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FREUD AND OBJECT RELATIONS THEORY

The Psychoanalytic Century

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INTRODUCTION

The 1998 Freud Exhibit at the Library of Congress presented an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate Freud's genius and his impact on twentieth-century culture. Moving into the twenty-first century, we recognize the multifaceted potential of his invention to generate a cascade of new theories of human development, each differing from the other and from Freud's classical theory. All of them spring from the Freudian platform, even those that reject Freud's views on the instinctual basis of human development.

From the classical Freudian emphasis on the instinctual basis of development, contemporary psychoanalysis is diverging into self-psychology, inter-subjectivity, relational psychology, Kleinian, and object relations theories (Greenberg and Mitchell 1983, Mitchell and Black 1995). These new developments reflect the sociocultural diversity, philosophical influences, and scientific advances of the twentieth century. They challenge the original psychoanalytic findings and theories discussed by Freud, and some of them appear to depart radically from his views. Here my discussion focuses on

British object relations theory, and my argument is that it builds upon and elaborates aspects that Freud identified but did not take further, possibly because of the inevitable constraint on the outer limits of his thinking due largely to his gender, his ethnicity, and his historical period (J. S. Scharff and D. E. Scharff 1998). I will focus on object relations theory, as an example of one of these new theories, so as to catalogue the ways in which, though radically different, it nevertheless derives from Freudian theory.

Imagine an exhibit in which Freudian theory is presented in a series of showcases along one side of an aisle, and object relations theory in cases across the aisle. Imagine yourself as a visitor to this exhibit. You can examine classical concepts in the showcase on one side and then look across the aisle to see elements of object relations theory that bear a relationship to them, whether of similarity or difference. Continuing, I proceed along the object relations aisle to describe the formation of the self as a system of internal object relationships and along the Freudian aisle to review the pre-and post-structural stages of Freudian theory from which I isolate some concepts. From time to time I crisscross between the aisles to compare and contrast Freudian concepts with elements of object relations theory in the neighboring showcases. I speculate as to why Freud's theory did not develop in the direction of object relations theory. In some elements of Freudian theory I find the seeds of object relations theory which thrived in the intellectual environment of the twentieth century after Freud's time. Following the

exhibit metaphor to its conclusion, I must leave empty some display cases at the end of the aisles to accommodate other concepts in Freud, object relations, and self-psychology that readers might consider relevant to this discussion (Ellman 1998).

OBJECT RELATIONS THEORY

Our tour begins with an introductory section on object relations. For the purpose of this chapter, I use the term *object relations theory,* a title coined by Fairbairn, to refer to the body of work contributed by British analysts Fairbairn, Balint, Winnicott, Guntrip, and Sutherland, and more recently Bollas, Ogden, and D. and J. Scharff (Bollas 1987, 1989, 1992, 1995, Balint 1952, 1968, Birtles and Scharff, ed. 1994, Fairbairn 1952, Guntrip 1961, 1969, 1986, Ogden 1982, 1986, 1989, 1994, D.E. Scharff 1992, 1996, J.S. Scharff 1992, J.S. and D.E. Scharff 1992, 1998, D. E. Scharff and Birtles 1994, Sutherland 1980, Winnicott 1958, 1965, 1971). I have not included those theories that present object relations as representations complementing Freud's existing drive/structure models (Jacobson 1964, Mahler et al. 1974, Kernberg 1976, 1979, 1980), or as functions of unconscious phantasy driven by the death and life instincts (Klein 1955), because, in retaining a primarily instinctual basis for development, they clearly derive from Freud, and therefore I find no need to argue the point. So, I refer only to the kind of object relations theory that radically eschews instinct as the central organizer of

development, and in particular to Fairbairn's theory.

