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THE ANNUAL OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

Volume XXI

Edited by
Jerome A. Winer
for the

Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis

To submit new manuscripts, send an original and three copies, together with an abstract of no more than 960 characters (letters, numbers, spaces), to:

Jerome A. Winer, M.D., Editor THE ANNUAL OF PSYCHOANALYSIS 180 North Michigan Avenue Chicago, IL 60601



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Freud's Concept of Autonomy and Strachey's Translation: A Piece of the Puzzle of the Freudian Self

NANCY KOBRIN

Why bother with an essay on Freud's concept of autonomy? The idea of autonomy is an important and timely topic because over the past decade there has been an interest in the closely related topic of subjectivity, especially the self. As Galatzer-Levy and Cohler (1990) have eloquently put it, there has been a "widespread psychoanalytic rediscovery of the concept of the self" (p. 9). Lewis Kirshner (1991) has offered yet another update on the concept of the self in psychoanalytic theory. He elucidates some of the Western philosophical foundations that informed Freud's idea of the self, the *Ich*, and captures effectively the ambiguity of the Freudian concept of the self:

As is well known, Freud did not spend time speculating or attempting to define the nature of a self, but instead took the liberty of using terms ambiguously to cover the broad usage of this concept in everyday parlance. Thus, the Ich can be "I" as the speaking subject, the ego as a structure, or "I" as a whole person. Strictly on clinical grounds, he noted that there are behavioral manifestations which we can not readily link up with conscious mental life and which lead to the assumption of a second consciousness untied with one's self—a psychical unconscious (Freud, 1915) [p. 166].

The roots of any concept can be forged through such an investigation; my objective is not to construct a point of origin but rather to engage in a comparative study of Freud's ideas and Strachey's translation of them.

For example, does Freud ever use the term "autonomy," and if so, what is its "original" equivalent in German? To know his concept helps make it possible to set it within the larger framework of post-Freudian psychoanalysis. At the very best, this inquiry may provide a long lost piece of the missing puzzle about the way in which Freud spoke and thought about an individual's sense of self. Autonomy accesses only one dimension of that relationship between a person and another individual. Nevertheless, it is autonomy that articulates the essence of selfhood. To extend the metaphor of the puzzle, this paper causes a reorganization of the present understanding of concepts such as Hartmann's autonomous ego; Lacan's linguistic self; and even Kohut's cohesive self, because the inquiry will provide additional information about the history of Freud's writings, translations of which have not previously considered the role of autonomy. Finally, today's psychoanalyst cannot help but think as a post-Freudian, even if classical theory is the preferred choice, because the analyst lives and writes after Freud.

This paper begins with an introductory definition in terms that provide historical background to the term "autonomy." A discussion follows with the examination of the superego as progenitor of Freud's concept of autonomy. This argument is buttressed by four specific instances in which Strachey translated Freud's thoughts using the term "autonomy." These translations provide insight into both the semantic and etymological gaps precipitated by the act of translating and the implications for potential distortion and misreadings. A conclusion summarizes the importance of the role of autonomy with regard to the superego, which is Freud's link between psyche and society, and indicates potential areas of

A Preliminary Definition of Terms Noted Against a Historical Backdrop

If one were to take an informal poll of psychoanalysts and ask one question - what was Freud's concept of autonomy? - most would answer that he did not have one. If one were to ask how to define autonomy, most would have difficulty giving a succinct reply. Moore and Fine (1990) offer the most recently authorized definition of autonomy.

The condition of being self-governing and independent. In psychoanalytic framework the term refers to the relative freedom of ego functions from the influence of the drives and ensuing conflict, a concept introduced by Hartmann (1939). Several functions are relatively resistant to instinctual forces, among them perception, motility

(walking, use of the hands, and so on), intention (planning, anticipation, purpose), intelligence, thinking, speech, and language. These functions are said to have primary autonomy. They develop relatively independent from the powerful forces of sexuality and aggressiveness, unlike such functions as object relations, defenses, and so on. But the relativity of such autonomy must be emphasized. Recent studies have shown, for instance, to what extent perceptual processes can be better understood if instinctual impulses and defensive operations are taken into account; perceived reality is not simply a mirror of a fixed external reality.

Forms of behavior that begin as defenses against instinctual drives but become free of such influences in the course of development are said to have secondary autonomy. An example is the individual who rebels against the authoritarian father to whom he unconsciously wishes to submit but in the course of development transforms his rebelliousness into constructive social criticism. The effective form his rebellion finally takes becomes emanicipated from the passivity and reaction formation in which it is nourished [p. 29].

It becomes immediately evident that the authorized meaning of autonomy is directly tied to ego psychology as developed by Heinz Hartmann. Even though Hartmann built his theory on Freud's shoulders, the definition does not cite Freud's work. For Hartmann, there are several dimensions to autonomy; the ego is one along with identity, independence, personality, self, and the superego. Moore and Fine (1990) say of defining the ego:

An important term in the history of the development of psychoanalytic theory, ego has an early and a later meaning, both still used to some extent. In his early writings, Freud sometimes used the term to refer to the total (mental) self: sometimes it meant an organized group of ideas. Certain of these ideas could be admitted to consciousness - these constituted the ego. Others were unacceptable and were relegated to the unconscious. Thus in his early concept of the ego Freud emphasized defense, one of its central functions.

