialism; that it expresses the will of the people; that their leaders are wise and work for humanity; that the profit interest in their society is a "socialist" profit interest and different from the "capitalist" profit interest; that their respect for property is that for "socialist" property and quite different from the respect for "capitalist" property; and so on, and so on. All these ideologies are impressed on the people from childhood on by their parents, by the schools, churches, movies, television, newspapers, and they take hold of men's minds as if they were the result of the men's own thinking or observation. If this process takes place in societies opposed to ours, we call it "brain washing," and, in its less extreme forms, "indoctrination" or "propaganda"; in ours, we call it "education" and "information." Even though it is true that societies differ in the degree of awareness and brain washing, and even though the Western world is somewhat better in this respect than the Soviet world, the difference is not enough to alter the fundamental picture of a mixture between repression of facts and acceptance of fiction.[1]

Why do people repress the awareness of what they would otherwise be aware of? Undoubtedly the main reason is fear. But fear of what? Is it fear of castration, as Freud assumed? There does not seem to be sufficient evidence to believe this. Is it fear of being killed, imprisoned, or fear of starvation? That might sound like a

[1] William J. Lederer, in *A Nation of Sheep* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1961), gives some good examples of this state of affairs with regard to political thinking.

satisfactory answer, provided repression occurred only in systems of terror and oppression. But since this is not so, we have to inquire further. Are there more subtle fears which a society such as our own, for instance, produces? Let us think of a young executive or engineer in a big corporation. If he has thoughts which are not "sound," he might be inclined to repress them lest he might not get the kind of promotion others get. This, in itself, would be no tragedy, were it not for the fact that he, his wife, and his friends will consider him a "failure" if he falls behind in the competitive race. Thus the fear of being a failure can become a sufficient cause for repression.

But there is still another and, as I believe, the most powerful motive for repression: the *fear of isolation and ostracism.*

For man, inasmuch as he is *man*—that is to say, inasmuch as he transcends nature and is aware of himself and of death—the sense of complete aloneness and separateness is close to insanity. Man as man is afraid of insanity, just as man as animal is afraid of death. Man has to be related, he has to find union with others, in order to be sane. This need to be one with others is his strongest passion, stronger than sex and often even stronger than his wish to live. It is this fear of isolation and ostracism, rather than the "castration fear," that makes people repress the awareness of that which is taboo since such awareness would mean being different, separate, and hence, to be ostracized. For this reason the individual must blind himself from seeing that which his group claims does not exist, or accept as truth that which the majority says is true, even if his own eyes could convince him that it is false. The herd is so vitally important for the individual that their views, beliefs, feelings, constitute reality for him, more so than what his senses and his

reason tell him. Just as in the hypnotic state of dissociation the hypnotist's voice and words take the place of reality, so the social pattern constitutes reality for most people. What man considers true, real, sane, are the clichés accepted by his society, and much that does not fit in with these clichés is excluded from awareness, is unconscious. There is almost nothing a man will not believe—or repress—when he is threatened with the explicit or implicit threat of ostracism. Returning to the fear of losing one's identity which I discussed earlier, I want to state that for the majority of people, their identity is precisely rooted in their conformity with the social clichés. "They" are who they are supposed to be—hence the fear of ostracism implies the fear of the loss of identity, and the very combination of both fears has a most powerful effect.

The concept of ostracism as the basis of repression could lead to the rather hopeless view that every society can dehumanize and deform man in whatever way it likes because every society can always threaten him with ostracism. But to assume this would mean to forget another fact. Man is not only a member of society, but he is also a member of the human race. While man is afraid of complete isolation from his social group, he is also afraid of being isolated from the humanity which is inside him and which is represented by his conscience and his reason. To be completely inhuman is frightening, even when a whole society has adopted inhuman norms of behavior. The more human a society is, the less need is there for the individual to choose between isolation from society or from humanity. The greater the conflict between the social aims and human aims, the more is the individual torn between the two dangerous poles of isolation. To that degree to which a person—because of his own intellectual and spiritual development—feels his solidarity with humanity, can he tolerate social ostracism, and vice versa.