Stated briefly, British object relations theory holds that the infant is motivated by the need to relate to another person, not by the wish for instinctual gratification. How the infant manages the early years, helped or hindered by the mothering person's capacity for environmental holding and eye-to-eye relating at the center of her being, is thought to be as crucial as the resolution of the Oedipus complex in determining personality development. There is only a pristine ego at birth, not an id out of which the ego will arise. This whole ego then experiences the vicissitudes of infantile dependency after birth when needs are no longer met automatically by uterine conditions. The infant ego grows by taking in experience with the infant's caregivers and storing it inside the self as internal object structures. Good experience infuses the ego and is retained in consciousness as an accepted object associated with feelings of satisfaction in relation to the central ego. The ego deals with experience that has been overwhelmingly frustrating, by splitting it off from what has felt good, and repressing it as an unsatisfactory object associated with feelings of frustration. The object is further divided and sorted into two main categories according to whether the frustration is associated with rage and rejection, or with longing and clinging. The ego also splits off parts of itself in relation to these objects and represses them too along with the associated affects.

In object relations theory, the unconscious is not preexisting and filled with instinctual energy. Instead, it is thought of as being formed from the ego's experience with relationships, the drives being given meaning by experience with objects. It is peopled by repressed parts of the ego, its objects, and associated affects. Objects that were experienced as being rejecting or exciting of need, are related to by a repressed anti-libidinal ego and a libidinal ego respectively. The quality of the repressed ego and object is colored by the effects of rage or of longing that connects them. Ego, object, and affect together form an internal object relationship. The self consists of a central ego in relation to an accepted objected connected by feelings of satisfaction, all in consciousness, while in unconsciousness there are need-rejecting and need-exciting internal object relationships connected by feelings of rage and longing. The self is a system of conscious and unconscious inter-related internal object relationships all in dynamic relation.

Object relations theory is a radical revision of Freud's theory, yet one that builds on his concepts of object, libido, narcissism, group psychology, repetition compulsion, identification, splitting of the ego, and structural conflict.

FREUDIAN INSTINCT THEORY AND THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE

Our tour of the Freudian aisle begins at instinct theory with reference to

Freud's *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1910) and *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes* (1915). Freudian instinct theory derives from biological, scientific, neuroanatomical, and philosophical concepts of energy, hierarchy, and dualism. It holds that instincts (also referred to as drives) are biological givens that consist of impulses of energy that seek expression and gratification of erogenous zones, but are opposed by countervailing instinctual forces. For instance, the libidinal (sex) instinct may be opposed by the self-preservative instinct (later the death instinct) so that the organism can return to the resting, non-excited state in keeping with the principle of entropy.

When unsuitable instincts are successfully opposed they do not invade consciousness in which rational thinking takes place. They are given acceptable expression by the pre-conscious, or remain in the unconscious, a seething mass of instinctual energy where thinking is not rational but is governed by the primary process. Conceptualizing the mind in layers from surface to depth, Freud's theory at this stage has also been called the *topographic theory.*

In Freud's theory of early development, the infant is not looking for a mother, for a relationship, or for food. The infant is driven by the libido (the sexual instinct) to seek satisfaction through stimulation of the oral orifice that happens to occur during feeding. In object relations theory, the infant's need

to be in a relationship is primary. The infant finds security and meaning in the loving arms and eyes of the mother and other family members, and in the predictable rhythm of stimulation and rest, togetherness and tolerable separation.

Freud's instinct theory depends upon the *pleasure principle.* The libido seeks expression by being gratified at the site of the pleasure zone that predominates at the different psychosexual stages—oral, anal, phallic, and genital. In emphasizing the source, expression, and control of the pleasure-seeking libido as it meets an environment experienced as hostile to its aims, instinct theory minimizes the human reality of people and their families, even though in practice Freud was well aware of the importance of family relationships as his case histories show. Unconscious sexual instincts give rise to impulses for pleasure without regard for the destruction of the object. They are opposed by the self-preservative instincts that safeguard the self. These impulses are in conflict as they compete for expression along the reflex arc to consciousness and their associated affects compete for release. This conflict is experienced as anxiety, a *discharge affect.*

Freud developed the hypothesis that this anxiety is a fear of the consequences of not being able to tame the instinct, these consequences being loss of the object, loss of the love of the object, or loss of the love of the self. Here the theory begins to require an object relational focus to explain why the

instincts have to be opposed. And indeed, as Freud moved on to develop his ideas on the Oedipus complex and explore mourning reactions to lost objects, the objects of the drives acquired an increasingly personal significance for personality development. Nevertheless, Freud did not give up the instinctual basis for the organization of development in favor of an object relational motivating drive.