In modern usage, the term most often refers to Freud's 1923 redefinition of the ego as one of the three major functional subdivisions of the mental apparatus. Though it has some conscious components, many of the operations of the ego are automatic, unconscious mechanisms. One aspect of the ego in its earlier meaning has now been replaced by the concept of the self. In reading psychoanalytic literature, one should determine the sense in which ego is used; this is often facilitated by noting the historical period to which the paper belongs.

The newborn infant exists in an undifferentiated psychic state from which the ego gradually evolves.

In order to function effectively, certain ego functions . . . need to mature in an environment relatively free of psychic conflict (Hartmann's concept of the primary autonomy of the ego) or need to develop so that they can function without undue conflict (secondary autonomy) [pp. 58-59].

Moore and Fine (1990) define identity in the following manner:

The relatively enduring, but not necessarily stable, experience of the self as a unique, coherent entity over time. The sense of identity, a subjective experience, begins with the child's awareness that he or she exists as an individual in a world with similar outer objects, but that he has his own wishes, thoughts, memories, and appearance distinct from that of others. Thus the term identity . . . connotes both a persistent sameness within oneself . . . and a persistent sharing of some kind of essential character with others.

The development of the body image is at the core of identity formation, which gains momentum as the process of separation-individuation unfolds but is not completed until after adolescence. The earlier stages may be thought of as the evolution of psychological self, but identity is achieved once the individual is defined in a variety of social contexts. Identification with both parents gives a bisexual quality to the self-representations, schemas, and self-concepts of children of both sexes. Eventually, however, an integrated self-organization is created out of the multiple former identifications contributing to character traits. With respect to gender and sexual identity these self-concepts usually represent a predominant identification with the parent of the same sex.

The sense of identity achieves relative stability when bisexual identifications are resolved and adolescence completed. The consciously available sense of identity is derived from the current self-concept, and an abiding sense of identity over time is derived from supraordinate self-schemas, which integrate various subordinate self-concepts and personal roles for relating with others. The conscious sense of "I" or "me" includes only some aspects of self-organization; other organizing forms for appraising self are unconscious [pp. 94–95].

From the term "identity" we move to the term "independence." Moore and Fine do not give an entry for this term in *Psychoanalytic Terms and Concepts*. Nevertheless, the term "independence" does appear in the entry-for autonomy as a gloss, having a meaning closely associated with self-governing. The notion of government indicates that independence is grounded in laws of behavior and moral codes of conduct. The notion's omission is interesting to note in Freud's cases. As shall be demonstrated,

independence figured heavily in his preferred way of speaking autonomy in German as Selbständigkeit.

Meanwhile Moore and Fine's (1990) definition of self is partit noteworthy:

The total person of an individual in reality, including one's line psychic organization; one's "own person" as contrasted with persons" or objects outside one's self. Self is a commonsense terr for the everyday concept; its usage in that sense embraces and or more technical aspects included in the terms self-concept, self-self-schemata, and identity.

The term self has been used in various ways in psychoanalysis. often used ego to mean self, particularly before the structural esis. In such concepts as an instinct turned against the self, selfwas the opposite of object. Hartmann clarified the proble separating ego as a group of functions from self. Narcissism the to be regarded as the libidinal cathexis of the self rather than Jacobson used self to refer to the whole person, while concern self-representations as slowly built up intrapsychic structures clarified three usages of self: the self as agent, the self as place self as object. Kohut has defined self as an independent initiative. Others (Meissner, Lichtenberg, Stern) have u way to refer to experience, either as a sense of development of self in a world of subjectivity and interest Whether regarded as a psychic structure or a subjective reference, self is a term more closely related to experience and superego [p. 174].

Moore and Fine (1990) give superego, of course, its entry:

One of three hypothetical systems of the tripartite (structure the superego sets up and maintains an intricate system values, prohibitions and commands (the conscience); the evaluates the self, compares it with the ideal and either reproaches, and punishes, leading to a variety of paint praises and rewards, thereby raising self esteem. Freud the term *Uber-Ich* (superego) in 1923, used it synonymously term *Ich-Ideal* (ego ideal), and described it as a differentiation within the ego. He viewed it as largely reflecting the clinical observation that in many patient and conscious were as much outside of awareness as the only what is lowest but also what is highest in the unconscious. ..."

After the oedipal phase the various superego function

become more impersonal and attain greater autonomy from external objects. While the superego becomes a relatively stable system, functioning with considerable consistency, defects or lacunae appear due to inconsistent functioning or defenses (such as denial, turning passive into active, and reexternalization) against important parts of the superego. Thus the superego remains "by no means a uniform, coherent, integrated, harmonious structure . . . but a mass of contradictions" (Arlow, 1982) [pp. 189–190].