The ability to act according to one's conscience depends on the degree to which one has transcended the limits of one's society and has become a citizen of the world.

The average individual does not permit himself to be aware of thoughts or feelings which are incompatible with the patterns of his culture, and hence he is forced to repress them. *Formally* speaking, then, what is unconscious and what is conscious depends on the structure of society and on the patterns of feeling and thought it produces. As to the *contents of the unconscious,* no generalization is possible. But one statement can be made: it always represents the whole man, with all his potentialities for darkness and light; it always contains the basis for the different answers which man is capable of giving to the question which existence poses. In the extreme case of the most regressive cultures, bent on returning to animal existence, this very wish is predominant and conscious, while all strivings to emerge from this level are repressed. In a culture which has moved from the regressive to the spiritual-progressive goal, the forces representing the dark are unconscious. But man, in any culture, has all the potentialities within himself; he is the archaic man, the beast of prey, the cannibal, the idolater, and he is the being with a capacity for reason, for love, for justice. The content of the unconscious, then, is neither the good nor the evil, the rational nor the irrational; it is both; it is all that is human. *The unconscious is the whole man —minus that part of him which corresponds to his society.* Consciousness represents social man, the accidental limitations set by the historical situation into which an individual is thrown. Unconsciousness represents universal man, the whole man, rooted in the cosmos; it represents the plant in him, the animal in him, the spirit in him; it represents his past, down to the dawn of human existence, and it represents his future up to the day when man will

have become fully human, and when nature will be humanized as man will be "naturalized." To become aware of one's unconscious means to get in touch with one's full humanity and to do away with barriers which society erects within each man and, consequently, between each man and his fellow man. To attain this aim fully is difficult and a rare occurrence; to approximate it is in the grasp of everybody, as it constitutes the emancipation of man from the socially conditioned alienation from himself and humankind. Nationalism and xenophobia are the opposite poles to the humanistic experience brought about by becoming aware of one's unconscious.

Which factors make for greater or lesser awareness of the social unconscious? First of all, it is quite obvious that certain individual experiences make a difference. The son of an authoritarian father, who has been rebelling against fatherly authority without being crushed by it, will be better prepared to see through the social rationalizations and to become aware of the social reality which, to most, is unconscious. Similarly, members of racial, religious, or social minority groups which have been discriminated against by the majority, will often be more likely to disbelieve in the social clichés; this holds also true for the members of an exploited and suffering class. But such class situation by no means always makes the individual more critical and independent. Very often his social status makes him more insecure and more eager to accept the clichés of the majority in order to be acceptable and to feel secure. It would take a minute analysis of many personal and social factors to determine why some members of minorities or exploited majorities react with increased criticism, and others with increased submission to the ruling patterns of thought.

In addition to these factors, there are purely social ones which determine how strong is the resistance against

the awareness of the social reality. If a society or a social class has no chance to make any use of its insight because there is objectively no hope for a change for the better, the chances are that everybody in such a society would stick to the fictions since the awareness of the truth would only make them feel worse. Decaying societies and classes are usually those which hold most fiercely to their fictions since they have nothing to gain by the truth. Conversely, societies—or social classes—which are bound for a better future offer conditions which make the awareness of reality easier, especially if this very awareness will help them to make the necessary chances. A good example is the bourgeois class in the eighteenth century. Even before it had won political hegemony over the aristocratic class, it had shed many fictions of the past and had developed new insight into the past and present social realities. The writers of the middle classes could penetrate through the fictions of feudalism because they did not need these fictions—on the contrary, they were helped by the truth. When the bourgeois class had been firmly entrenched and was fighting against the onslaught of the working class and, later, the colonial peoples, the situation was reversed; the members of the middle classes refused to see the social reality, the members of the forward-moving new classes were more prone to dispense with many illusions. Very often, however, individuals developing these insights in support of the groups fighting for their freedom came from the very classes against which they were fighting. In all such cases one would have to examine the individual factors which make a person critical of his own social group, and make him side with the group to which he does not belong by birth.