FREUD ON THE OBJECT

The next item on display in the imaginary museum is Freud's concept of the object and its implications for identification. Freud (1895) first used the term *object* in *Project for a Scientific Psychology.* After a helpful person responds specifically to the cry of the helpless infant, the infant has an experience of satisfaction from which follows "a cathexis of one (or several) of the neurons which correspond to the perception of an object" (p. 318). Freud's argument concerns the released reflex movement between the endogenous excitation (the scream), the extraneous excitation (the helpful action), the removal of the endogenous excitation, and the facilitation of cathexis. He does not define object. It could refer to any perception of the person, but in context, it can be read as a term used to refer to the perception of the person as the agent of the satisfaction. Of most interest to the object relations theorist, Freud describes this total event as constituting "an *experience of satisfaction,* which has the most radical results on the

development of the individual's functions" (p. 318).

The Infantile Narcissistic Object

In *Three Essays on Sexuality* (1905) Freud used the term *object* to refer to the *object of the drives*, *the source of gratification that the sexual drives are aimed at.* The object is the infant's own dominant erogenous zone. In the beginning, he thought, there is no external object in the environment, human or non-human. The libido is directed internally and finds its primary object in itself. Infants look to their own bodies for stimulation, gratification, and soothing, and expect sources outside the self to be ungratifying or even traumatizing if the barrier around the self is broken. This is the stage of *primary autoerotism.*

In "On Narcissism," Freud (1914) developed these ideas. He said that the internal object of the autoerotic stage is infused with narcissistic libido, and he called this stage *primary narcissism.*

Gradually the libido develops *object cathexis,* that is to say, energy is aimed outside the self: Infants reach out when their mothers seem to promise gratification of the libidinal aims. When the mother proves disappointing, hurtful, rejecting, or traumatic in response to the baby's needs for pleasure, the baby stops looking to her as the source of gratification. In Freud's words, the infant retreats to using the self as the primary object after the external

object fails to gratify the libido. Freud called this the stage of *secondary* narcissism.

After persistent nonoccurrence of satisfaction, the disappointed infant abandons the attempt at satisfaction through hallucination.

Then under the influence of the self-preservative ego instincts, the infant ego accepts the state of unpleasure as real and looks for useful ways to change its reality (Freud 1911). When the mother gratifies the libido, the infant finds pleasure, and then refinds it in fantasy. When the source of this pleasure is found and refound, the infant recognizes the source of pleasure in the object outside the self. Narcissism gives way to a capacity for *object* love.

In a relational tone, Freud holds that "persons who are concerned with a child's feeding, care, and protection become his earliest sexual objects" (1914, p. 87), unless the child makes an object-choice based on himself as the model. But Freud's energy goes into showing how this observation proves that the sexual instincts were originally tied to the ego-instincts and later become independent of them. He also shows that the individual has two types of object choices open to him: the *narcissistic* (based on himself, or a part of himself as he is or was or wishes to be, as the model) or the *anaclitic* (leaning on the early caregiver as the model), also called the *attachment type* of object choice. In an even more relationally inclined tone, Freud subdivided the

attachment type of object choice into two basic models: the woman who fed him and the man who protected him.

Object relations theory—which holds that the infant is not motivated by sexual and self-preservative instincts, therefore has no id, and has a pristine whole ego at birth—views narcissism as always secondary to frustration due to lack of fit between the infant's constitutional ego capacities for expressing need and tolerating organismic distress and the quality of maternal response. Object relations theory follows Freud in observing withdrawn ego states (Guntrip 1969), but regards them as a secondary phenomenon, not as a retreat to an original condition.

