Studies on Authority and the Family. Sociopsychological Dimensions

Erich Fromm
(1936a)
Translation from the German by Susan Kassouf

With the first publication of the English translation of the Sociopsychological Dimensions *in the* Studies on Authority and the Family *(edited by Max Horkheimer) from 1936, the question arose why Erich Fromm himself did not later publish this so important contribution about the authoritarian character in English. Although Fromm in* Escape from Freedom *(1941) described the authoritarian character in detail, he had already psychoanalytically analyzed the psychodynamics of the sadistic and masochistic aspects of authoritarian orientation in great detail in 1936, so without this early paper the reception of the authoritarian character in the English-speaking world is in a way incomplete. Hence we are glad to be able to publish a text with – in regard to the translation – best expertise in psychoanalytic terminology by Susan Kassouf.*

The answer to the question why Fromm himself did not bring the Sociopsychological Dimensions *into English for publication has undoubtedly to do with the fact that this contribution was still formulated entirely along the lines of Freud's drive theory. Fromm would have had to make hundreds of comments or rewrite the entire text. He first described his approach to the existential necessity of being related in 1947 in* Man for Himself *(and then even more extensively in* The Sane Society *in 1955). But Fromm's different approach also has an impact on the Freudian structural model of Ego – It – Superego, which for Fromm had lost its explanatory power or was plausible only within patriarchal and authoritarian conditions, but could be generalized as essential for human beings. It was therefore only consistent that Fromm in* Man for Himself

spoke of the humanistic conscience as an inner normative regulative and that he identified Freud's Superego with the authoritarian conscience.

In addition, it is noticeable that Section 4 of Sociopsychological Dimensions *already addresses the narcissistic gain of authoritarian psychodynamics, but not the symbiotic dependence of the ruling and the submissive, which is crucial for the understanding of the authoritarian character in* Escape from Freedom. *In the last part of this early work, Fromm addressed the distinction between rational and irrational authority, which was also important in his later writings. The fact that there must be a rationally justifiable authority did not yet say anything about an inner passion to exercise dominion over others or to want to be subservient.*

It is also important to note that in this article (in the second half of Section 3) Fromm already clearly opposed the thesis that a liberated sexuality automatically leads to more Ego strength. This criticism was probably directed against Wilhelm Reich at the time; it is also an early sign of Fromm's criticism of Herbert Marcuse's reception of Freud, which culminated in the mid-1950s. Finally, it became apparent (towards the end of Section 3) how intensively Fromm dealt with the effects of hypnosis on the Ego. He will write more about this in Escape from Freedom.

Despite the libido theoretical framework in which this paper was written, we nevertheless publish this seminal early contribution of Fromm's in an English translation, without having made any substantive changes to the text. Yet the readers of this article should be aware that the drive-theoretical framework of Fromm's interpretation was later no longer valid.

(Rainer Funk)

1. Introduction: Diverse Manifestations

For many people, their attitude toward authority is their most prominent character trait: some may actually only be happy when they can yield and submit to authority, the harsher and more ruthless the better, or others may behave rebelliously and defiantly just as soon as they are to follow any sort of commands, even if these commands might be most reasonable and appropriate. Other character traits, such as parsimony or punctuality, manifest in a relatively uniform fashion. But the picture emerging from only a few examples of different sorts of authority and responses to it is so diverse and confusing that we must

doubt whether or not we are even dealing with a case uniform enough to be made into the object of psychological inquiry.

In a certain type of peasant family structure, a situation of authority exists in the relation of the son to the father. The father is feared and obeyed without contradiction or hesitation; sometimes a feeling of respect, sometimes a feeling of hate or fear predominates and gives the relation its particular color. As long as the father is alive, his will is the only law, and any hope of autonomy and independence is linked, consciously or unconsciously, with the hope of the father's death. Such a hope, or even such a wish, is absent in a certain type of relation between soldier and officer. The subordinate only too gladly surrenders his own personality, becoming a tool of the leader whose will replaces his own.

The soldier admires the officer as an infinitely superior being and finds happiness in his leader's rare praise. Certainly, he fears him as well, but usually only when he believes that he has not done his duty to the full. Respect, admiration, even love plays a much bigger role than fear in his feelings. The relation to the leader that has developed in the youth movement, especially the German youth movement, is yet again completely different. Here, too, there is a fusion with the leader, a surrender of the individual's personality, will and resolve. But the fundamental core of the relationship is not the power of the leader and fear of the consequences of violating one's duty, but rather love for the leader and fear of losing that love.

Love is also the fundamental core of a relationship of authority found frequently in cases of subordination, such as a nurse toward a doctor; here, however, it is a matter of heterosexual, and not homosexual, love, with all sorts of other kinds of consequences that this difference implies; if there is always a trace of desire for sameness and identification in homosexual love, then this is absent in heterosexual love. The desire to be loved, be it more or less conscious, and the fear of loss – even if it is only the loss of the possibility of being loved – are the basis for admiration and obedience.

Fear and love play a less central role in the relation between the devout Catholic to his or her confessor. The confessor's superiority is primarily a moral one. He is the personified conscience of the believer. The confessor can make the believer feel guilty and grant inner peace through forgiveness. He can appear to the naïve believer as a higher being, and the distance between them can never be bridged. Not praise and love, but rather approval and forgiveness are the blessings that the believer can expect for the price of submission – submission not necessarily to a person but to the idea and institution that the person represents.

In all of these cases, while the basic relation to the authority figure is purely emotional with little rational thought, rational thought does play a decisive

role in a drastically different relationship of authority, namely that between a student and the professor whom he greatly admires and respects. What makes this person a master is not sexual or moral power, but rather intellectual values and capacities that the student hopes to achieve for himself one day. The basic feature of this relationship is not an unbridgeable distance but rather the wish to become like the authority figure.

In one such structure, the authority figure embodies the ideals of his devoted follower, yet in other very different, if in some respects related, formations the authority figure personifies egotistical interests. The successful boss is in this sense an authority figure for the ambitious employee. Following the boss's example, »believing« in him, provides external and internal stability as well as support for the employee's own ambitions; the boss's praise and recognition are gratifying not in and of themselves, but foremost because of the benefit they promise.

These examples offer little encouragement for our effort to define authority in a psychological sense. The differences in emotional structures appear greater than their similarities, and one doubts if they are sufficiently viable for a coherent treatment of the subject. Sometimes fear, sometimes admiration, sometimes love and sometimes egotism appears to be the decisive feature. First it is power and danger, then it is exemplary achievement which is the source of the authority dynamic; in one case, only feelings are involved, in another it is rational thought; sometimes the relation to authority is experienced as continuous heavy pressure, other times as gratifying enrichment; sometimes the dynamic seems to be a force of external circumstances and in this sense necessary, sometimes it appears to be an act of free will.

Rather than a positive definition, it seems perhaps easier to say first what we do not mean by authority. The response to authority is not simply coerced behavior. The prisoner of war or the political prisoner who submits to those in power without giving up his hostile and defiant stance, does not exemplify an attitude toward authority. When G. Simmel says (1908a, p. 136 ff.) that there must always be a measure of freedom in authority, he likely means that while submission may be coerced, we can only speak of authority when this coercion is not experienced internally solely as such, but rather when it is supplemented or intensified through an emotional connection. Expressed positively, every response to authority involves the emotional attachment of a subordinate to a superior person or entity.

The feeling toward authority always appears to have something of fear, awe, respect, admiration, love, as well as frequently hate, but in each case the quantitative role accorded to singular components of this emotional complex appears to vary widely. This difficulty becomes more complicated still by the

fact that the components can emerge sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, sometimes directly and sometimes as a reaction formation. In light of this, we would do well to dispense with a definition and make do with having outlined in rough form the attitude toward authority as an object of psychological inquiry.

The following study focuses on the psychological dynamic behind different attitudes toward authority. It attempts to analyze those instinctual inclinations and psychic mechanisms active in the development of diverse forms of »attitudes toward authority«. While this purely psychological approach sets the essay apart from the others collected in this volume [*Studies on Authority and the Family*], it nevertheless remains closely connected to them. To the degree that those operative impulses and drives, while based on certain given physiological and biological conditions, develop within an individual, or within groups, as an active or passive adaptation to social circumstances, even a purely psychological study can never lose sight of specific lived experience – lived experience that generates and continually reproduces those psychic tendencies under investigation. In light of the scope and complexity of the subject, this work limits itself to a selection and discussion of only a few of the problems emerging from the total structure and dynamic of attitudes toward authority. As strange as it may seem, given the great individual and sociopsychological significance of the subject, until now the attitude toward authority has rarely been the subject of psychological investigation. The only psychologist relevant in this regard is Freud, and not only because his psychological categories, as a consequence of their dynamic character, are the only usable ones, but also because he dealt directly with the problem of authority and offered important and fruitful perspectives.

2. Authority and the Super-Ego. The Role of the Family in Their Development

Freud discusses the problem of authority in the context of group psychology and the »super-ego«. His treatment of both shows the critical significance he attributes to a psychological understanding of authority. He locates group formation precisely in the relationship between a group and its leader. »A primary group of this kind,« writes S. Freud (1921c, p. 116) »is a number of individuals who have substituted one and the same object [that is, the leader] for their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in

their ego.«[1] Authority is no less significant for group formation, according to Freud, in the formation of the »super-ego«. Since we will continue to have to deal with the concepts of »super-ego,« »ego« and »id,« we should briefly outline what Freud meant by them. He presumes three agencies in the psychic apparatus: the »id,« the »ego« and the »super-ego.« These are not terms for static »parts« but rather vehicles for dynamic functions, not sharply separated, but merging into each other. The »id« is the original and undifferentiated form of the psychic apparatus. »At the very beginning, all the libido is accumulated in the id, while the ego is still in process of formation or is still feeble« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 46). The ego is »that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world« (ibid., p. 25). It represents »what may be called reason and common sense, in contrast to the id, which contains the passions« (ibid.). In summary, he says of the ego:

> »We have formed the idea that in each individual there is a coherent organization of mental processes; and we call this his ego. It is to this ego that consciousness is attached; the ego controls the approaches to motility—that is, to the discharge of excitations into the external world; it is the mental agency which supervises all its own constituent processes, and which goes to sleep at night, though even then it exercises the censorship on dreams. From this ego proceed the repressions, too, by means of which it is sought to exclude certain trends in the mind not merely from consciousness but also from other forms of effectiveness and activity.« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 17)

The *super-ego*, originally termed the ideal ego or ego ideal by Freud, is »phylogenetically the last and most delicate« (S. Freud, 1933a, p. 79) agency of the psychic apparatus. Freud describes its function as »self-observation, the moral conscience, the censorship of dreams, and the chief influence in repression.« (S. Freud, 1921c, SE 18, p. 110) In the *New Introductory Lectures*, he names self-observation, conscience and (maintaining) the ideal as the three functions of the super-ego (S. Freud, 1933a, p. 66). Freud answers in a contradictory way whether reality testing is also a function of the super-ego (see S. Freud,

1 Freud expands upon this idea with the supposition that a group spirit plays a fundamental role in group formation. He derives this group spirit, such as a feeling for social justice, from an original envy. »Social justice means that we deny ourselves many things so that others may have to do without them as well, or, what is the same thing, may not be able to ask for them.« (S. Freud, 1921c, p. 121.) It would take us too far astray, however, to explore here in more detail a pertinent analysis of what is essentially a social feeling among certain classes only.