The social and the individual unconscious are related to each other and in constant interaction. In fact, unconsciousness/consciousness is, in the last analysis, indi-

visible. What matters is not so much the *content* of what is repressed, but the *state of mind* and, to be more precise, the degree of awakedness and realism in the individual. If a person in a given society is not able to see the social reality, and instead fills his mind with fictions, his capacity to see the individual reality with regard to himself, his family, his friends, is also limited. He lives in a state of half-awakedness, ready to receive suggestions from all sides, and to believe that the fictions suggested to him are the truth. (Of course, a person will be particularly prone to repress the awareness of reality with regard to his personal life in areas where social repression is particularly marked. In a society, for instance, which cultivates obedience to authority, and hence repression of the awareness or criticism, the individual son will be more prone to be in awe of his father than the one in a society where criticism of authority is not an essential part of social repression.)

Freud was mainly concerned with the uncovering of the individual unconscious. While he assumed that society enforced repressions, these were the repressions of instinctual forces, and not the social repressions which really matter—the repressions of the awareness of social contradictions, socially produced suffering, of the failure of authority, of feelings of *malaise* and dissatisfaction, etc. Freudian analysis has shown that it is possible to some degree to make the individual unconscious conscious, without touching the social unconscious. However, it follows from the premises which were presented thus far, that any attempt for de-repression which excludes the social sphere must remain limited. The full awareness of what had been repressed is possible only if it transcends the individual realm, and if the process includes the analysis of the social unconscious. The reasons for this proposition follow from what has been said before. Unless a person

is able to transcend his society and see how it furthers or hinders the development of human potentialities, he cannot be fully in touch with his own humanity. Socially conditioned taboos and restrictions must appear as "natural" to him, and human nature must appear in a distorted form, as long as he does not recognize the distortion of human nature by the society he happens to live in. If uncovering the unconscious means arriving at the experience of one's own humanity, then, indeed, it cannot stop with the individual but must proceed to the uncovering of the social unconscious. This implies the understanding of social dynamics and the critical appraisal of one's own society from the standpoint of universal human values. The very insight into society which Marx has given us is a condition for becoming aware of the social unconscious, and hence for the full awakening ("derepression") of an individual. If there "should be Ego where there was Id," humanistic social criticism is a necessary precondition. Otherwise, the person will become aware only of certain aspects of his individual unconscious, yet in other aspects hardly more awake as a total person than the rest. It must be added, however, that not only is critical understanding of society important for the analytic understanding of oneself, but that the analytic understanding of the individual unconscious is also a significant contribution to the understanding of society. Only if one has experienced the dimensions of the unconscious in one's personal life can one fully appreciate how it is possible that social life is determined by ideologies which are neither truths nor lies or, to put it differently, which are both truths *and* lies—truths in the sense that people believe them sincerely, and lies in the sense that they are rationalizations which have the function of hiding the real motivation of social and political actions.

Much as the individual and the social unconscious in-

teract, if we compare Freud's and Marx's respective concepts of repression in terms of social evolution, we find a fundamental contradiction. For Freud, as we have indicated before, growing civilization means growing repression—hence social evolution does not lead to the dissolution of repression but rather to its reinforcement. For Marx, on the other hand, repression is essentially the result of contradictions between the need for the full development of man and the given social structure—hence the fully developed society in which exploitation and class conflict have disappeared does not need ideologies and can dispense with repression. In the fully humanized society there would be no need for repression, hence there would be no social unconscious. According to Freud, repression increases; according to Marx, it decreases in the process of social evolution.