Freud avoided an explicit definition of the self, and I argue that there is similar avoidance of developing an explicit definition of autonomy now. Freud did not spend time attempting to overtly theorize autonomy. However, because Freud's concern was the unconscious of the individual, he had to have been interested in conceptualizing the role of autonomy with regard to the individual, identity formation, and society. How then did he talk about autonomy, and where does it appear in his texts? One way to begin to investigate this would be to localize the occurrence of the word "autonomy" in the German edition of his works. However, there is no German counterpart to Guttmann's Concordance to the Standard Edition (1984). Therefore, it is necessary to work backward from Strachey's translation of Freud's writings, noting where Strachey used the word "autonomy." By then moving to the German passage, a comparative study can be undertaken. It will be incomplete as there exists no comprehensive inventory of Freud's use of German. Nonetheless, this inquiry can offer a preliminary consideration of how Freud thought about autonomy and how the inexplicit concept influenced later psychoanalytic theories, especially the shift from the triad to dyadic, or interpersonal, relations. (After id psychology, especially with the creation of the structural model of 1923 and its three agencies-id, ego, and superego-Freud and his follower clinicians began to move beyond the oedipal triad to scrutinize the first relationship between mother and

This inquiry about autonomy should be understood as a piece of that puzzle of the self in psychoanalytic theory, very much informed by the structural model but at the same time having implications for interrelational studies. For those who believe that Freud was not interested in an idea of autonomy, it is worthwhile to recall the direction psychoanalysis took after 1923. Ego psychology came into being as well is the field of object relations and Lacanian psychoanalysis. And though ome argue that if Freud had lived long enough, he would have moved oward a more interpersonal view of the world, I claim that Freud's lotion of autonomy precisely indicates that he deliberately chose not to

define the intrapsychic as narrowly as many clinicians asserted after his death.

If there is one author besides Freud to whom psychoanalysts point as having developed a "scientific" notion of autonomy, it is Heinz Hartmann, whose essay Ich-Psychologie und Anpassungsproblem (1939) quickly ushered in the new field of inquiry called ego psychology. Ego psychology was to be understood in contradistinction to id psychology. Hartmann sought to biologize psychoanalysis even more than Freud did by asserting that the principle, teleological task of an individual's psyche is to adapt to the environment; this was more than mere self-preservation as a drive. Hartmann created a new vocabulary for psychoanalysis, especially when he coined the term autonomes Ich (p. 133), which passed into English as "autonomous ego." Freud never used such a phrase as autonomes Ich; it does not appear in any of his writings. Autonomes Ich was used by Hartmann in 1938 when he delivered his paper in Budapest. Ironically, his preoccupation with a concept like adaptation served him well, on the eve of his own forced emigration under the impact of Nazism. Hence his own personal history, which was grounded in the ability to adapt, can be read in his scientific theory.

In contrast to Hartmann's ego autonomy, the closest Freud ever came to positing an autonomous ego would be his concept of a "coherent ego" (1922, p. 131). In "Group Psychology" the kohärentes Ich (1921b, p. 121) is cited as having as its antecedent the "Project for a Scientific Psychology" (Freud, 1895, pp. 322-324). Yet in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle," the coherent ego (Freud, 1920a) has been translated from the German das zusammenhängende Ich (Freud, 1920b, p. 229). But even Freud's "coherent ego" has little in common with Hartmann's "autonomous ego" because Freud's term stresses continuity and interdependency in the ego, not absolute, discrete, separateness.

To extend the contrast, Hartmann asserted that the autonomous ego is an inborn, biologically oriented mental apparatus that develops independently of the id. The autonomous ego has its own separate developmental line. It is related to the id and interacts with it but is not its direct descendant. In any function it is possible to distinguish the contributions of the autonomous ego from those of the defensive ego. Fine (1979) has called Hartmann "the greatest theoretician of the era following World War II" (p. 336). Along with Hartmann, Rudolph Loewenstein and Ernst Kris (1952) constituted the first wave of ego psychologists. They were followed by their students David Rapaport (1951, 1958), Robert R. Holt, and Karl Menninger (Fine, 1979, p. 319). Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation (Hartmann, 1958) became the centerpiece of their theory.

For Hartmann, the adaptive mastery of reality was among a whole constellation of notions such as the conflict-free sphere; the reality principle; and the ego functions of perception, cognition, motility, and memory. It is a very optimistic theory of the individual, one that was not accepted by all psychoanalysts, especially in France. Nonetheless, Hartmann's ego psychology adapted readily to American soil, where the national mentality embraced adaptation and survival of the fittest through concepts such as manifest destiny. Ego psychology came to dominate American psychoanalytic thinking after the war instead of other alternatives such as the cultural revisionist neo-Freudian writings of Henry Stack Sullivan, Karen Horney, and Erich Fromm or even Lacanian psychoanalysis of France. Hartmann envisioned ego psychology as the royal road leading psychoanalysis into academic psychology in order to legitimate its place in the American institutions of science and learning. It was held that the concept of the autonomous ego allowed researchers to identify an object of inquiry that could guarantee reliability and predictability for empirical studies at the university. This explains in part why Freud's concept of autonomy has been overlooked until now.

As we shall see, the very term "autonomy" is powerful because of its direct links to law, power, and politics. Indeed, Hartmann's term precipitated a tremendous upheaval within the international institution of psychoanalysis. Part of this was due to the semantic chord it unwittingly struck without psychoanalysts consciously recognizing what was at stake. The breakup of homogenous Freudian psychoanalysis was also happening; a hitherto unknown diversity of opinions beset psychoanalysts in America, England, and France. Such diversity led to inevitable infighting, and a direct attack was launched by the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan precisely in response to Hartmann's autonomous ego. Much ink has been spilt over the exchange. At the center of this debate is—autonomy. Turkle (1982) has adeptly critiqued Lacan's vehement dislike for the autonomous ego, the Moi indépendant, because it supposedly engenders the fantasy of an objective, knowable reality. Lacan's complaint is philosophical, according to Turkle:

In his essay on "The Mirror Stage," Lacan gives his own description of the ego, built out of the misidentifications, confusions, and alienations of a presymbolic stage of development. This image of the ego has nothing in common with the sturdy, helpful being described by the ego psychologists. While the American school of ego psychology was calling for "therapeutic alliances" with the ego, Lacan insisted that the ego, trapped in the presymbolic mode of alienating identifications, is the carrier of neurosis. For an analyst, allying with the ego is consorting with the enemy [p. 224].