1921c, p. 110, and S. Freud, 1923b, p. 28). He locates the formation of the super-ego in close connection with the father. The small boy already identifies with the father above all other object relations, and behind the ego ideal »lies hidden the individual's first and most important identification, his identification with the father in his own personal prehistory« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 31). This primary identification is strengthened by a secondary one which is a precipitate of the Oedipal phase. Pressured by fear of his father's jealousy, the young boy must give up his sexual feelings toward his mother and his hostile and jealous feelings toward his father; identifying with the father, and introjecting his commands and prohibitions, make this easier for him. An internal anxiety takes the place of the external one, which automatically protects him from experiencing the external fear. By this detour, the boy simultaneously reaches some of his forbidden aims in that he has now become like his father through his identification with him. This ambivalent state of affairs corresponds to the twofold nature of the super-ego:

> »You *ought to be* like this (like your father). […] You *may not be* like this (like your father) – that is, you may not do all that he does; some things are his prerogative.« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 34)

> »In the course of development the super-ego also takes on the influences of those who have stepped into the place of the parents – educators, teachers, people chosen as ideal models.« (S. Freud, 1933a, p. 64; see S. Freud, 1923b, p. 37)

The super-ego »becomes the vehicle of tradition« (S. Freud, 1933a, p. 67) and »external coercion gradually becomes internalized« (S. Freud, 1927c, p. 11). The relation of the super-ego to the id is a contradictory one. On the one hand, the super-ego is »a reaction-formation against the instinctual processes of the id« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 56), on the other hand, it draws its energies from the id (see S. Freud, 1926d, p. 116).

Certain contradictions as well as a lack of clarity are unmistakable in these Freudian concepts. The ambiguity that reality testing is sometimes ascribed to the ego and sometimes to the super-ego was already indicated above. It is also difficult to grasp why self-observation should be a function of the same agency that embodies a reaction formation against conscience and those ideals arising in response to the instinctual world. One has the impression that Freud proceeded formalistically here, in other words, that he saddled the super-ego with all those functions that he did not want to attribute for whatever reason to the ego or the id.

A category as important for the genesis of the super-ego as identification also suffers from this formalistic character. What lies hidden beneath Freud's description of identification are quite different psychological facts, and a less formalistic concept would have to distinguish at least three main types of identification: an enriching identification, that is, an identification in which I assimilate the other person into myself and strengthen my ego through this enrichment; an impoverishing identification in which I displace myself in another person and become a part of them; and finally a (conscious or unconscious) sense of identity that involves a sameness and interchangeability of myself with another. The basis for this feeling, however, may be less about »shared characteristics« and more about vital shared interests.

Despite the contradictions and ambiguities in the theory of the super-ego and identification, on this point Freud has conveyed a crucial insight into the problem of authority and, beyond that, of social dynamics. His theory offers an important contribution in answering the question of how it is possible that the ruling power in a society is actually as effective as history shows us. External force and power, which embody the controlling authorities in each society, play an indispensable part in the realization of group obedience and submission to authority. On the other hand, however, it is clear that this external compulsion does not only have a direct effect, but rather that when the masses submit to the demands and prohibitions of the authorities, they do so not only out of simple fear of physical violence and coercion. Certainly, however, even this situation can also arise temporarily and as an exception.

Submissiveness based only on fear of real coercion would require an apparatus the size of which would in the long run be too costly; the quality of the work done by those acting only out of external fear would be paralyzed in a way that is at the very least incompatible with production in modern society, and moreover, this submissiveness would also create an instability and unrest in social relations which would likewise be incompatible with the demands of production in the long run. It seems that when external force determines the obedience of the group, it must also change the quality of each individual psyche. The difficulty that hereby arises is partially resolved by the formation of the super-ego. The external force is transformed by the super-ego in such a way that it changes from an external into an internal force. As representatives of external force, the authorities become internalized, and the individual acts on their commands and prohibitions no longer solely out of fear of external punishment, but rather out of fear of the psychic entity erected within.

External social force confronts the growing child in the form of its parents, and in the immediate patriarchal family especially in the form of its father. In identifying with the father and internalizing his commands and prohibitions,

the super-ego as an entity is invested with the attributes of morality and power. Once this entity has been established, however, the process of identification is simultaneously reversed. The super-ego is repeatedly projected onto the ruling authority in society, in other words, the individual invests the actual authorities with the qualities of his own super-ego. Because of the super-ego's act of projection onto authority figures, the figures themselves largely evade rational critique. Credence is given to their morality, wisdom, and strength, to a great extent independently of reality. In the process, however, these authorities are in return now able to become re-internalized and support the super-ego.

This transfiguration of authority through the nature of super-ego projections sheds light on one difficulty. It is of course easy to understand why the small child, as a result of its lack of life experience and discernment, holds its parents up as ideals and as a consequence can assimilate them in the specific sense of super-ego formation. It would be much more difficult for the critical adult to have the same feeling of reverence for the ruling authorities in society unless these authorities, by virtue of the super-ego's projections, possessed in the adult's mind those exact same qualities that the parents once had for the uncritical child.

The relationship between the super-ego and authority is dialectic. The super-ego is an internalization of authority, authority becomes transfigured by the projection of the super-ego's qualities on to it, and in this transfigured form becomes internalized again. Authority and the super-ego are altogether inseparable from each other. The superego is the external force now internalized, and the external force is so powerful because it takes on the qualities of the super-ego. The super-ego, therefore, is in no way an agency that is formed in childhood and from then on is active in a person, regardless of what the society in which he lives looks like; in most cases, the super-ego would be much more likely to more or less disappear or completely change its character and substance, were not the controlling authorities in society always those that continued or – more correctly – renewed the process of super-ego formation begun in childhood.

While these authorities are invested with the moral qualities of the super-ego, this does not mean that the existence of the super-ego and its projection would be enough to activate these authorities unless they too were vehicles of physical force. Just as the child, through super-ego formation, internalizes the force emanating from the father, the perpetuation and renewal of the adult's superego is always based on the internalization of actual external force; even if the super-ego turns fear of an external danger into an internal fear, the dynamic, decisive factor in its formation and continuation still remains external force and fear of it. Without both of these, external fear could not be internalized and the physical force could not be transformed into a moral one.

This statement, however, requires qualification. The experiences that a person has in his early childhood and adolescence are of greater importance for the formation of character than the experiences of later years. While childhood experiences do not determine character in such a way that subsequent events leave it unchanged (this is to a large extent only the case with neurotics, who are characterized precisely by their more or less great lack of ability to adapt their psychic apparatus and by their fixation on their childhood situation), they nevertheless create dispositions that bring about a relative sluggish and inert psychical apparatus in the face of real change. Regarding our problem, this means that if childhood experiences have produced a strong super-ego, then this super-ego remains relatively resistant to life circumstances that would require a different sort of super-ego. The relatively determinative character of childhood experiences is the reason why certain psychic structures often retain their power beyond any social necessity. Such discrepancies between psychic structure and social reality, however, can only be temporary, and if the psychic structure is to remain standing in the long run, social changes must intervene that activate them anew. One could say that the psychic structure has the function of a flywheel, which maintains motion even after the motor stops, but still only for a limited period.

The necessary alliance between the super-ego and authority is based not only on the fact that the super-ego must continually be produced anew by real and powerful authorities, but also on the fact that the super-ego itself is not strong and stable enough to perform its prescribed tasks alone. Certainly there are personality types, ranging from the normal to the pathologically obsessive, whose super-ego is so strong that it would completely control their actions and impulses, were this super-ego not embodied by real people and powers. But only a Robinson Crusoe with an obsessive character would continue even on the island to obey his super-ego as he was wont to do before the shipwreck. For the average person, this interior agency is not so strong that fear of its disapproval alone would suffice. Fear of the power invested in real authorities, the hope for material advantage, the wish to be loved and praised by them, and the gratification that follows the realization of this wish (for example, through honors or promotion, etc.), moreover, the additional possibility of (even if unconscious and unrealized) sexual, especially homosexual, object relations to these authorities – all of these are factors whose strength is at least no less than the ego's fear of the super-ego. The relation between the super-ego and authority is indeed complex. At times, the super-ego is the internalized authority and the authority is the super-ego personified, at other times their interaction creates a voluntary obedience and submission which characterize social practice to an astounding extent.

Because the super-ego already emerges in the child's early years as an agency determined by fear of the father and the simultaneous wish to be loved by him, the family proves to be an important aid in the establishment of the adult's later capacity to believe in authority and submit to it. But, the creation of the super-ego is only one of the functions served by the family as the psychological agent of society, and the creation of the super-ego cannot be separated from the overall drive structure and character of a person as produced within the family. Freud showed how decisive the experiences of early childhood are for the development of the drive structure and individual character, and that the emotional ties to the parents, the kind of love felt for them, the fear of them and the hatred toward them, play the main role in the development of the child's psyche; here, with regard to the social functions mentioned above, Freud made a major contribution toward understanding the power of the family. He overlooked, however, that apart from the individual differences that exist in each family, families primarily represent certain social meanings and the family's most important social function lies in their transmission, and not in terms of the transmission of opinions and points of view, but rather in the production of the socially desired psychic structure. Freud's super-ego theory suffers from this flaw.

According to Freud, the super-ego represents an identification with the father »to whom were added, as time went on, those who trained and taught him and the innumerable and indefinable host of all the other people in his environment – his fellow-men – and public opinion« (S. Freud, 1914c, p. 96). For Freud, the origin of identification lies, apart from the so-called primary identifications of very earliest childhood, in the Oedipus complex. The little boy has sexual wishes in relation to his mother, sees himself confronted with the threatening superiority of the father, fears in particular the punishment of castration for his forbidden impulses, transforms his external fear of castration by the father into an internal one, and gratifies some of his original wishes by identification with the father. The super-ego, according to Freud, is the »heir of the Oedipus complex.«

This conception is problematic because it insufficiently appreciates the connection between the family structure and the structure of society as a whole. While Freud is correct in a certain external and temporal sense when he says that over time the representatives of society affiliate themselves with the figure of the father, this statement needs to include the opposite notion that the father aligns himself with the dominant authority in society. The authority that the father has in the family is not a coincidental one later »supplemented« by the social authorities, but rather the authority of the father himself is ultimately grounded in the authority structure of society as a

whole. True, the father is for the child (in terms of time) the first to transmit social authority, however, (in terms of meaning) he does not model authority but rather imitates it.