In Freudian theory the mother is the *object of the drives, the object that the drive attaches to, and eventually the object of love*. In object relations theory the mother's self is *the object of attachment, the object that her infant attaches to from the beginning, and the object of love and hate.*

The Anaclitic Object

The ego may look to the external object not just for gratification but for support. When the ego seems weak and the object is viewed as strong, the ego's relation to the object is of an exaggeratedly anaclitic type. Freud (1917) drew upon the concept of the anaclitic object in his paper "Mourning and Melancholia" to explain the depression of bereaved adults who have relied so

heavily on the presence of their loved ones that they are devastated by their departures. But dependency was a pathological condition in Freudian theory, not a natural condition for development, as it is in object relations theory. Freud recognized the importance of the parents as objects of the drives, but he did not focus on the child's ego in relation to its objects until the oedipal stage. Even then, when he took the family dynamics into account, he retained a drive-oriented approach. Although he said that "it is inevitable and perfectly normal that a child should take his parents as the first objects of his love," he nevertheless revealed his commitment to an instinct-based view of the object, when he continued "but his libido should not remain fixated to these first objects; later on, it should merely take them as a model" (Freud 1910, p. 48).

The Lost Object.

Freud (1917) studied the effect of the loss of the object on development. He saw the *lost object* as an important stimulus to thinking. In its absence, the person learned to hallucinate the missing object to secure wish fulfillment. In this way *the person has the object.* When the person identifies with the lost object that is being hallucinated, the *person becomes the object.* Then the ego is divided into two pieces, one of which rages against the other piece that is identified with the lost object. In this way, *the ego is split by its relation to the lost object.*

From studies of the narcissistic, anaclitic, and lost objects, Freud filled out his concept of *identification,* which he acknowledged as the original form of emotional tie to the object. He thought that identification could operate regressively so that the object was introjected into the ego as a substitute for a libidinal object tie, or could operate healthily to enrich the personality when it occurred in relation to any person with whom one shared a quality in common and who was not an object of the libido. This line of thinking elaborated on Freud's earlier conception of *splitting of the mind* (Breuer and Freud 1893).

Turning briefly to the object relations exhibit, we note that the concept of *splitting of the ego* was further developed by Fairbairn and Klein. Fairbairn saw it along a continuum as a response to the temporarily or chronically unresponsive external object, and Klein saw it as a response to perceptions of the object colored good or bad by projective identification under the force of the life or death instincts.

INTRAPSYCHIC VERSUS RELATIONAL PERSPECTIVES IN FREUD

The State of Being in Love

At this point in our journey through the imagined museum space, we dart back and forth between the Freudian and object relations displays,

comparing and contrasting Freudian and object relations perspectives. Freud (1914) noted that adults in love do not see each other's characteristics objectively. Instead, they overvalue each other because each of them needs the other as a wonderful object to be gratifying to the libido. The object is used to aggrandize the ego rather than the object being loved and appreciated for its unique characteristics, its otherness. In Freud's way of putting it, the new love object is overvalued by being infused with narcissistic libido. The new object has to be glorified so that it can serve as a successful substitute for the unattainable oedipal object. Only this level of achievement can satisfy the narcissistic aims of the libido.

In the state of falling in love, as Freud saw it, the lover may become so preoccupied with the loved one that he or she may lose the sense of being a separate person, or the lover's idealization may obstruct the individuality of the loved one. In that case, to use Freud's language, the loved object may consume the lover's ego, or the ego may consume the object, because the choice is dominated by the narcissistic aims of the libido.

The object relations view of marriage derives from Henry Dicks. Dicks (1967) used Fairbairn's theory of the individual personality composed of parts of ego, object, and affect connected in internal object relationships and looked at how these interact with the personality of the marital partner. He applied the Kleinian mechanism of projective identification to explain how

the internal object relationships communicate with the spouse's internal set in a reciprocal process to create a marital joint personality. In the healthy marriage, this has a modifying effect on each spouse's internal world, but in the marriages that come to treatment, it cements faulty internal constellations (Dicks 1967).

In Freud's theory of mating, the adult is driven by the sexual instinct to find a partner with whom to gratify the libido in fully genital sexual intercourse, whereas foreplay simply gratifies the component pregenital instincts by stimulation of the relevant erogenous zones. In object relations theory, the adult is seen as finding a partner with whom, through projective identification, to refind, re-experience, and reintegrate lost parts of the self in a mutual psychosomatic process of growth and enrichment, supported by the fully expressive, bodily and genitally interactive, psychologically interpenetrating, intensely pleasurable sexual relationship (D. Scharff 1981).