Interestingly, Lacan translated "autonomous ego" as Moi indépendant, in contrast to other French analysts who were in Hartmann's camp. These French ego psychologists, such as Sasha Nacht, retained the term "autonomy" as in Moi autonome (Nacht, 1967), whereby the Moi autonome could remain explicitly tied to the Western philosophical tradition of law, nómos. Even Turkle does not acknowledge the full implications of this translation choice—conscious or unconscious.

Yet "ego autonomy" is not Freud's autonomy. Freud does not resort to drawing upon the legalistic dimension of autonomy, save under very specific situations. Freud neither speaks of an autonomous self nor writes about the autonomy of the individual; instead he describes a self-sufficiency, or an independent self, that recognizes the role of others without absolute separation of the self from others. It is wholly unlike the preoccupation that characterizes the Hartmann-Lacan debate.

The only way to render as completely as possible how Freud construed autonomy is to compare his German to Strachey's English. Even though Bettelheim (1983) and others have given Strachey poor marks for the English translation of the Standard Edition, such criticism fails to allow for a series of more interesting questions with speculative answers, such as how and why a particular translation was arrived at and, fundamentally, what translation as an interpretative act tells us about the original. Like the task of the analyst who asks why does this particular symptom occur now and what is its possible function, in order to hypothesize its meaning, a similar question can be asked about translation and word usage: Why now? Why the occurrence of this particular term? The translator's task is similar to that of the analyst who engages in reconstructions, which are meaning-making endeavors. Through the comparison of the source to its translation, slips in meaning can be discerned that lay bare the translator's cognitive underpinnings. Strachey's challenge as translator was really the impossible task of recreating, simulating, and converting the very identity of Freud's German text into a viable equivalent in English. Ironically, while translating attempts to create an equivalent, it also threatens the unique identity of the original. Furthermore, Strachey had the peculiar task of inventing the norm of a yet-to-be standard edition.

In the case of "autonomy," Strachey did not choose to use the term with great frequency. Its low occurrence has added to the misperception that Freud did not have a theory of autonomy. Strachey deployed the term "autonomy" or its variant a total of eight times. This paper examines those instances that are most relevant to the topic. The infrequency of the term "autonomy" in the English translation is deceptive, because Freud was preoccupied with formulating his innovative concept of the self or the

individual as relatively autonomous never splitting the intrapsychic off from social reality. He did this through the creation of the agency superego.

Recall Kirschner's remarks that Freud ingeniously relied on the ambiguity of terminology to facilitate a broad usage for the nascent concept of a psychologically motivated self. In light of this strategy, Freud's idea of autonomy should be understood as broad and comprehensive, not limited to literal translations. Autonomy is fundamental to an individual's existence and instrumental to the processes of identity formation and differentiation. As the dialectics of the clinical transference remind us, psychoanalysis does not take place in a vacuum (Kobrin, 1987). The displacement and actualization of unconscious desire and rage onto the analyst could not be initiated without a theoretical idea of autonomy. Autonomy remains a key factor in identity formation. Autonomy is always strived for, but relatively rarely achieved outright. The dialectics of the transference signal the inevitability of contaminated identities; that is, there is no pure paternal transference, no pure maternal transference, but rather a mixing of mental representations through the complicated process of identification as it is taken up internally through the creation of intrapsychic reality. Although autonomy is central to the self, the term need not be explicitly named in order to exist. Freud inexplicitly defined autonomy in his own way and on his own terms through a series of essays treating topics both scientific and cultural.

The Superego as Progenitor of Freudian Autonomy

Medicine as taught and practiced in turn-of-the-century Vienna was heavily influenced by the French scientific model. Autobiographically, Freud wrote about his dream to study in France and his travels to Paris to fulfill this dream under the tutelage of Charcot. What he failed to note (because he himself was not completely consciously aware), is that he had inherited a compartmentalized way of thinking from 19th-century French science. The burdens of this compartmentalized, scientific, 19th-century inheritance propelled him to shift from the topographical nodel of 1900 to the structural model, or seamless apparatus, of 1923. While Sulloway (1979) continues to argue (see Raymond, 1991) that freud uncritically accepted such an erroneous scientific inheritance, I claim that the creation of the superego demonstrates precisely the apposite—namely that Freud strived to free himself from the constraints of such theories. French scientific thought was dependent on an intense

demarcation of pathology maintained by strict binary oppositions such as functional versus dysfunctional and normal versus pathological. It was only when Freud made a break with this past that he was free to create the structural model of the mind in "The Ego and the Id" (1923b). The essence of its seamlessness is that the id, ego, and superego are loosely compartmentalized agencies.