Sexual rivalry in the father-son relationship is always colored by the social situation. Although Freud considered the Oedipus complex to be a universally human and biologically essential phenomenon, and in this spirit also projected it back on to the pre-history of humanity, the social determination of the Oedipus complex is based foremost upon the fact that Freud's description only characterizes certain social structures. There are enough societies in which the father most certainly does not unite the functions of a sexual rival and an almighty authority. For example, in a number of primitive tribes both of these functions are divided between the mother's brother and the father.

However, this should in no way diminish the extraordinary importance of the Oedipus complex, the sexual desires of the child, and the resulting rivalry and animosity toward the father in the patriarchal family. Clinical experiences in psychoanalysis have shown the significance of the Oedipus complex well beyond the shadow of a doubt. In particular, they have shown how important the complex is as a source for the son's hostility and revolt against the father; the structure of the patriarchal family, which fosters the incestuous desires of the son, results in the son's conflict with the father, thereby producing a revolt against him and a tendency to break apart the family. But the extent of the son's hostility toward the father also depends upon the father's attitude toward the son. The father's attitude, in light of his own clear sexual superiority, is far less influenced by sexual rivalry than the child's, even If it is quite strong and under certain circumstances that cannot be enumerated here. This rivalry is conditioned much more from the first day of life onward and is determined by how the overall relationship between father and son develops in light of the individual and social constellation of the family.

To make this very clear, let us just compare a few simplified textbook cases of family situations within our society. Consider the contrast in father-son relationships between a type of small peasant family and the family of a wealthy city doctor. Because of his economic and social situation, for the peasant every family member is first and foremost a form of labor power which he utilizes to the full. Every newly arriving child is potential labor power whose utility only becomes evident when the child is old enough to work. Until then, the child is just another mouth to feed who is tolerated in light of his later utility. In addition, because of his class situation, the peasant has developed a character in which the predominant feature is the maximum utilization of all these people and goods at his disposal, and in which love, striving for the happiness of the beloved person for their own sake, is a barely developed trait.

From the outset, the father's relationship to the son is scarcely characterized by love, but rather essentially by hostility and by a tendency toward exploitation. But the same enmity will also develop in the son when he is older. Age and the father's death can free the son from being an object of exploitation, and afford him compensation for all of his sufferings when he himself becomes master. The relationship hints at mortal enemies; but this enmity is already foreshadowed by the father's attitude when a new son is born. This atmosphere fundamentally determines the reaction and the overall psychological development of the growing son. The situation was similar in the proletarian family in the first half of the 19th century. For such families, too, children were basically an object of economic utility, and no one resisted laws limiting child labor more than those parents who were economically exploiting their children. They truly were »the worst enemies of their children,« and from the start this hostility helped form the crucial emotional nuance in the father-son relationship.

In our second example, the situation is significantly different. The hidden and subtle sorts of exploitative tendencies also present here will not be discussed. But, the situation itself is fundamentally dissimilar. A minority of children does not have the function of increasing their father's income, and are not regarded as potential workers and as useless mouths to feed until they are able to work. They are brought into the world because the parents delight in having children. Many unfulfilled wishes and ideals that the parents had for themselves are placed onto their children, and their realization through the children, be it through identification or object love, is experienced as self-gratification. The atmosphere that welcomes a child into this family is not the impatient, antagonistic anticipation of its exploitation, but rather one of loving support and kindness. From the first days of life, this different air creates a different character and different relation to the father. Whatever rivalry may exist is colored and held differently. It is totally different in quantity and quality from the rivalry in the peasant and working-class family.

Finally, let us examine yet a third example: a petty bourgeois, urban family in which the father is something like a minor post office official. His income is sufficient for the needs that arise in his social situation. The family is not a collective enterprise, and the children are not yet tasked with contributing labor power or money to the household as quickly as possible. Thus, some of the conflict of interests based on the exploitative tendencies of the father, and the resulting animosity, is absent. On the other hand, the father's life has so little gratification and, especially as a consequence of his professional and social situation, is so devoid of any possibility in which he himself could exercise power and issue commands, that the child as well as the wife takes on the function for the father of replacing what life otherwise denies him. The child

should allow him indirectly, by way of identification, to reach those goals that life makes unreachable directly; the child allows him to secure prestige in relation to other members of his social group; the child allows him the possibility of gratifying his wishes to dominate and issue commands, and thus compensates the father for his social powerlessness. The father-son relationship in this case is a mixture of exploitative tendencies and supportive impulses, of kindness and hate, and this conflicted structure in turn creates specific emotional reactions in the growing child.

The super-ego owes its formation to a relationship with the father driven by fear and love. But, the character of this fear and love is – as we have just tried to show – primarily determined in turn by the entire socially conditioned relationship between father and son. The super-ego is thus, in its intensity and content, a reflection of and heir to a much broader emotional relationship than the Oedipus complex, although the latter is itself intertwined throughout. In an observation in his *New Introductory Lectures to Psycho-Analysis*, Freud gave more weight to the socially conditioned character of the father than in his earlier writings. He says that the child's ego and super-ego are

> »in fact constructed on the model not of its parents but of its parents' super-ego; the contents which fill it are the same and it becomes the vehicle of tradition and of all the time-resisting judgments of value which have propagated themselves in this manner from generation to generation.« (S. Freud, 1933a, p. 67)

He inserts a polemic here:

> »It seems likely that what are known as materialistic views of history sin in under-estimating this factor (super-ego formation; E.F.). They brush it aside with the remark that human ›ideologies‹ are nothing other than the product and superstructure of their contemporary economic conditions. This is true, but very probably not the whole truth. Mankind never lives entirely in the present. The past lives on in the ideologies of the super-ego and yields only slowly to the influences of the present and to new changes; and so long as it operates through the super-ego it plays a powerful part in human life, independently of economic conditions.« (Ibid.)

In so far as Freud points here to the discrepancy between the pace of economic development and the relative slowness of ideological development, he certainly does not find himself in opposition to Marx. When, however, he speaks about the super-ego playing a role »independent of economic conditions,« this

is the sort of simplification Freud almost always makes when he addresses social phenomena. This study should indeed show that a psychic agency like the super-ego and the ego, a mechanism like repression, impulses like sadomasochism, which so decisively influence peoples' feelings, thoughts and actions, are not some sort of »natural« conditions, but rather they themselves are each influenced by how people live, ultimately by modes of production and the resulting social structure. By proving that people are largely driven not by their rational, conscious intentions, but rather by their unconscious passions, and by demonstrating the elasticity and adaptability of these very passions, Freud offered a key to understanding how the social and economic structure change the entire cultural system, namely through their transmission of man's drive structure which they have shaped, and thereby his ideas and desires. As a consequence of certain biases, however, Freud only made use of this key to understand individual differences among people within a society and not to understand the common characteristics of people in different societies or classes.

We have so far discussed Freudian theory in terms of the emergence of the super-ego in the family, and pointed to the socially determined relation of the son to his father as well as the super-ego formation that arises out of this relation. But the family itself is the result of a very particular social structure, which primarily determines its functions. This insight takes our investigation beyond the creation of the super-ego and the attitude toward authority in the family to the question of the general social conditions surrounding the need for the super-ego and authority. This section of our study requires that we first attend to the structure and dynamic of the psychic apparatus in more detail, and specifically examine the relation between the ego and super-ego and their role in defending against the drives. [The following text until the end of this section is in its original form a comment on the last sentence.]

Throughout Freud's writings we find a curious contradiction in assessing the strength of the ego and the super-ego in relation to one another. At times it appears as if the ego plays a downright pitiful role or carries out the orders given by the id or super-ego, at other times it appears as if the ego shows enormous power in its capacity to repress. One moment, Freud calls the ego a »poor creature« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 56), the next he speaks of the »might of the ego« (S. Freud, 1926d, p. 95). In the analytic literature, the view that emphasizes the impotence and weakness of the ego has found more resonance than its opposite. Freud asserts this directly and says:

> »Many writers have laid much stress on the weakness of the ego in relation to the id and of our rational elements in the face of the daemonic

> forces within us; and they display a strong tendency to make what I have said into a corner-stone of a psycho-analytic *Weltanschauung*. Yet surely the psychoanalyst, with his knowledge of the way in which repression works, should, of all people, be restrained from adopting such an extreme and one-sided view.« (S. Freud, 1926d, p. 95)

The vague formulation («should […] be restrained«) at a moment where he argues explicitly against an extreme view of the weakness of the ego is characteristic of Freud's own ambivalence. We find the same contradiction in his comments about the psychic development of humanity. On the one hand, he sees the development of the psychic apparatus in the course of human history as characterized by continual growth of the superego.

»It is in keeping with the course of human development that external coercion gradually becomes internalized; for a special mental agency, man's super-ego, takes it over and includes it among its commandments. Every child presents this process of transformation to us; only by that means does it become a moral and social being. Such a strengthening of the super-ego is a most precious cultural asset in the psychological field.« (S. Freud, 1927c, p. 11.)

Elsewhere he describes drive repression as the phenomenon »upon which is based all that is most precious in human civilization« (S. Freud, 1920g, p. 42). On the other hand, Freud speaks of psychoanalysis as »an instrument to enable the ego to achieve a progressive conquest of the id« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 56), and emphasizes the same idea in the *New Introductory Lectures*:

> »Its (psychoanalysis'; E.F.) intention is, indeed, to strengthen the ego, to make it more independent of the super-ego, to widen its fields of perception and enlarge its organization, so that it can appropriate fresh portions of the id. Where id was, there ego shall be. It is a work of culture – not unlike the draining of the Zuider Zee.« (S. Freud, 1933a, p. 80.)

Freud does not resolve the contradictions in the relationship between the ego and super-ego. They could hardly be resolved since the contradiction characterizes a more general uncertainty running throughout his entire work, namely the contradiction in judging the developmental possibilities of human society at all. Freud wavers here between a position like the one held by the progressive bourgeoisie of the 18th and 19th centuries, and a misanthropic pessimism in sharp contrast to this position. The progressive position corresponds to the view that the human being, or specifically his psychic apparatus, changes over the course of history, in that the ego increasingly learns to master the external world and its internal world of drives. The opposite view corresponds to

the idea that the ego is to be thought of as a weak, eternally »poor creature,« whose only choice is to be controlled by impulses stemming from the id or from the super-ego, and which can maintain the appearance of sovereignty only with effort.

The polarity between these two basic positions becomes most clear in *The Future of an Illusion* (S. Freud, 1927c) and *Civilization and its Discontents* (S. Freud, 1930a), which appeared in rapid succession. In the first, the emphasis is on the positive possibilities of development for human society, on its continually growing control of nature, and its liberation from external and internal pressure. In the second, the emphasis is on man's inherent wickedness in light of which all attempts to achieve a society based on human happiness must inevitably fail. The same contradiction can be found in the recently published twelfth volume of Freud's writings. On the one hand, he notes the »work of civilization« in the passage mentioned above, which consists of the growing strengthening of the ego. On the other – in a commemorative article for Josef Popper-Lynkeus – is his idea of the modern state as that in which »a mob, eager for enjoyment and destruction, has to be held down forcibly by a prudent superior class« (S. Freud, 1932c, p. 221).