Group Psychology

Freud (1921) again seems to be moving toward a relational approach in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego.* He noted that, "in the individual's mental life someone else is invariably involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent; and so from the very first individual psychology is at the same time a social psychology as well" (Freud 1921, p.

69). He observed that human beings tend to want to live and work in groups and establish emotional ties to others in the group even if only to avoid the conflict between following the leader or doing for oneself. Freud found that the human is a social animal. This was quite a move beyond his intensely intrapsychic, drive-motivated view of development, but not surprisingly, Freud had to find an instinct to explain it. He named it *the social instinct.* But instead of giving it a solely biological basis, he looked for its origin in social terms. He said "that the social instinct may not be a primitive one and insusceptible of dissection, and that it may be possible to discover the beginnings of its development in a narrower circle, such as that of the family" (p. 70). Freud acknowledged the family as the possible source of the human tendency to want to live and work in groups.

This tentative move toward an object relational approach based on the psychology of family, social, and individual development was not maintained, perhaps because Freud was horrified when the social instinct, augmented by the death instinct, led to group efforts at mass destruction in the First World War. Freud also turned against his early seduction hypothesis regarding the pathology resulting from the actualities of traumatic relationships in early childhood and adolescence, perhaps because it was unacceptable to a society that felt accused and might then be more inclined to reject his theories of psychosexual development. From his study of primary and secondary narcissism, identification in loss and mourning, and his watershed discovery

of oedipal fantasy, Freud moved toward producing the concept of parts of ego and object in a structural relationship. By 1920, he had prepared the way for an object relations theory to study the dynamic, intrapsychic relation between these parts of the self and also their continuing development in interaction with significant others through the life cycle. Perhaps Freud could have moved more solidly in this direction himself, but his concept of identification received too little attention from his colleagues and from himself. In any case, he could not pursue every theory at once. Fie made his choices according to personal inclination, scientific credibility, and political implications.

FREUD ON PSYCHIC STRUCTURE

Returning to concentrate on the development of Freud's thought, we will look in on the decade before the 1923 publication of *The Ego and the Id.* We will trace some of the developments that paved the way for Freud's new structural theory of the mind: in chronological order, the discovery of the reality principle, the repetition compulsion, identification in mourning, mental structure, and oedipal development.

The Reality Principle and the Capacity for Delay

In *Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning,* Freud

(1911) added to the pleasure principle (to safeguard it, not to depose it) another principle of mental functioning, called the *reality principle.* The reality principle comes into play when maturing cognitive functions enable the object to be held in mind as a reality whether it is agreeable or not. It is held there long enough to hold off the frustrated instinctual impulse until a moment convenient for the object. The reality principle governs the *capacity for delay.* The reality principle also infers the need for consideration of the object as having a separate reality to which adjustment must be made. This element might have sparked a substantially relational theory at that time, but it did not because there was still more interest in drive than object. Instead, the reality principle became a crucial building block for Freud's later monumental leap to structural theory.

The Repetition Compulsion and the Death Instinct

In his 1920 paper *Beyond the Pleasure Principle,* Freud continued his emphasis on the reality principle, in contrast to the pleasure principle. He pointed to the recurrence of the same unsatisfying behaviors and unwelcome incidents in a person's life, unpleasant dreams in a traumatized person's sleep, and repetitive themes in a child's play. He called this phenomenon "the compulsion to repeat" (p. 36) and noted that it reflected a peculiar pleasurable investment in unpleasure, and must therefore be due to a force that overrode the pleasure principle. Freud continued to refer to the pleasure

principle-driven conflict between the sexual and the self-preservative instincts, and made a long and tortuous argument redefining the nature of the duality of the instincts. He proposed that the concept of the sexual instinct be broadened to include all tendencies aimed at unity and life directed toward objects, and that it be called the life instinct (and sometimes the object instinct). Instinctual trends not related to and opposing this life instinct had earlier been called the ego instincts (because they were not directed toward an object but tended instead to return the organism to the resting state). In 1920, Freud argued that they did in fact also have libidinal tendencies. Therefore he lumped together the ego instincts and object instincts, called them the life instincts, and then found a fresh opposition to them in destructive impulses residing in the ego. Those instincts formerly known as self-preservative were then seen not just as securing survival, but as permitting the organism to follow its own inherent path toward death, undisturbed by external forces or object-oriented impulses. From this argument, Freud arrived at his concept of the *death instinct* as the opposition to the life instinct (1920).