There is another difference between Freudian and Marxian thought which has not been sufficiently emphasized. While I have already discussed the similarity between "rationalization" and "ideologies," it is necessary to point to this difference. Through rationalization one tries to make it appear as though an action is motivated by reasonable and moral motives, thus covering up the fact that it is caused by motives which are in contrast to a person's conscious thinking. The rationalization is mostly sham, and has only the negative function of permitting a person to act wrongly, yet without awareness that he is acting irrationally or immorally. The ideology has a similar function, yet in one point there is an important difference. Take the example of Christian teaching: the teachings of Christ, the ideals of humility, brotherly love, justice, charity, etc., were once genuine ideals which moved the hearts of people to such a degree that they were willing to give their lives for the sake of these ideals. But throughout history these ideals have been misused to

that nothing in life is achieved without effort, daring to take risks and often some suffering. Paying the analyst, talking for five hours a week on the couch, and some anxiety produced when the resistance grows, were often considered as the equivalent of effort and daring. But, if at all, they are a rather insufficient equivalent. This holds especially true for the upper middle class, for which neither the money nor the time represent any serious sacrifice.

What does the patient want? If he has serious symptoms such as psychogenetic headaches, or a wash compulsion, or if he suffers from sexual impotence, he wants to be cured of his symptoms. This is what motivated most of Freud's patients to seek analytic help. In general it is not too difficult to cure such symptoms psychoanalytically and it is, if anything, an underestimation to assume that at least 50 percent of such patients are cured. But in the last twenty years these patients with symptoms no longer constitute the majority of those seeking the help of the psychoanalyst. An increasing number of people come who do not suffer from any "symptom" in the traditional sense, but who suffer from what the French called over a century ago *la maladie du siécle;* they suffer from a general unhappiness, from lack of satisfaction in their work, from lack of happiness in their marriages, from the fact that "they are without joy in the midst of plenty," to use a Biblical expression. This new type of patient often seeks nothing but the relief which the psychoanalytic procedure can give, even when it is not successful; the satisfaction of having somebody to talk to, of "belonging" to a cult, of having a "philosophy." The aim of therapy is often that of helping the person to be better adjusted to existing circumstances, to "reality" as it is frequently called; mental health is often considered to be nothing but this adjustment or, to put it differently, a state of mind in which one's individual unhappiness is reduced to the level of the general unhappiness. The *real* problem,

than the adults, but he is not yet so eager to conform. Furthermore, any new discovery is an adventure, and the adventures require not only a certain degree of inner security, but also a vitality and joy which can be found only in those for whom living is more than releasing tensions and avoiding pain. In order to reduce the general level of stupidity, we need not more "intellect" but a different kind of character: men who are independent, adventurous, and who are in love with life.

I cannot leave the topic of intellect without talking about another aspect, the danger of intellectualization and of the misuse of words. Words can be used without meaning what they purport to mean; words can be empty shells and one can learn certain philosophical, religious, and political ideas as one learns a foreign language. *Indeed one of the greatest dangers to be avoided is to confuse words with facts; the fetishism of words prevents the understanding of reality.*

This can be observed in all areas—most of all, perhaps, in religion, politics, and philosophy. The vast majority of all Americans believe in God; yet from all observations, scientifically organized as well as random observations, it seems clear that this belief in God has very little consequence for action and the conduct of life. Most people are concerned with health, money, and "education" (the latter as part of social success), and not at all with the problems which would arise if they were concerned with God. We are consumption-hungry and production-proud, and show precisely all the traits of materialism of which we accuse the "godless." If there is anything to be taken seriously in our profession of God, it is to recognize the fact that God has become an idol. Not an idol of wood or stone like the ones our ancestors worshiped, but an idol of words, phrases, doctrines. We violate at every moment the command not to use God's name in vain, which means using

mankind. To wake up to this danger, to look through the double talk on all sides which is used to prevent men from seeing the abyss toward which they are moving is the one obligation, the one moral and intellectual command which man must respect today. If he does not, we all will be doomed.

If we should all perish in the nuclear holocaust, it will not be because man was not capable of becoming human, or that he was inherently evil; it would be because the consensus of stupidity has prevented him from seeing reality and acting upon the truth.

I believe in the perfectability of man, but I doubt whether he will achieve this goal, unless he awakens soon.

Watchman, what of the night?
The watchman says:
Morning comes and also the night
If you will inquire, inquire:
Return, come back again.

(Isaiah 21)