3. Authority and Repression

The individual is interwoven with the natural as well as with the social environments. They are simultaneously objects of as well as barriers to the satisfaction of his drives. His needs force him to change the environment in line with the satisfaction of his drives. On the other hand, the environment forces the individual to adapt his impulses and needs within what are narrow bio-physiological boundaries. The self-preservative drives prove to be less elastic in this process, while the sexual drives, as a result of their capacity to be displaced, transformed and repressed, have an extraordinarily high degree of adaptability. In the course of history, as man transforms his natural as well as social environment, he changes his psychic apparatus as well. This also means a transformation of the strength and substance of his libidinal needs, as well as a transformation of his ego and super-ego. Throughout history (if we disregard primitive societies), needs have always been greater than the possibility of their satisfaction. In this fact lies, on the one hand, a precondition for the intensity of impulses that change the environment, and which go beyond the niveau that society has already reached; on the other hand, we also find the need to repress impulses which cannot be satisfied because of social limitations. The tension between needs and the social means available to satisfy them becomes

amplified further by the ruling class's greater degree of satisfaction and the lesser degree of satisfaction among those ruled.

The psychic agency that needs to master the inner as well as outer world is the ego. In mastering the outer and inner worlds, in other words, those drives stemming from the id, the activity of the ego proceeds in two directions. The more encompassing and powerful the instruments of production are, the more man's control over nature grows and the less people are slaves of nature. But, this growing domination of nature never leads to complete independence of or freedom from it.

Control in the sense of submission to as well as development of the drives, is a process that corresponds closely to control of the external world. The human ego develops only gradually and to the extent that man's active, calculating control over natural and social forces grows. As long as the ego is still relatively weak, it is not yet up to the task of suppressing and defending against drives that are incompatible with social requirements. This is first accomplished through the emergence and development of the super-ego, and through a particular psychic relationship to authority. The decisive factor in the relationship of the ego to the super-ego, as well as the individual to authority, is their emotional character. Man wants to feel loved by his super-ego as well as by authority, he fears their enmity and gratifies his self-love when he pleases his super-ego or the authorities with whom he identifies. With the help of these emotional forces, he succeeds in suppressing socially unacceptable, in particular dangerous, impulses and wishes. This defense against the drives, undertaken with the help of the super-ego and authority, is very radical. The wish to be defended against no longer reaches consciousness, but rather is cut off from consciousness as well as from any movement; it becomes *repressed*. The repressed drive is not eradicated. Although shut out from consciousness, it remains in the unconscious, and it requires a continual expenditure of psychic energy to prevent its surfacing into consciousness. The neuroses vividly document the sorts of active and often dangerous activity into which the individual's repressed drives can develop. The defense method of drive repression which relies on the help of the super-ego or authority can be compared with the attempt to extinguish one forest fire by lighting another. Those drives seeking gratification are countered by even stronger drives, namely the emotional relationships to external and internalized authority.

Here we must consider an obvious objection: do we really need the concept of the super-ego, or authority, to understand the defense against the drives? Isn't a more likely reason, which in all cases would suffice for such a defense, fear of the consequences of a forbidden impulse? Experience does show that in many cases fear alone is sufficient to defend against the drives. For exam-

ple, when a child knows that it will be beaten for sneaking sweets, then a fear of punishment may be completely sufficient to enable the suppression of the wish. The same is true of many adults who refrain from, say, robbery or fraud solely out of a fear of being punished for their actions. In all cases in which a fear of punishment stops drives from being acted upon, the conflict and the decision take place consciously. The impulse as such is conscious and not at all repressed, the fear is conscious, and depending on the strength of an impulse, the magnitude of the danger and the risk of being caught, it will be easier or harder for a person to fend it off.

Fear of the super-ego and authority, and the related force used in defense against an impulse, are completely different. Certainly, in addition to the desire to be loved by authority, or by one's own super-ego, fear here is also a decisive factor. But, it is of a different type than the »real« fear of which we have just spoken. It is not a clearly defined fear of a particular consequence implied by a forbidden action, but rather an irrational, indeterminate, emotional fear of a person in authority, or the internalized representation of same. On the one hand, one is afraid to lose this person's love, respect, and concern, and on the other hand, one is afraid provoking his wrath and the resulting indeterminate, but terrible consequences. Hence, the effects of this irrational and emotional fear of authority may be much greater than those of a clearly defined fear based in reality; with the latter, an impulse itself becomes conscious but, depending on circumstances, rejected out of fear. The specific fear of the super-ego or authority, however, has such a strong effect that the impulse itself does not even become conscious, but rather becomes repressed just before it comes to that.

Let us make this difference clear with a simple example. Consider two young girls, one of whom who was raised puritanically; her parents, with whom she has a loving, respectful relationship, have taught her that sexual relations, even sexual desires, outside of marriage are a horrifying and unforgiveable sin. She has made her parents and, along with them, their moral views, into an independent agency within her as her super-ego. Let us consider in parallel a modern city girl growing up without this sexually restrictive, moral perspective, who in no way regards sexual relations outside of marriage to be immoral or sinful. Now, suppose both girls meet a man who arouses their sexual desires. In the first case, it may happen that the young girl cannot even become conscious of her sexual desires as such, she immediately represses them, although if the repression is not entirely successful, they may perhaps manifest in a symptom like blushing. In the second case, the desires will be completely conscious, but it could happen that under certain circumstances a realization of this desire could be risky for the young girl, for example she might lose her position. If her fear of this is correspondingly great, she may

forego the realization of her desire. But, the wish as such will be completely conscious, and the defense against it is not a result of repression. It is correct to say that in both cases fear plays a major role in the defense against a drive, but its quality and thus its effect is very different in both cases. In the former case, fear is inextricably mixed with a fear of losing the love of the authorities, but it is also unreal in the sense that it bears no relation whatsoever to what would really happen to the girl. Rather it is just as indefinite and fantastically great as are the authority figures or the super-ego that represents them.

In contrast to a defense based on real fear, the immense social significance that the repression of taboo impulses, aided by emotional ties to authority or the super-ego, has is obvious. A defense based on real fear does not guarantee absolute effectiveness. The individual may imagine the danger to be less than it is, or may even be prepared to take on a risk of danger or even punishment for satisfying his desire. This is even more likely when the wish stems from passion, rather than a purely egotistical wish which is inhibited relatively easily because of anticipated disadvantages for the ego. Only a defense based on the repression of a drive is a guarantee of absolute and automatic effectiveness. Here, desire does not become conscious. For that reason, the rationality of the individual does not even matter. A defense against the drive that relies upon repression is marked by thoroughness and automation. The more socially important it is to refrain from certain actions, the less a society can rely upon a conscious and real fear of punishment. In addition, because the impulse as such is not at all conscious when the drive is repressed, its defense does not call forth resentment or hate for the prohibiting agency.

The advantage of this drive repression aided by authority and the super-ego faces serious disadvantages, although these relate to the personal happiness of the individual more than social stability. One disadvantage lies in the constant expenditure of energy required for repression. Freud once compared the repressed drive impulse to an unwanted guest who has been thrown out of the house but always wants to return, and only a servant who keeps continual watch at the door can prevent his re-entry. The energy needed to maintain the repression is all the greater the more extensive and intensive the repressions are.

If the constant use of energy needed for the process of repression presents a disadvantage for the id, the process is also not as beneficial for the ego as it might at first glance appear. To be sure, the super-ego and authority come to the ego's aid in order to enable its defense of repression in the face of dangerous impulses. But the repressed impulse is not eradicated. With the help of its allies, the ego keeps the impulse at bay, but thereby restricts its own power, in that the repressed impulse represents a force within the ego's domain. The

broader and more intense the repressions, the more the individual is protected against any dangerous eruption of the drives, but also the more his ego's strength is limited and the more rigid and unrealistic are his reactions. While repression is undertaken in the service of the ego, the ego is a slave to those factors causing the repression, just as the ego without repression would be a slave to the impulses emanating from the id. The ego pays, so to speak, for the alliance between authority and the superego by surrendering its independence and renouncing its sovereignty.

Before we pursue the development of the psychic apparatus further, let us point out briefly that the content of the impulses to be repressed depends upon social conditions. Such impulses, whose realization would be incompatible with the functioning of a particular society, become taboo and subject to repression. In addition, different conditions apply to each individual social group. There are certain impulses whose realization would endanger society as a whole and which therefore must be defended against by every member of society. Then again, there are other impulses whose satisfaction is permitted for one class but is frowned upon for another. This »double standard« can either be explicitly stated or, as in modern society, be present in such a way that a complicated apparatus is needed for its production and simultaneous concealment. The more that drive repressions are needed, the greater the role that authority and the super-ego play in support of repression.

But, the ego develops as well. As people transform nature over the course of history, the strength and capabilities of the ego grow. While the weak ego must develop under the protection, as it were, of the super-ego, when the ego grows stronger, it becomes increasingly capable of independently taking on the defensive task, without the aid of emotional connections to the super-ego and authority. A drive defense of »condemnation« (S. Freud, 1915d, p. 146) on the part of the ego supersedes defenses based on pure fear and repression. This defense is of a completely different character than repression. It does not shut out the condemned impulse from consciousness, it does not remove it from the ego's domain, and it does not weaken it by establishing a, so to speak, autonomous province in the psychic apparatus. The condemnation also lacks a rigidity of reaction typical of suppression. Whatever the nature of the energy with which the ego works (Freud assumes we are dealing with a desexualized drive energy), it is certain that rational thinking plays an important role in the ego's drive defense of condemnation, and likewise helps the ego with repression, as do the emotional connections to authority and the super-ego.

Thinking takes on a very different role in cases of repression versus condemnation. In repression, thinking essentially has the function of a »rationalization.« Just as in posthypnotic experiments when the subject gives rational

reasons for actions that the hypnotist previously commanded, without any idea of this command, the rationalization of the impulses »commanded« by the ego or super-ego, or authority, happens after the fact. The compulsion to rationalize shows us that reason is still strong, even where emotional forces, and not reason, dictate conditioned decisions so much so that they appear to us as well as others as if they were dictated by reason. Rationalization, however, does not have a dynamic quality; here, rational thinking does not have a creative and transformative function, but only conceals and legitimates. The situation is altogether different in the case of condemnation as a defense. Here, rational thinking leads to insight; it becomes a productive force and power that takes the place of those drives related to the super-ego and authority, not in the sense of an antagonistic relation between the ego and the id, as with repression, but rather in the sense of a resolution of this contradiction on a higher level.