Let us for a moment glance over at the display on object relations for a contrasting view. Maintaining that the death instinct was superfluous, Fairbairn (1943) thought that there was no need for a repetition compulsion to explain the persistence of traumatic scenes in a person's dreams and relationships. Instead, Fairbairn thought of the person as being haunted by

internal bad objects to which his ego is attached, a result of spontaneous release of repressed objects activated by trauma similar enough to rekindle awareness of the originally repressed constellation. He thought that the destructive traumatic repetition Freud described in terms of the death instinct is better explained by an internalized object relationship with a bad object of a sadomasochistic type, an object relationship that needs to be recovered from through its emergence and reworking within the therapeutic relationship.

Identification, Mental Structure, and Oedipal Development

Moving back to the Freud side of the exhibit, we note another contribution toward structural theory that emerged from Freud's study Mourning *and Melancholia* (1917). Freud noted that it was as if the lost object was being held inside the self to deal with the libido remaining cathected to the lost object and not released through the grieving process. So Freud was led to think of the mind as having different parts, constructed by identification with lost objects in order to exercise power over the drives. This gave him the idea that the drives are to be controlled by mental structure rather than by other drives.

Applying his findings in melancholia to normal development, Freud became aware that, at each stage, the child has to give up the object of the

earlier stage. He proposed that the child does so by incorporating the redundant versions of the object that related to the earlier component instincts. It is out of these introjections of lost developmental objects that the ego is formed.

This concept acquired special developmental significance when applied to the lost object of the oedipal phase. The libido that seeks to express itself in relation to the loved parent of either sex is blocked from receiving gratification because the object is not available: the one parent is already the object of the other parent's libido. Ultimately the child must transfer the libido to the opposite-sex parent and then renounce this sexual aim as inappropriate. The child's libido has to be repressed or sublimated until it finds a new, non-incestuous object. At the point of renunciation, the child's ego usefully identifies with parts of the parents upon which it models itself. Depending on the force of the instincts and the strength of the opposition to them, the oedipal-stage identifications might be either with the parental traits or in reaction formation against them.

The most admired and respected parts of the other lead to the development of the *ego ideal* toward which the personality aspires and from which it derives its sense of self-esteem when it comes close to the ideal. The *superego* forms from selective identification with some of these highly valued aspects and reaction formation against other aspects of the parents

associated with their prohibition of the child's libidinal longings.

Identification was the last major building block Freud needed for arriving at his structural theory.

Structural Theory

As the infant matures and mental functioning comes under the force of the reality principle, the instincts undergo delay, detour, binding, and neutralization of their energy. The drives that are constantly pressing for gratification can be persuaded to hold off until a later date when their eventual satisfaction can be expected with confidence and greater personal pleasure (Rapaport 1960). The absence of the object and the resulting delay in instinctual expression leads to mental structure formation that is then capable of securing further delays. Then conflict is experienced between the id, where the drives are located, and the reality-oriented ego, formed from identification with the lost objects.

This line of development in his thinking culminated in Freud's *The Ego and the Id* (1923). Freud now viewed *conflict as structural,* occurring between parts of the self, not between instincts. The conflict is experienced as anxiety, now in the form of *signal affect,* not discharge affect. To account for this capacity for managing delay, Freud postulated the existence of the ego as an executive agency in the conscious and preconscious parts of the mind, in

which lost objects are represented, and which can respond to the signal affect by alerting the mind's defenses against the threat of instinctual energy release.

Freud did not give up the old topographic theory of the broadly-based realms of consciousness and unconsciousness. He still held that the infant progresses along a predetermined timeline, relating to its objects because they satisfy instinctual demands specific to each psychosexual stage, and experiencing them progressively through the oral, anal, and phallic routes, with oedipal-level renunciation of the object as the ultimate. Freud superimposed the new structural theory on the old topographic theory, much as the ego sat upon the id (Mitchell and Black 1995, J. S. and D. E. Scharff 1998).