Its seamlessness is predominantly negotiated by the ego in conjunction with its newly create superego. The superego is distinct (maybe even autonomous) from the id and ego, but most of all it is this agency which for the first time accounts for the important mechanism of exchange between psyche and society. Freud stressed that the superego was not just heir to the parents but was specifically heir to their superegos, which were taken up through the processes of identification with the resolution of the oedipal conflict under the threat of castration. The ego's tasks are quite different from those of the superego in that the ego must try to keep the id's urges under wraps while facing external reality as the horserider on horseback riding down the road of reality. The degree of autonomy and independence achieved by the individual is directly affected by the way in which the superego functions. The superego is the progenitor of autonomy for the Freudian self because it is where human nature meets morality. Autonomy goes hand in hand with processes and degrees of * identification; the superego bridges the intrapsychic and the social through the use of language. Children inherit the superegos of their parents, thereby creating an intergenerational mechanism for the transmission of language, culture, tradition, values, and even fantasies.

Yet philosophers such as those cited by Young (1980), who have considered Freud's work in relation to autonomy, have on the whole tended to select out one predominant contribution within a psychologically motivated sphere. For them neurotic behavior, in part, arises out of incomplete mastery of the psychosexual stages of the oral, anal, genital, and phallic, which are conceived of as a "natural order of developmental problems the adequate resolution of which is the primary sign of a person's maturity" (p. 35). For example, competency at the anal stage is "getting that area of one's life, the importance of which one's parents emphatically bring home to one, under one's own control" (Young, 1980, pp. 37-38). And Freud (1908a) even wrote about "the picture of his baby sitting on the pot and deliberating whether he would put up with a restriction of this kind upon his personal freedom" (p. 175) with the italicized phrase originally articulated in the German as "seiner persönlichen Willensfreiheit" (Freud, 1908b, p. 27).

It is to be noted that Freud did not use the word autonomy in describing the two-year-old; instead he described the toddler's personal

freedom of will. Locating a sense of independence, mastery, and competence at the anal stage of development was very important for Freud just as the subject of toilet training was a big topic for Viennese parents at the turn of the century. But to reduce Freud's sense of what constitutes autonomy to the control of the anal sphincter would be to underestimate the power of his theory of the unconscious. Autonomy is much more varied, nuanced, and complicated than a matter of bowel control.

Even though toilet training can lead to a power struggle, it merely reminds us that all relationships are power relationships and that the individual who has the power is the individual who gets to judge what constitutes competent behavior. And in the most authoritarian case, the judge dictates what constitutes acceptable social practice. To lack autonomy is to be without agency (Wertheim. 1975).

Emblematic of this Freudian ambiguity is that the term "self," das Selbst, occurs very rarely in Freud's work (McIntosh, 1986); the relative autonomy in its meaning remains

Strachey's Translation: From the Body Compartmentalized to Superego, Relatively Autonomized

AUTONOMY AND THE EROTOGENIC ZONES

The earliest use of the term "autonomy" occurs in " 'Civilized' Sexual Morality" (Freud, 1908a), which is considered to be a forerunner of "Civilization and Its Discontents" (1930a). The English editor of the latter declared it "the earliest of Freud's full-length discussions of the antagonism between civilization and instinctual life" (p. 180). With the suppression of instincts, the slow process of individuation and autonomy begins through repression. The subject experiencing repression is partially alienated from himself or herself as expressed through the new symptomatology, a manifestation of the disavowed part(s) of the self. In classical Freudian terms, (successful) repression of component instincts leads to structural advance-and hence, autonomy-through differentiation. Autoeroticism anticipates not only a shift from self to other but also a shift from parts to an integrated whole. Furthermore, Freud circumscribes autonomy in concrete terms for the human body through the discussion of the erotogenic zones, "those parts of the body (including the nose) that are capable of contributing to sexual excitement in its wider, nongenital sense" (Sulloway, 1983, p. 173). Here is the textual evidence of the aforementioned French influence of compartmentalized

thinking that Freud later abandons in order to conceptualize the superego. Freud writes and Strachey translates:

The development of the sexual instinct then proceeds from autoerotism to object-love and from the autonomy of the erotogenic zones to their subordination under the primacy of the genitals, which are put at the service of reproduction. During this development a part of the sexual excitation which is provided by the subject's own body is inhibited as being unserviceable for the reproductive function and in favourable cases is brought to sublimation. The forces that can be employed for cultural activities are thus to a great extent obtained through the suppression of what are known as the perverse elements of sexual excitation [Freud, 1908, pp. 188–189; italics added].

Die Entwicklung des Sexualtriebes geht dann vom Autoerotismus zur Objektliebe und von der Autonomie der erogennen Zonen zur Unterordnung derselben unter das Primat der in den Dienst der Fortpflanzung gestellten Genitalien [1908b, p. 19; italics added].

This passage is very important, because Freud links the term Autonomie to the body as zoned or compartmentalized. Kern (1975) explains the connection between Charcot and Freud:

In the 1880s psychiatrists elaborated on Charcot's charts of the hysterogenic zones and mapped out a number of erotogenic zones of the body in addition to the genitals. They concluded that almost any surface of the body could generate sexual excitation. The publication of Krafft-Ebings *Psychopathia Sexualis* in 1886 marks the beginning of the contribution of formal scholarship to the modern sexual revolution. From that time researchers and popular writers compiled tomes of information from psychiatric, anthropological, and historical studies of sexuality [pp. 130-131].