As long as the ego is still weak and undeveloped, the child mainly requires, in addition to real fear, emotional help from the super-ego and authority to defend against the drives. To the extent that the ego becomes stronger, the importance of these agencies can be reduced. In *The Future of an Illusion* (S. Freud, 1927c), Freud drew attention to the parallels between the child's helplessness and the helplessness of the adult in the face of social forces. He overlooks, however, that we are faced here not with parallels but with a complicated interconnection. On the one hand, the situation of the child differs from that of the adult, who confronts a dangerous and inscrutable world. The adult must pay for any step that strays from the socially prescribed path with real injury to life and limb, while the protected child confronts a less dangerous situation and consequently need not develop such a strict super-ego or fear of authority to the same degree as an adult. On the other hand, however, both situations are not parallel in that the level of fear that an adult later experiences in society is largely dependent upon the amount of fear and intimidation experienced in childhood. Thus, it is not primarily the young child's biological helplessness that produces a strong need for a super-ego and strict authority; the needs that arise from biological helplessness can be met by a kindly disposed and unintimidating agency. It is much more the adult's social helplessness that makes its mark on the child's biological helplessness and allows the super-ego and authority to take on such meaning in the child's development.

If a key psychological function of authority lies in how it allows the super-ego to use repression as a defense against the drives, then the role that authority and the super-ego play in this regard depends upon two factors: first, the degree of socially necessary drive suppression, and second, the degree to which the ego can master the unwanted drive by condemnation, without the aid of repression.

The drives manifest as needs, and the needs differ according to the quality of the drives. While there exists a physical as well as psychic »level of subsistence,« those needs stemming from the sexual drives are actually so elastic that they can be in part quite adaptable to the given possibilities of satisfaction. Which needs, that is, which drives, develop with particular strength, and which must be suppressed, thus depends upon the quality and quantity of existing possibilities for satisfaction in a society, or more simply, upon a society's wealth. The necessity of drive suppression, of repression, which means the strength of the super-ego and authority, is all the greater the less a society or class can satisfy needs. The dependent class must suppress their drives to a greater degree than the ruling class.

Ego development depends upon life experience. The ego takes on a crucial role in mastering nature. At a primitive level of production, for example in a society with favorable climatic conditions in which one can make a living easily and without intensive work, the ego plays only a relatively minor part. Neither the mind nor the will need exert any special effort and, consequently, remain poorly developed. But, the more necessary active mastery and the transformation of natural and social conditions with the help of the mind become, the more the ego develops.

Freud's view about the development of the ego calls for a significant addition here. He sees the ego predominantly in its passive, perceptive function, whereby it brings the influence of the external world to bear on the id, and not the active, effective ways in which the ego changes the environment. The ego develops, however, not only through the effect of the external world acting on it, but also and primarily by acting on the external world and changing it. The ego represents not only »what may be called reason and common sense« (S. Freud, 1923b, p. 25), but it also represents the capacity for systematic actions that change the environment. This constitutes the key condition for the development and strength of the ego. Man's ego grows to the degree that he learns to master external nature systematically and rationally, as does his capacity to control his drives with the help of this strengthened ego, rather than by repression.

Following the different functions of each class in the social process, however, the development of the ego within society is uneven. During the prime of their rule, the governing class, which has the greatest overview, also is the most advanced in their ego development. But the more social antagonisms deepen, the less the ruling order can do rational and progressive justice to its task, the less the leaders' social role results in the strengthening of their ego, and the more the process of ego development is transferred to other social groups. The ego development of a particular class leading a society becomes partially objec-

tified in that society's culture, and the adoption of the most valuable elements from a previous cultural epoch promotes the ego development of the newly ruling class. In this regard, the ego proves to be a part of the psychic apparatus of man, who develops himself along with the development of his productive powers and communal life, and who in turn participates in communal life as a productive force.

In principle, the same holds true for the ego development of the child. The more education aims to strengthen rational thinking and the activity of the child within the scope of its developing powers, the more it contributes to the growth of the child's ego. Conversely, an education that misleads instead of enlightens the child, and which hinders the child in actively, systematically shaping its life within the scope of its possibilities, disrupts ego development. Even if there are multiple individual differences within a society and a class, a minimum and maximum of possible education in one way or another depends upon the structure of the entire society and upon the lived experience that awaits the child as an adult.

If active and rational living represent the positive condition for ego development, an absence of fear is the negative condition. As long as the ego is still weak, it requires a certain degree of freedom from fear in order to develop. The more the weak ego is threatened by fear, the more inhibited its development: alternately, the stronger the ego, the less effective the fear. The amount of fear to which an individual is subject is socially determined in two senses. The less power a society has in the face of a dangerous and threatening natural world, the greater the fear of it. In fortunate cases where, because of favorable conditions such as a sheltered and fertile climate, safety from hostile attacks, and so on, a primitive society can live without fear of the natural environment; the level of fear among community members may be relatively low despite a weak ego. Nature in and of itself only instills fear to the degree that it proves to be dangerous and hostile in daily living. But the division of society into classes creates additional, mutual fear among opposing groups.

The level of fear among the lower classes is naturally greater than among those who wield the instruments of social power. Depending on its quality, fear is in part based in reality, in part it is an irrational, emotional fear of the super-ego and authority. For the accomplishment of its psychic tasks, the weak ego requires authority; authority, for its part, weakens the ego through the fear that it instills within it. The inner fear that a dangerous situation evokes does not depend mechanically upon the magnitude of danger and the possibility of overcoming it. An attitude of passivity and helplessness leads an individual to feel fear even in the face of relatively little danger, while conversely the person with a strong ego reacts to great and possibly insurmountable danger

primarily with action and thought, but not with fear. *Si fractus illabatur orbis impavidum ferient ruinae. [If the world should break and fall on him, it would strike him fearless. (Horace)]*

The role that the satisfaction of genital impulses plays in ego development is much more complicated and opaque than the influence of lived experience and freedom from fear. Although there is much critical research still to be done, at present we can at least be certain that the full development of the ego depends upon a satisfaction of genital sexuality which is not constrained by intimidating prohibitions. This is not to say that, on the one hand, an unrestrained heterosexual gratification must necessarily create a strong ego and, on the other, that the ego could not develop at all under the pressure of sexual prohibitions. It also certainly does not mean that the strength of the ego is proportional to the degree of sexual gratification. A large number of primitive tribes provide a clear enough example that uninhibited sexuality in itself does not create a strong ego. Although a group's favorable living conditions may permit a sexually affirmative attitude without fear, this sexual affirmation in itself does not lead to a strong ego. A strong ego is linked much more with an active, systematic way of life which is especially lacking among primitive tribes. If, because of a change in economic conditions, more energy must be spent on the control of nature, the new way of life and the associated process of ego growth require constraints on sexuality, and this sexual suppression can then become a condition of ego development. The relationship between the ego and sexuality, however, flips again into its opposite when ego development has reached a certain level and the suppression of sexuality fetters ego development.

The role of fear as a factor inhibiting the ego relates to how a morality hostile to sexuality constrains the ego. Of course, every society must at least allow for the satisfaction of genital sexuality to the minimum necessary for its reproduction. But in a culture more or less hostile to genital sexuality, such as Christianity, sexual desires and their satisfaction are seen as something bad and sinful which only under certain conditions – such as procreation in a monogamous marriage – lose their sinful character. But because of man's physiological organization, in which sexuality represents a powerful source of stimulation beyond the socially sanctioned minimum, the consequence of its prohibition is the automatic production of fear and guilt. Fear constantly produced in this way has an inhibiting and crippling effect on the ego, and thereby reinforces the significance of the super-ego and authority for the individual. But, in a society with strong sexual prohibitions, authority is also strengthened because, especially in its religious form, it offers people the possibility to liberate themselves from a part of their guilt. This liberation, however, is necessarily linked with increased submission to and dependence on authority.

The restriction of genital sexuality leads to sexual energy being used in the direction of what Freud called the pregenital aims of the drive, be it in the sense of a fixation or in the sense of a regression. Here we must point to the extreme importance of Freud's discoveries for sociology and, for reasons of space, forego the question if a causal effect can in fact be ascribed to the sensations of the »erogenous« zones (oral and anal) which Freud accorded in the production of various levels in the libido's organization. Or, is it not much more the case that certain conditions produce a general tendency in the direction of (oral) incorporation or devouring, (anal) retention or (genital) productive creativity, and that the processes of the erogenous zones represent only one factor interwoven among many other conditions of life.

In any case, genital sexuality differs from pregenital strivings in that physiological discharge is possible through the sexual act, while a corresponding physiological possibility for the pregenital strivings is lacking. The level of tension in genital sexuality is thereby continually lowered, while the lack of a similar release of pregenital tension lends an energy to the oral and anal impulses that never abates. Thus, from a purely quantitative perspective, the pregenital impulses gain an intensity which is more difficult for the ego to defend against than the genital impulses. This greater difficulty is an inhibiting factor in ego development. The number of drive impulses to be defended against is too big for the still developing ego and they force it to seek help from the super-ego and authority, and thereby constrain itself. There is also a qualitative dimension. To a much higher degree than the genital impulses, pregenital impulses have the quality of embedding themselves in the ego as the drives behind personal characteristics, becoming part of the ego and thereby hindering the development of the ego in the sense of it mastering its drives (See E. Fromm, *Psychoanalytic Characterology and Its Relevance for Social Psychology*, 1932b).

The ego develops last and, as Freud said, it is the »most delicate« agency of the psychic apparatus. In keeping with its genesis, it is relatively unstable; under certain conditions it can regress again from developmental levels it has already reached to earlier ones. This process of »ego dismantling« is a regular and normal feature of sleep. Here, as dreams show very clearly, the ego is practically brought to a standstill, while the id and also the super-ego, in its role as censor, lose little of their usual strength. The same basic thing happens with all forms of intoxication, and every drunk offers an impressive example of how fast and far the ego is capable of being dismantled, even if only temporarily. The psychoses show even more drastically the dismantling of the ego, to the point of its complete destruction. The most fitting example for studying the dismantling of the ego is hypnosis. In the hypnotic situation,

it is possible to eliminate a subject's individual will and capacity for judgment completely, and have him perform other functions of will and judgement usually under the control of the hypnotized subject's ego. What is important is that the hypnotized subject feels weak, and that the hypnotist seems to him incomparably stronger and more powerful. The techniques used to do this vary. What always remains important is that the hypnotized subject is put into the role of the small child who passively subordinates himself to someone greater.

Sándor Ferenczi (1970, Vol. 1, pp. 12–47) pointed out that in hypnosis either fear of or love for the hypnotist is the critical emotional basis for the hypnotic effect, in particular that it is the paternal or maternal role that gives the hypnotist his power.

> »*Suggestion and hypnosis is the intentional creation of conditions under which the tendency to blind faith and uncritical obedience*, which is present in every person but usually repressed by the censor and is a remnant of the infantile, erotic love and fear of the parents, *can be unconsciously transferred to the person who is hypnotizing or suggesting*.« (Ibid., pp. 46 f.)

In pointing to love and fear as conditions for the establishment and effectiveness of the hypnotic situation, Ferenczi made an important observation. But, we cannot subscribe to his view that there exists a tendency to blind faith, which acts like a drive, and which under normal circumstances is simply repressed. What happens in hypnosis is not the eruption of a repressed tendency, but rather the dismantling of the ego. Nor is the child's attitude toward the parents »transferred« to the hypnotist in the sense that the latter assumes his hypnotic function *because* he becomes a father or mother figure to the subject. Instead, he plays the same role as the father or mother because he understands how to establish the same conditions that prevailed in childhood, namely positioning himself as so powerful and intimidating, or so loving and protective, that the subject renounces his own ego.