The *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (Freud 1905) and the Case *Histories* (Breuer and Freud 1893-1895) had demonstrated Freud's understanding of the infant's need for holding and handling, and then the older child's need for family support and validation. His emphasis on family influence was clear when he claimed that neurosis was caused when actual seduction by a family member overwhelmed a young person's capacity to oppose the demands of the libido to seek such gratification. But in his most developed structural theory, Freud gave less attention to the influence of the actualities of family relationships on the child's developing personality

structure than to the impact of the child's inherent constitutionally and phylogenetically predetermined characteristics. Although he outlined the way in which the child selectively identifies with or creates reaction formations against the character traits of the parents in the oedipal phase, and although he said that the ego is filled with the lost objects, he mainly claimed that the ego formed out of the id, the cauldron of instinctual energy. Nevertheless, the structural theory did take account of childhood misperceptions of parent figures and by extension it includes the role of the family as the carrier of culture and shaper of human ideals and behaviors.

A last look along the object relations aisle shows that Fairbairn followed Freud in being interested in internal conflict, but he did not agree that it occurs between the agencies of id, ego and superego. In his theory there is no id. For Fairbairn, the ideal object, the nucleus of the superego function is an internalized accepted object shorn of its troublesome libidinal and anti-libidinal features more like Freud's ego ideal, and the central ego is subdivided into parts that relate to the accepted, libidinal, and anti-libidinal objects. Conflict may be experienced between parts of self at any point in the dynamic system of partly conscious, and (depending on the degree of the trauma and the strength of the constitution) partly repressed, and partly dissociated, ego, parts of object, and affect.

CONCLUSION

To the object relations theorist looking back, Freud's structural theory seems to hold within it the potential for an object relations view of the mind. But it remained a biologically centered, intrapsychic, individually oriented theory of linear and deterministic type, in keeping with the scientific influences of the time, and in distinction to the diverging ideas and methodologies of Ferenczi (1933) that later influenced his analyzands Balint and Klein toward the object relations perspective that flourished later in the twentieth century (Falzeder 1994). In addition, the English translators' choice of Latin terminology—id, ego, superego—had the unfortunate effect of reifying Freud's structural concept of the mind. Bettleheim (1982) made the point that in the original German, Freud had used the highly personal term "I" (translated as *ego)* and the impersonal "it" (translated as *id*). "Ego" seems to suggest a rather mechanistic, reflexively operant management function, as opposed to what I think Freud intended—a proactive, personal, executive structure for receiving affect signals and managing affect states, integrating experience with the objects, selecting object qualities to identify with or defend against, and in general, dealing with internal and external reality. Perhaps Freud's concern for the person's self—as opposed to his ego structures—expressed in his German theory-building was not evident to his English-language followers, and may have contributed to delaying the emergence of an object relations perspective.

For various historical, personal, and professional reasons, the radical,

redefining potential of this aspect of Freud's ideas remained undeveloped, for he continued to subscribe to his model of the mind as one that generated its own form and did so under pressure from the instincts as the driving force that governed development. It was not until new information infused the culture that disparate and overlooked elements in Freudian theory led to a radical revision according to the object relations perspective. The crucial new influences from the realm of science that were not available to push Freud in this direction stemmed from advances in models of science influenced by the theory of relativity (D. E. Scharff and Birtles 1994), cybernetic systems (Bertalannfy 1950), and most recently chaos theory (J. S. Scharff and D. E. Scharff 1998). Other developments in psychiatry—studies of attachment and separation (Bowlby 1958, 1969, 1973, 1980), infant attachment style (Ainsworth et al. 1978), neurological development (Schore 1994), group dependency, fight/flight, and pairing subgroup responses to task and leader (Bion 1959, 1962), and war neuroses resulting from unresolved infantile dependence (Fairbairn 1943)—pushed toward object relations theory. As we move further into the twenty-first century, the cultural effects of feminist theory, the scientific advances in chaos theory, the communication explosion, and whatever the future may bring, will move Freud's invention of psychoanalysis in yet new directions.

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