That Viennese society finds itself saddled with this inhibiting civilized sexual morality is attributed to the limitations of the bourgeois institution of marriage. Inadequately released and repressed sexual desire—for example, current sexual practices such as onanism, in part due to the lack of adequate birth control—yields the dysfunctional state of neurosis. Autonomie is a hapax legomenon; the quoted instance is the only one in all of Freud's writings, and it is directly translated into its English equivalent, "autonomy." This unique occurrence appears to function as if it were a calque, affording Strachey the opportunity to simulate a one-to-one correspondence. The minimal difficulty in translation, however, observes the history of these two different words.

E. Bär (1986), a well-known medical semiotician, commented that words have etymological memories that, like the unconscious, are carried forward in our daily speech as a kind of undercurrent that molds and shapes our thinking. These significations are always functioning behind the scenes, and it is in this way that language controls and manipulates us much more than we would like to admit. We tend to want to believe that we as speakers can engineer a term, thereby guaranteeing a desired meaning. It is for this reason that the history of the term "autonomy" should not be overlooked. It warrants recalling that neither the German Autonomie nor the French autonomie is original to its respective language. Both of these and the English "autonomy" derive from the Greek. Kluge (1975) gives a brief etymology:

Autonomie f. (staatliche) 'Selbständigkeit', zu griech. Autós 'selbst', nómos 'Gesetz'. Die Fähigkeit, sich selbst Gesetze zu geben beanspruchen dann Wissenschaft, Kultur (die klassische Antike: vorher und sonst Mythos), in der Neuzeit Körperschaften u. dgl.; Goethe 1805: Schulz, Fremdwb. 65 (p. 42).

Autonomie finds its roots in nómos, or law. It is a known fact that ultimately all of language is correlated to the legal code, because only the adjudication of law provides the mechanism to make interpretation binding on a community. It is for this reason that "autonomy" is such a highly charged word, resonating on this special legal-semantic level in the history of the West. Shipley (1984) notes that nómos means to divide, take, or allot, as in ancient Mediterranean agrarian practices, customs, and laws concerning pasturing. The word "nomad" comes from nómos (p. 267). Autonomy retains this idea of compartmentalization or differentiation through division and allotment. Kluge gives Selbständigkeit as a synonym for Autonomie; the former is Freud's preferred term for autonomy as it means independent in colloquial usage. A German-speaking mother would never describe her child as autonomous but rather selbständig. In addition, Selbständigkeit emphasizes positioning rather than

The bodily zones express Freud's tendency to compartmentalize; even the topographic model retains this tendency because topos and "zone" designate compartments. Laplanche and Pontalis (1975) note that Freud was forced to distance his use of the term "topography" from its then-current anatomical connotations. In addition, "topography" had a distinct Kantian history falling between the ancient Greek usage in logic and rhetoric and the future signification of mental localities that would soon be put into circulation (p. 453). Instead of mapping the body, a shift

occurs and Freud begins to map the mind. Thus, Freud's choice of Autonomie instead of Selbständigkeit is the tip of an important theoretical iceberg.

THE SUPEREGO AS AUTONOMOUS

What lies below the tip of this iceberg is the description of the superego as autonomous. In "The New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis" (1933b) ("The Dissection of the Psychical Personality") Strachey's translating begins to help fill in its broader semantic field, which has already been anticipated by Kluge. For example:

Hardly have we familiarized ourselves with the idea of a super-ego like this which enjoys a certain degree of autonomy, follows its own intentions and is independent of the ego for its supply of energy, than a clinical picture forces itself on our notice which throws light on the severity of this agency and indeed its cruelty, and on its changing relations to the ego. I am thinking of the condition of melancholia, or, more precisely, of melancholic attacks, which you too will have heard plenty about, even if you are not psychiatrists. The most striking feature of this illness, of whose causation and mechanism we know much too little, is the way in which the super-ego—"conscience," you may call it—quietly treats the ego [p. 60; italics added].

Kaum daß wir uns mit der Idee eines solchen Über-Ichs befreundet haben, das eine gewisse Selbständigkeit genießt, seine eigenen Absichten verfolgt und in seinem Energiebesitz vom Ich unabhängig ist, drängt sich uns ein Krankheitsbild auf, das die Strenge, ja die Grausamkeit dieser Instanz und die Wandlungen in ihrer Beziehung zum Ich auffällig verdeutlicht [1933a, p. 499; italics added].

To the best of my knowledge and research, not one commentator has ever chosen to emphasize or highlight this autonomous nature of the superego that Freud stresses here, nor has Freudian autonomy been described as a relative—"a certain degree of"—matter. In conjunction with this point is the importance of the two terms Selbständigkeit and Unabhängigkeit. These are repeatedly twinned by Freud and are encountered often; hence, they must be central to the German way in which one speaks about autonomy in an everyday manner. Like Selbständigkeit, Unabhängigkeit expresses a sense of positioning. Finally, with regard to this particular passage, the superego passes judgment on fantasies and thoughts. Freud'ssuse of the legal register again has fit with autonomy. As

he describes it, the superego functions as if it were a colonizing agent who adjudicates and controls:

I might say that the special agency which I am beginning to distinguish in the ego is conscience. But it is more prudent to keep the agency as something *independent* and to suppose that conscience is one of its functions and that self-observation, which is an essential preliminary to the judging activity of conscience, is another of them. And since when we recognize that something has a separate existence we give it a name of its own, from this time forward I will describe this agency in the ego as the "superego" [1933, p. 60; italics added].