After all, the ego evolved to serve the individual as a weapon in the struggle for survival: if somebody proves to be so powerful and dangerous that struggle against him is hopeless and submission still the best defense, or if he proves to be so loving and protective that one's own actions seem unnecessary, in other words, if a situation arises in which the ego's exercise of its functions becomes impossible or superfluous, then the ego disappears, for as long as the functions tied to the ego's own emergence can or must no longer be exercised. The ego's dismantling in hypnosis goes so far that perceptive functioning can also be

completely disabled, so that, for example, the subject eats a raw potato with the feeling and consciousness that he was given a delicious pineapple. If the hypnotic situation is established effectively and the ego largely dismantled in all of its functions, then the content of what the subject should believe or feel hardly matters anymore.

The hypnotic situation is only an especially flagrant example of ego dismantlement. To a quantitatively lesser degree, we find the same mechanism in everyday relations between people when one person succeeds in appearing protective to another.[2] Even in this everyday situation, a weakening of the ego function often takes place, if not as extensively as in hypnosis. The relations of doctor to patient, officer to soldier, skillful seller to customer, celebrity to the average person of the masses, are familiar examples. The socially most important sort of hypnotic relationship between people is above all the relation to authority. Like the hypnotist, authority impresses those in its thrall so strongly and powerfully that, on the one hand, it is futile to use one's own ego against it, and on the other hand such actions are superfluous because authority takes on the role of protecting and preserving the individual, for whose realization the ego developed in the first place. A superior power's qualities of danger and care are therefore ones that every authority must possess to the degree it can render the ego unnecessary and replace it. To be sure, the less the force of authority is grounded in its real and social role by necessity, the more it must attempt to produce an image of its power for its subjects by all manner of techniques. Among these techniques, a special role is reserved for promises that create the idea that personal happiness and safety are actually better and more quickly realized by authority than one's own active efforts. Even though these promises may in fact be completely irrational under certain conditions, the subjective feeling of expediency and rationality in submitting to authority is indispensable.

If we understand the relation to authority as a hypnotic situation brought about by the dismantling of the ego, then the absurdity of what the subject believes and thinks offers no cause for surprise. It costs the hypnotist no more effort to let the subject believe the raw potato is a pineapple rather than a cooked potato, and the same holds for all sorts of ideologies that have been suggested to the masses throughout history. On the contrary, precisely the absurdity and irrationality of what is suggested proves the special power and

2 In the essay quoted, Ferenczi makes an interesting statement about this transition from hypnosis to everyday occurrences. He observes that members of the lower classes can be much more easily hypnotized by someone from a superior social class than by their social equal. He mentions a case in which an infantryman instantaneously fell asleep at the behest of his lieutenant without requiring any further orders (see S. Ferenczi, 1970, Vol. 1, p. 32).

ability of authority: a simple man could act rationally all on his own; promising what is irrational and magical is the prerogative of the powerful and only means a heightening of their prestige. *Credo quia absurdum est [I believe because it is absurd]* takes on its full meaning in the hypnotic situation.

We have thus far spoken essentially only of *one* function of authority, namely the suppression or repression of drives. But, in addition to this negative function, authority also always has a positive function, which incites a certain behavior in those submitting to it, serving for them as an example and ideal. The actions of people in society are not only limited to the suppression of particular impulses, but rather they are substantially determined by the realization of certain other goals demanded by society. The peculiar ambiguity of authority's function and substance, namely suppressing and stimulating the drives, also characterizes the super-ego as the internalized authority. The very fact that authority and the super-ego have two faces is an essential condition for their effectiveness. By containing the ideal and positive drives of the individual, the side that suppresses the drives is colored by the glow of this positive function. If authority and the super-ego were only feared, they would be feared differently than if they were also simultaneously loved as embodying ideals. Precisely their dual function creates that singular, irrational emotional relationship which gives a strength to the fear of authority needed for the process of repression. Transgressing the prohibitions of authority not only means risking punishment, but rather losing the love of that agency which embodies one's own ideals and the essence of all that one would like to become.

The substance of what authority and the super-ego incite depends upon social conditions in two ways. Certain ideals hold for all members of society, while certain others hold explicitly or simply in fact for particular groups. The substance of an ideal may tend more in the direction of individual happiness, that is, in the maximum development of one's capacities, or in the fulfillment of duty. In the latter case, drive suppression itself becomes an ideal. Not only the substance of authority and the super-ego, but also their specific mixture, has a social foundation. The prohibiting and stimulating functions of the super-ego and authority form a dialectic unity that does not permit the isolation of either side.

The formation of stimulating ideals as well as drive-constraining prohibitions is carried out in bourgeois society by the medium of the family. In this respect, too, the father represents social reality. Identification with the father lays the groundwork for super-ego formation and thereby also for the later emotional relationship to authority, which embodies the same ideals. For example, if an 18th-century merchant embodies drive-negating tendencies for his son, he also simultaneously embodies ideals of hard work, moderation, devotion to commerce, etc., which should one day put his later heirs and

successors in the position of carrying out their social role successfully. Just as we elaborated above on the drive-suppressing function of the super-ego and authority, the success of the idealizing function also relies upon the grown son's economic situation not differing fundamentally from the one that his father determined for him. When such a shift does take place, the ideals that the son has adopted through identification with his father then serve an inhibiting rather than animating function.

4. The Authoritarian-Masochistic Character

The analysis of drive suppression has shown that, under social conditions preventing ego strengthening beyond a certain level, the task of drive suppression can only be achieved with the help of irrational emotional relationships with authority and its inner, psychic representative, the super-ego. This negative function, however, does not yet explain the singular gratification that the relationship to authority clearly has for many of those submitting to it, a pleasure in obedience and submission so great and widespread that one might believe we could speak of a natural, innate instinct for submission (See A. Vierkandt, 1928, p. 37 ff.; W. McDougall, 1928, pp. 169 ff., as well as the passages cited above by S. Ferenczi, 1970, Vol. 1, pp. 12–47).

Pleasure in submission to authority now makes it understandable why it was relatively easy to force people into submission, indeed, that this task was often much easier than the reverse, that is, to induce people to give up their subjugation in favor of inner self-reliance and independence. The conclusion, however, to which authors such as McDougall and Vierkandt come in inferring that the pleasure in submitting indicates an innate drive of submission, essentializes a phenomenon in a way that precludes our understanding of it. The following attempts to analyze and show that the gratification provided by submitting to authority is not about a timeless »submissive drive«, but rather a historically determined, psychic state of affairs. Especially cases in which submission as such is pleasurable will need to be differentiated from those in which this is not the case. The conclusion that all submission must be pleasurable because in many cases it is, usually serves as a rationalization for social theories seeking to prove the fundamental necessity of man's domination over man. Such theories underline this necessity with the argument that this is the only way that the desires of the subjugated can be satisfied.

The situation of inferiority and superiority varies entirely according to the material substance of the relationship. The teacher is superior to his student, the slave owner to his slave. The interests of the teacher and student move

in the same direction. The slave holder, in contrast, is interested in exploiting his slaves as much as possible; the slaves themselves try to find a scrap of happiness in life despite their master's demands. Superiority in both of these examples has the opposite function. In one case, it is the condition for support, in the other, it is the condition for exploitation. Of course, the contrast between the prohibitive and supportive character of the relationship to authority proves to be relative. We practically never find an absolute opposition of interests between a subordinate and his superior. The slave, as a rule, receives the minimum of food and shelter needed for him to carry out his work for his master. The modern factory worker receives his wages from his employer. In the above example, the peasant father who uses his son as labor power provides him with a means of subsistence and security. Although the minor postal official wants to satisfy his own ambition and desire for power through his son, at the same time he also provides his son with the opportunity of climbing the social hierarchy and developing his own strengths.

In all of these relationships to authority, we do not find a rigid opposition between prohibition and stimulation. The weight of each of the two moments depends upon the nature of the social situation in which superior and subordinate confront each other. Broadly speaking, we can say that a minimum of support is determined by whether or not it puts the subordinate in a position to satisfy the interests of his superior. Where superiority is legally and politically determined, as in the relation of the master to his slave or the feudal lord to his vassals, the amount of concrete support – means of subsistence, free time, etc. – is unilaterally determined, openly and explicitly, by the one in the superior position. In cases such as that of the modern factory worker, in which de facto dependence, based on the unequal conditions in which worker and employer face each other on the labor market, is cloaked in legal independence, the amount of support is decided not by explicit decree but rather implicitly by economic laws and necessities. This, however, says nothing about the extent of the conflict of interests, which is determined much more by the circumstances of the historical situation. While conflicts between social groups do not balance each other out in total, even in an ideal case, this is a possibility in individual relationships to authority. The relationship of the prosperous merchant to his future heir and business successor offers an example of this. Their interests are reciprocal. The son can offer the father the satisfaction of adapting to his wishes and ideals, increasing his prestige and providing him with the economic security of representing him in his business; the son, on the other hand, has the wish to rise to his father's position.

Even in the case of reciprocal interest, the relationship is determined by the fact that each gains as much advantage from it as the other. In a true part-

nership between superior and subordinate, however, the conflict of interests as such is resolved, and thereby also the gratification of reciprocal, but still separate, interests. Whereas history offers numerous examples of an authority structure based on a separation of interests, examples of relations between a superior and subordinate based on a solidarity of interests are sparse. Such solidarity predominates in those primitive social organizations in which the common struggle against nature creates a primordial solidarity of interests. In the present when a common interest is created, we also find a solidarity fundamentally different from the mere reciprocal parity of interests based on isolated and individual lives. In the following analysis of the psychology of those drives satisfied by the relationship to authority, neither a parity of individual interests nor solidarity is presumed, but rather a relationship based on conflicting interests.

If one resists the temptation to essentialize every drive-like need by fabricating a particular instinct, and instead tries to analyze the drive-like basis of the need, this effort leads to a critical insight into the drives underlying the authoritarian character. The pleasure of obedience, submission, and the surrender of one's own personality, that feeling of »absolute dependency« are features typical of masochistic character structure. Masochism, however, belongs to those phenomena whose exploration is still in its infancy in psychoanalysis (see S. Freud, 1924c). The reasons for the difficulties in studying the problem of masochism may be found foremost in the following: the masochistic character – in its non-pathological manifestations – describes the majority of people in our society so well that, as a consequence of this lack of distance, it does not even register as a scientific problem for those researchers who view the bourgeois character as »normal« and natural. Moreover, masochistic perversion as a fascinating anomaly has so captured the attention of psychologists that the more important phenomenon of the masochistic character has retreated into the background.