As remarkable a formulation concerning the interdependency of the agencies the above cited passage is, it is equally remarkable to point out Freud's comprehension of how language works. He was a semiotician at work, explaining the function of naming in tandem with creating this important new agency: "When we recognize that something has a separate existence we give it a name of its own." Through naming, difference is created; and so Freud designates the new agency, the superego. Yet why did Freud develop the structural model and its accompanying superego? Among the reasons given is that the first topography was too inflexible and could not explain aspects of dependency relationships because of its compartmentalization, especially for the Unconscious. For a dynamic understanding of how identifications took place and how such operations left behind permanent structures, Freud needed to design a mental apparatus with more flexibility to account adequately for such complicated interactions (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1975, p. 452). Freud needed a seamless apparatus that could better describe the self-sabotaging behavior of his patients as well as the phenomenon of the negative therapeutic reaction. Freud noted the interdependency among the agencies for intrapsychic reality, which paralleled his perception of the interdependency among human beings in their daily living. The struggle for the superego to enable an individual to be autonomous, or self-governing, was an ongoing experience. The Freudian self is not to be understood as isolated from others.

FREUDIAN EGO AUTONOMY?

Freud repeatedly asserts the interdependency of the agencies and often draws upon Selbständigkeit and Unabhängigkeit to describe this phenomenon. A good example of this is found in a discussion of the technique of psychoanalysis (Freud, 1940a). Moreover, Strachey translates this by using the term "autonomy": "According to our hypothesis it is the ego's

task to meet the demands raised by its three dependent relations—to reality, to the id and to the super-ego—and nevertheless at the same time to preserve its own organization and maintain its own autonomy" (Freud, 1940b, p. 172; italics added). The German reads: "Wir wissen schon manches zur Vorbereitung für diese Unternehmung. Nach unserer Voraussetzung hat das Ich die Aufgabe, Ansprüchen seiner drei Abhängigkeiten von der Realität, dem Es und dem Über-Ich zu genügen und dabei doch seine Organisation aufrechtzuhalten, seine Selbständigkeit zu behaupten" (Freud, 1940a, p. 411; italics added).

If the ego cannot preserve its organization, that is, maintain its autonomy, then selfhood is threatened. If one were to pinpoint an origin for Hartmann's ego autonomy, one would be tempted to cite this passage. However, Strachey's translation is deceiving because Freud does not resort to using any variant of Autonomie. This passage coincides more or less historically with Anna Freud's and Heinz Hartmann's growing interest in initiating formal studies of the ego, which suggests that the term das autonome Ich could have been in circulation and available but not chosen by Freud. Yet the very question of the nature of autonomy continues to pressure Freud; and in "Civilization and Its Discontents" (1930a) the ego is cautiously described as both autonomous and unitary. It is a remarkable if not an uncanny observation on Freud's part, simply expressed:

Normally, there is nothing of which we are more certain than the feeling of ourself, of our own ego. This ego appears to us as something autonomous and unitary, marked off distinctly from everything else. That such an appearance is deceptive, and that on the contrary the ego is continued inwards, without any sharp delimitation, into an unconscious mental entity which we designate as the id and for which it serves as a kind of facade—this was a discovery first made by psycho-analytic research, which should still have much more to tell us about the relation of the ego to the id. But towards the outside, at any rate, the ego seems to maintain clear and sharp lines of demarcation [p. 66; italics added].

The German phrase of interest here is "Dies Ich erscheint uns selbständig, einheitlich, gegen alles andere gut abgesetzt" (1930b, p. 198).

Freud stresses the potential deceptiveness of our own feelings—how they can be misleading especially with regard to the self and its object. Posed in terms of boundaries, selbständig is paired with einheitlich, underscoring the sense of being marked off and distinct. Freud cautions against assuming absolute autonomy for the ego: "Normally, there is nothing of which we are more certain than the feeling of ourself, of our

own ego." Once again Freud avoids using autonomy to drive home this point.

MOSES, FREUD'S AUTONOMOUS MAN

Our discussion of autonomy would not be complete if it did not touch upon the ego ideal, a facet of the superego. The ego ideal is bound up with narcissism, problems in idealization, and the shift from the topographic to the structural model. Therefore, it is not surprising that the theme of autonomy also relates to the ego ideal. The fourth occurrence of "autonomy" coincides with Freud's disclosure of his own fantasy about autonomy and idealizations. Who epitomizes this valuable trait? The answer brings the reader back to Freud's favorite, Moses. Indeed, it may be argued that psychoanalysts and scholars have long been fascinated by the figure of Moses in Freud's writings (see most recently, for example, Rice, 1990; Blum, 1991). Freud's particular use of Moses reveals a glimpse of his ego ideal as well as ours, which expresses an identification with an acknowledgment of the ambivalently revered and hated patriarch. From treating the personal Moses, Freud (1939b) moves to universalize the biblical giver of the Law:

Let us, therefore, take it for granted that a great man influences his fellow-men in two ways: by his personality and by the idea which he puts forward. That idea may stress some ancient wishful image of the masses, or it may point out a new wishful aim to them, or it may cast its spell over them in some other way. Occasionally-and this is undoubtedly the more primary case—the personality works by itself and the idea plays a quite trivial part. Not for a moment are we in the dark as to why a great man ever becomes important. We know that in the mass of mankind there is a powerful need for an authority who can be admired, before whom one bows down, by whom one is ruled and perhaps even ill-treated. We have learnt from the psychology of individual men what the origin is of this need of the masses. It is a longing for the father felt by everyone from his childhood onwards, for the same father whom the hero of the legend boasts he has overcome. And now it may begin to dawn on us that all the characteristics with which we equipped the great men for which we vainly searched lies in this conformity. The decisiveness of thought, the strength of will, the energy of action are part of the picture of a father-but above all the autonomy and independence of the great man, his divine unconcern which may grow into ruthlessness. One must admire him, one may trust him, but one cannot avoid being afraid of him too. We should have been led to realize this from the word itself: Who but the father can have been the "great man" in childhood?

There is no doubt that it was a mighty prototype of a father in the person of Moses, stooped to the poor Jewish bondsmen to them that they were his dear children [pp. 109, 11; italics add

Die Entschiendenheit der Gedanken, die Stärke des Wille Wucht der Taten gehören dem Vaterbilde zu, vor allem a Selbständigkeit und Unabhängigkeit des großen Mannes, seine gunbekümmerheit, die sich zur Rücksichtslosigkeit steigern die [1939a, p. 555; italics added].

The figure of Moses affords Freud the opportunity to person crystallize his representation of autonomy and its relationship to ity. Freud resorts to using this potent biblical character; it is well that the use of biblical typology runs the risk of producing mist precisely because biblical characters are so easily identifiable the overdetermined formulaic quality can skew the author's intention the law giver par excellence, who makes divine will manifest it discourse through the act of the giving of the law (Kobrin, 1934) fails to comprehend that he is playing with a loaded intention to stake a claim for authenticity and authority. Here, the between law and autonomy surfaces.

Discussion

Thus far, we have encountered four instances in which Street Freud's conceptualization of the self, the unconscious, and being commensurate with the English word autonomy. The body compartmentalized; (2) the superego; (3) the qui autonomy; and (4) Moses as the representation of autonomy difference in translation marks a growing awareness tempted to develop a functional notion of autonomy, threat everyday German denoting self-governing capacities and ception of the self as beings interdependent with others reality or fantasy is not to be isolated from the social reality the agency superego. The shift away from using a form supports my claim that Freud's earlier, inherited, Freud's framework impeded his move toward establishing a funcfor the mental apparatus and inhibited him from taking stance as opposed to the substantialism of compartments superego, Freud placed the individual psyche in contiguity and society, which in turn, allowed for the establishment

autonomy. Freud's creation of the agency of the superego compelled him to move into the realm of the social more than ever before. The special position of the superego in Freudian thought is evident when considering a passage from "The Economic Problem of Masochism" (Freud, 1924):

As I have said elsewhere, it is easily conceivable that, thanks to the defusion of instinct which occurs along with this introduction into the ego, the severity was increased. The super-ego—the conscience at work in the ego—may then become harsh, cruel, and inexorable against the ego which is in its charge. Kant's Categorical Imperative is thus the direct heir of the Oedipus complex [p. 167; italics added].

This is a startling assertion, because it clearly defines Freud's perception of what the task of the superego is. Kant's categorical imperative, the golden rule of "do unto others as you would do unto yourself," is embraced outright by Freud. The categorical imperative is the dictum of moral conduct, and it may be thought of as a command to act as if one's actions take on a kind of universality. Kant's autonomy is the supreme principle of morality grounded in the ability of the common person (more precisely, for Kant, the common man) to impose laws upon himself rather than resulting from a heteronomy. Accordingly, autonomy constitutes "true" freedom from external laws as well as from internal self-interest. This is to say that one should act as an end in and of itself, not as a means. This is Kant's fantasy taken up and recast as the superego.

By appropriating the famous categorical imperative, Freud could attribute to this new agency the potential for a special kind of sensitivity. And even though Kant escaped psychic determinism through the rigidity of his imperative, Freud remained a believer of instincts and psychiatric history that determine behavior but that are always explainable and comprehensible. The agency superego expresses the realization that identity and autonomy are interrelated, as well as relative, matters. Freud's is a theory of relativity conjoined with psychic determinism. Indeed, the superego as categorical imperative is Freud's way of realizing intrapsychically what Kant fantasied, namely that to "do unto others" recognizes that an individual is a closed organism with a unique reality, albeit subjective. Accessing this special, private reality requires imagining what it must be like for "others."

Similarly, the comments herein on autonomy in Freud's writing are based on only imagining or approximating what he might have meant and can be read as a part of the larger puzzle of the Freudian self.

Summary

In this paper, I have asserted that Freud conceptualized autonomy as relational and relative. In addition, autonomy is a key concept for an understanding of the history, theory, and philosophy of psychoanalysis. This is so because of the unique position given to the processes of identity formation in Freudian thought. Moreover, schisms have arisen within the institution of psychoanalysis in part due to a failure to understand the political implications of the term autonomy. The example given was Hartmann's notion of ego autonomy.

An investigation of Strachey's translation in juxtaposition to the German chosen by Freud was presented and examined in order to yield a possible understanding of the nature of autonomy. It was noted that the terms "autonomy" and "autonomous" are low-frequency words in the English translation. Freud favored the more colloquial German terms Selbständigkeit and Unabhängigkeit to describe how, and under what conditions and circumstances, a relative autonomy is achieved. Indeed, it is Freud's formulation of the agency superego that facilitates a relative autonomy. The superego is the psychoanalytic counterpart to Kant's categorical imperative.

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