Among those authors who have examined the problem of masochism in a fruitful way are above all W. Reich and K. Horney (See W. Reich, 1933; K. Horney, 1935). Reich pointed to the predominance of the pleasure principle in masochism and showed that even masochism itself is not »beyond the pleasure principle.« However, in the typical physiological overvaluation of the sexual factor so characteristic of his work, Reich did set very narrow limits for the applicability of this view. Horney opened up an understanding of masochism as a fundamental psychic position; the following discussion is indebted to her works for their critical impetus. She sees in masochistic perversion an extreme case of a much more universal psychic position, which is especially determined by a weakening of normal aggression and the capacity to assert demands

actively and independently, and shows that a host of characterological traits, previously only seen in isolation, all emerge from the masochistic structure.

Freud offered crucially important insight into the problem of characterology for understanding the masochistic, and thereby authoritarian, character, which must be mentioned before we discuss individual traits of the masochistic character. According to Freud, character develops in the drive structure's adaptation to particular social conditions; through sublimation and reaction formations, the drive impulses – now transformed into character traits – appear in the ego. Character establishes mediation between the drives, the »id« and socially sanctioned behavior, and thus has a double function. The drives provide the necessary energy for action, in the sense of social demands, and are themselves repeatedly satisfied through the activity of character. Freud showed that certain character traits, even when they have a rational basis, are nevertheless born of certain passions; thus, the individual holds on with surprising tenacity to his character once acquired and to those attitudes that stem from it, because every character trait is itself gratifying.

Freud, Abraham and other psychoanalytic authors demonstrated this extensively and most impressively for the features of the »anal character.« They were able to establish that character traits such as parsimony, punctuality, orderliness and stubbornness are not accidental attributes, but rather rooted in the specific drive structure of an individual. Accordingly, stingy, punctual and stubborn behavior constitutes the satisfaction of a drive, albeit unconsciously and cloaked in rationality. The same is true of the authoritarian character. While the pleasure in obedience and subjugation as such may be conscious or completely obscured by rationalizations such as lawfulness, necessity and reason, what remains decisive for the authoritarian character is that situations in which he can obey are satisfying for him. He does not try to alter such conditions when he finds them in reality, but rather seek to reinforce them. Since the satisfying and pleasurable nature of this behavior is often completely unconscious, it is frequently difficult to differentiate those cases that actually exhibit traits of the authoritarian-masochistic character from those in which submission is based simply on reality or plainly coerced submission. Here a method of interpreting consciousness with regard to those underlying unconscious tendencies is required, a method that a good judge of character develops intuitively and that psychoanalysis develops scientifically and systematically. To understand our discussion, we must presume a knowledge of this interpretive method.

According to Freud's fundamental insight, character is not a summation of individual traits but rather possesses a very particular structure; a change in any one character trait causes a change in all the rest. Psychoanalytic findings show that a characterological structure that includes masochism necessarily

also includes sadism. One can speak of a difference between the sadistic and masochistic character only in the sense that in one case more of the masochistic tendencies are repressed, in the other more of the sadistic tendencies, and the opposite tendencies are expressed in behavior more strongly respectively. Yet, even the momentarily repressed side of sadomasochism never fully disappears, but rather surfaces in the most diverse, if often also most hidden, places. In addition: because strengthening the one side, that is masochism, strengthens the structure as such, the other drive tendency is necessarily intensified. This has the important socio-psychological consequence that a society which produces sadomasochism as the dominant drive structure must provide opportunities that gratify the both sides of sadomasochism.

In submitting to power, sacrificing the individuality of one's own personality and renouncing one's happiness as an individual, masochistic strivings almost aim to lose themselves in power, and through this surrender, which in pathological cases can lead to physical suffering, find pleasure and gratification. Sadistic strivings have the opposite aim of making another person into a dependent and defenseless instrument of one's own will, dominating the other absolutely and without restriction, and in extreme cases, forcing him to suffer and express that suffering. The sadomasochistic character's typical attitude toward people results from the basis of this drive. It is easy to see that the attitude discussed here is the same as that of the authoritarian character. The most characteristic feature of this attitude is how it differs according to whether a stronger or weaker person is the object.

If we can classify personality types very generally according to whether or not one type develops aggression against the powerful and sympathy for the oppressed, while the other exercises aggression against the defenseless and sympathy with the powerful, then the authoritarian character clearly represents the second type. The basis of his feelings toward the stronger and more powerful is fear. But, this is not really conscious; what emerges from fear is reverence, admiration and love. When this character type senses power, he almost automatically feels reverence and love. Thus, it matters little whether it is the power of a person, an institution or socially sanctioned idea. One could justifiably turn around the familiar proverb for him and say: »He loves the one who does not spare the rod.« He is happy when he can follow orders, as long as these orders come from an agency which, because of its power and confident bearing, he can fear, revere and love. This wish to receive orders and act upon them, to submit obediently to a higher power, or even to lose oneself in it completely, can go so far that he even enjoys being disciplined and mistreated.

This love for someone stronger, however, grows upon extremely ambivalent emotional ground. When he loves someone stronger and more powerful, it

does not mean that he does not also envy and hate him. Yet, this hate is usually repressed. Often ambivalence gets expressed in a sort of splitting. Some in power are ascribed all of the good qualities and are loved, whereas others are ascribed all of the bad qualities and are hated. Examples of this are the hatred toward the gods of other religions, toward the leaders of foreign peoples, especially during war, toward financial capital in contrast to »productive capital,« or the rebellion against a father coupled with extreme obedience and submission to a leader. This ambivalence is all the stronger the more that real occasion exists to hate a particular authority. This authority frequently encourages and supports this split, as it can thereby achieve the dual goal of keeping the relation to authority itself free of hate and on the other hand, directing the hate toward those powers that the authority wants to fight with the help of its subjects. If the authority can no longer ensure that the individual represses his negative feelings or transfers them to other objects, then open hostility toward authority itself will probably ensue. But, this has the character of insolence, not of an active struggle against the powers that be. Lack of capacity for such a struggle against authority or, expressed differently, lack of offensive potency is the negative marker of this type of character's relation to authority. This lack applies as much to action as to thought. He may well be driven under certain circumstances to a defiant revolt against the existing authority, but as a rule he will then prescribe himself a new one.

If a lack of capacity for independent action characterizes the authoritarian character's attitude toward the strong, then his attitude toward the weak and helpless provides compensation. Just as power automatically arouses his fear and – albeit ambivalent – love, helplessness arouses his contempt and hatred. But this hatred differs from what the non-authoritarian character feels toward the strong, not only in terms of its object, but also in terms of its quality. While the hatred of the latter wants to eliminate or destroy the more powerful person, the former sort of hatred wants to torment the weak and let them suffer. All of the hostility and aggression present, which cannot be expressed toward the more powerful person, finds its object in the weaker one. If hatred against the strong must be repressed, at least cruelty toward the weak can be enjoyed. If asserting one's own will against the strong must be renounced, at least enjoyment can be found in the feeling of power provided by unrestrained control over the weak; and this means more control than just forcing the weak to suffer!

Masochistic as well as sadistic strivings are gratified by the authoritarian structures of society. Everyone is enmeshed in a system of dependencies from above and below. The lower an individual's place in this hierarchy, the greater the number and quality of his dependencies on higher agencies. He must obey the commands of his immediate superior, but even these orders come

from the top of the pyramid, that is, from the monarch, the leader or a god. As a result, even the immediate superior, although he may play a less than impressive role in the hierarchy, takes on the glow of the great and powerful. The masochistic character's typical pleasure in surrender and obedience thus finds its gratification, albeit to varying degrees, according to social position. Theoretically, the head of a society would be the only one no longer subject to orders. But the feeling of carrying out the orders of God or destiny also gratifies his masochistic strivings.

The possibility of giving in to sadistic impulses of dominating the weak and subordinate is also commonplace in authoritarian society. For members of the ruling classes it is self-evident, but even the simple man on the street has objects available which are weaker than he and which can become objects of his sadism. Women, children and animals play an extremely important socio-psychological role in this regard. If they prove insufficient, objects of sadism are artificially created and thrown into the arena, be they slaves or imprisoned enemies, classes or racialized minorities. The sadistic *Circenses* always had to play a greater role the scarcer bread became, and the more people's real helplessness led to an intensification of the sadomasochistic character structure. In authoritarian society, the sadomasochistic character structure is generated by the economic structure, which necessitates the authoritarian hierarchy. In the authoritarian state, as in bourgeois society in general, the lower the individual stands in the hierarchy, the more his life is subject to chance. The relative opacity of social, and thereby individual, life creates a nearly hopeless dependency to which the individual adapts by developing a sadomasochistic character structure.

Except for the relation to authority mentioned above, the basic masochistic attitude generated by society is expressed in a certain attitude toward the world and fate, in a feeling about life and in a *Weltanschauung* that can be described as masochistic. The masochistic character type experiences his relation to the world in terms of an inevitable destiny. He loves not only those conditions that constrain human life and limit human freedom; he also loves being subjugated to a blind and all-powerful fate. What appears immutable to him depends entirely upon his social position. For the soldier, the will or whim of his superior determines his destiny and his life, to which he gladly submits. The small-scale merchant submits to economic laws as his fate. For him, crisis and prosperity are not social phenomena that could be changed by human intervention, but rather express a higher power to which one must unquestioningly surrender and yield. It is basically no different for those at the top of the pyramid. The difference lies only in the greatness and universality of that to which one submits, not in the feeling of an inevitable dependence on fate itself.

Not only those powers that determine an individual's life, but also those powers that appear to govern human life as a whole, are perceived as immutable fate. That wars must exist is experienced as »fatum«; just as unchangeable is the fact that one part of humanity must be ruled by another, or that the amount of suffering in the world can never really be lessened. Fate may be rationalized realistically as »natural law« or »social facts,« philosophically as »the power of the past,«[3] religiously as »the will of God« or morally as »duty,« but there always remains a higher power external to man in the face of which all activity ends and only blind submission is possible. The masochistic character worships the past. How things were is how they must remain in perpetuity; wanting something that has not yet been is criminal or mad. Human life is subject to

3 Compare for example the following typical statements by Moeller van den Bruck (1930, pp. 219 ff.):

»The revolutionary labors under the delusion that with this collapse the moment has come for existence to now be organized according to a completely new measure, according to laws that have arisen in his head, which can already be imposed upon the present, and with the force of a fissure never before possessed by an historical event, the past, an historical if unfortunate time, can be separated from the future, an ahistorical but fortunate time – according to a new calendar which begins with the start of life on earth up until Karl Marx, as the future would have to be calculated, and in turn, from Karl Marx until the end of life on earth. But, the continuity of human history rises up against this presumptuous delusion, which would reestablish itself as a conservative law of motion on the same day which we might suppose that the revolutionary would have actually succeeded in ›overthrowing the previous social order‹ with rigor and with the apparent destruction of its final traces. The epochs believed ended would avenge themselves for the violence done to them. The spirits of the Weltanschauungen would mock the decrees that tried to eliminate them from the world. And the dead, which had been only pronounced dead, would begin to live again.

Continuity and conservatism complete each other and are sides of the same essential concept underlying everything that happens. Communism has enjoyed, at best, seventy-five years during which the proletariat was prepared to conquer the world in class struggle, but beyond that, these seventy-five years face the sum total of millennia, the cosmic nature of this star and the biological nature of its creatures, the same nature which even the greatest, most heartfelt revolution of psychic depth – the coming of Christ and the introduction of Christianity – could not suppress or change. They have against them racial dispositions, civilizational effects, geopolitical laws, which survive every change of historical venue and the people and powers which set foot upon them, laws to which even Christ and Christianity were subject, from the lingering influences of the Mediterranean which still effected man of antiquity to the total change of conditions in the Occident undertaken by Nordic man. For the revolutionary, history begins with himself. In this sense, Marx spoke of the proletarian movement as the ›independent movement of the immense majority.‹ But he confused movement with self-movement and did not see that everything that moves today actually does not »move« itself at all, but rather is ›moved‹ by the millennia pushing from behind.«

the laws of a higher power and can never escape its rule. The definition of religiosity as the feeling of absolute dependence, one that cannot be overcome but is to be enjoyed, is the definition of the universal masochistic feeling; the idea that original sin immutably burdens all future generations is characteristic of masochistic morality. A moral guilt, but also every failure in achievement, is something man can no longer escape. The entire idea of guilt and atonement is based on this masochistic stance. Whoever has sinned once is now shackled to his deed by unbreakable chains. The deed becomes the power that dominates and never frees him. There is no escape from the Erinyes. Atonement may lessen the aftermath of guilt, but its necessity only confirms the inescapable power of what happened. (Recall the magnificent portrayal of the idea of the inescapability of guilt in the character of Javert in *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo.)

All masochistic thinking has one thing in common: life is determined by powers that lie outside the individual, his will and his interests. One must submit to these powers, and the ultimate attainable happiness is to enjoy this submission. Man's helplessness is the fundamental theme of this masochistic philosophy. Moeller van den Bruck (1930, pp. 223 f.) expressed this feeling clearly in the following:

> »The conservative is much more skeptical. He does not believe in progress for the sake of progress, which becomes reality, and as reason demands. He believes rather in catastrophe, in the powerlessness of people to avoid it, in the inevitability with which it unfolds, and in the terrible disillusionment that ultimately remains for those optimists led astray. The conservative trusts only the power of grace and destiny granted each individual, and the fate of all people, races, and eras, must stand under the sign of the individual, insofar as they can achieve things through their own will.«

This masochistic worldview is not in conflict with activity and courage. But, activity and courage mean something very different to the masochistic-authoritarian character type than to the non-masochist. For the masochistic character, activity means doing one's best in reverential submission to what destiny has historically bestowed and a higher power ordained. The activity of the authoritarian-masochistic character need not be less than that of the non-authoritarian. It is the quality that is different: a tendency to submission is always an inherent feature of masochism. Activity is possible in the name of God, the past, nature, or duty, not in the name of the unborn, future generations, the powerless, or happiness itself. The authoritarian character draws his strength to act by depending on these higher powers. The powers themselves are never open to criticism or change. For the masochistic character, courage consists

in enduring the suffering that fate or its personification, the leader, inflicts. Suffering without complaint is the highest virtue, and not the elimination of suffering or, at a minimum, its lessening. To submit to fate is the heroism of the masochist; to change fate is the heroism of the revolutionary.

The masochistic-authoritarian character can also go on the offensive; but he can only attack when he finds himself in defiant rebellion against authority or feels himself already in possession of power; he has to believe that he fights and enforces on behalf of a power, be it history, nature, God or the like. He is cowardly when he is supposed to fight for the future instead of the past, for what is becoming instead of what is, for the still disempowered instead of the powerful. Weakness for him is always a sign of injustice or inferiority, and as soon as an authority in whom he had believed proves unsteady or uncertain, his love turns into hatred and contempt. He lacks that offensive fighting energy that can attack an established power without feeling beholden to a »higher« one. (Of course, what is shown here of the masochistic character is true only of the »normal,« non-pathological masochist. The pathological masochist lacks the capacity for activity which the masochistic character can develop, and which gave the petty bourgeoisie, which embodies this most strongly, such unforeseen force.)

It appears as if the aimlessness of social life and the resulting random, helpless nature of the individual's life, in short, the fact of »absolute dependency« upon higher forces characterizing most of history, has also determined the masochistic character in the sense meant here, namely that it typifies the psychic structure of the great majority of people. But, the intensity with which the sadomasochistic structure developed is not the same across different epochs and classes. When a class like the 18th century bourgeoisie masters natural and social forces better than its predecessors, then it acquires a feeling of power and autonomy which diminishes the intensity of sadomasochism. The more conflicted the contradictions within society grow and the more unsolvable they become, the more blinding and uncontrolled social forces are, the more catastrophes like war and unemployment overshadow the life of the individual as unavoidable forces of fate, then the stronger and more universal the sadomasochistic drive structure, and thus the authoritarian character structure, become. And, the more surrendering to fate becomes the supreme virtue as well as pleasure. This pleasure makes it possible at all for people to endure such a life gladly and willingly, and masochism proves itself to be one of the most important psychic conditions for the functioning of society, a main element of the cement that continues to hold it together.

Ultimately, overcoming sadomasochism is only conceivable in a society where people can systematically, rationally and actively regulate their lives, and in which, rather than the fortitude of endurance and obedience, the courage

to be happy and contemplate fate is the supreme virtue. Sadomasochism may then still be found as a pathological individual phenomenon, but it will have lost its colossal social role. If until now Prometheus has only been the patron saint of individuals, may the average man one day be able to say with him:

> Mistake me not; I would not, if I might,
> Change my misfortunes for thy vassalage.
> Oh! better be the vassal of this rock
> Than born the trusty messenger of Zeus.
> (Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*)

We have tried to show that the authoritarian social structure creates and satisfies those desires born of sadomasochism. This insight promotes a psychological understanding of an attitude toward authority, since masochism is a clinically well-observed phenomenon, and observations show without a doubt the fact that submission to a higher, stronger power, indeed suffering in the process, can be experienced as pleasurable, and that such situations in which this need is satisfied can be sought out. The question, however, of why suffering can be satisfying and pleasurable, belongs to those psychological problems whose solution is still in its very early stages. As noted above, the difficulty of the problem was compounded by focusing only on the pathological, and especially the perverse, forms of masochism. That displeasure should be pleasurable seemed to contradict the fundamental pleasure principle of all other drive processes. But, perhaps it is already the case with masochistic perversion that suffering in itself is not sought, but rather the strongest expression of complete submission to something higher, and on this level, the desire is satisfied, with only the ego experiencing it as suffering. In any case, we see that the situation of being dependent and obeying is also consciously experienced by many as purely positive, while others experience it as most unbearable and unpleasurable. It would appear that we can understand masochism better through character than through perversion. Social psychology can be especially productive for psychopathology in this regard.

The satisfaction inherent in masochism is of both a negative and positive nature: negative as a liberation from fear, that is, the protection that reliance on a stronger power grants, and positive because surrendering to power satisfies individual desires for greatness and strength. A precondition for the importance and necessity of both kinds of satisfaction is the individual's weakened capacity to make and enforce demands. To the degree that it exceeds the social average, the weakness depends upon individual factors or, insofar as it is unique to a society or a class, upon their individual life practice.

The masochistic attitude toward authority satisfies a desire for greatness and power as well a desire for less fear. The individual faces a world which he can neither comprehend nor control, of which he is helplessly at the mercy. There have certainly been diverse attempts to assuage this fear through religion. Be it the Indian belief in reincarnation or the Christian belief in a God who is ultimately a just judge of humanity, belief in the individual's just fate functions to lessen the fear arising from the random, impenetrable nature of overpowering destiny. This belief gives the individual the opportunity to understand fate as meaningful and to believe in a later reckoning. But, authority also takes on the same psychological function, indeed all the more so the weaker that the effect of religious faith is. The authoritarian character thus renounces understanding or even shaping those laws that determine his life and the life of society; instead, God or some other sovereign possesses his full faith and is beyond all doubt. Even if the individual, as a member of the masses, has no possibility to understand life, even if he also stands helpless before the forces within him and without him, he can still find comfort in aligning himself with the strong and letting himself be led. This security continues to grow when, through a series of techniques, especially that of obedience, the individual retains the possibility to influence and appease authority. The world thereby loses its chaotic character for him. Only when we can assess correctly the full extent of each individual's fear generated by the real helplessness of people in society, can we grasp this important function of authority as comfort, as a fictional, quasi-prosthetic security.

The amount of fear within society varies according to the role of different classes in the production process. The effect of this fear differs diametrically for the upper and lower classes. With the latter, it leads to an increase in their dependency, in their faith in authority. With the former, it leads to an increase in pressure on and suppression of the dominated class. Yet, when we speak here about the psychological security that authority provides, it does not mean that the security is necessarily unreal. In a society in which those who are dependent actually gain the greatest measure of protection and security by relying upon the rulers, the psychological function of authority corresponds to its economic and social functions as well. Only if the dominated could in fact obtain better living conditions and a greater security does the psychological function of authority become irrational, and thus requires all the more artificial psychological reinforcement. In place of the real function of authority in the production process, authority must emphasize its own security and fearlessness through a host of ideological procedures.

But the masochistic relation to authority not only lessens fear, it also provides an alternative to the impossibility of satisfying desires for greatness and

power in reality. Losing oneself in something greater, something stronger, not only means losing one's own personality, but also partaking in a powerful, superior personality. By surrendering to this personality, one shares in its glory and power. We cannot call this mechanism identification. We find this sooner in democratic structures of authority, where the distance between leader and led appears fundamentally bridgeable. But, in the extreme structure of authority, it is a part of the leader's nature that he was born to lead and that he rules over those who were born to follow. One cannot identify with this born leader, but one can partake of him, and this partaking offers the believer in authority much of the narcissistic compensation that his miserable social position otherwise denies him. This narcissistic »substitute satisfaction« through masochistic surrender to a higher and mighty power is attained not only through the relation to the ruler, but also by partaking in the glory of the nation or race. The more highly the individual values the power and glory of the force in which he partakes, the greater his satisfaction. This is why every ideology that endows these forces with the most wonderful qualities falls on fertile soil. We can compare the psychological situation of partaking with the political situation of Roman clientship and speak of a psychological client relationship.

Protection from fear and partaking in the glory of force are the immediate satisfactions of the masochistic attitude. In addition, there are certain tendencies which, on the basis of analytic experience, must be regarded as quite frequently linked with the sadomasochistic structure, and which find broad satisfaction in relation to authority. Here, the fact must be mentioned that sadomasochism is usually associated with a relative weakness of heterosexual genitality. This has two consequences. First, the pregenital and especially anal strivings are relatively strongly developed and expressed in the characterological manifestations of orderliness, punctuality and parsimony, which play such an obvious and socially important role in the character of the petty-bourgeois authoritarian type.

The other consequence is the presence of homosexual strivings. The degree to which the sadomasochistic drive structure is connected with homosexuality is in many respects a still unclarified problem. We want to call attention here to only two points. One is that, as a result of a fundamental fear that the sadomasochistic character has especially of all things foreign and unknown, women arouse fear in him, as they in many respects represent a foreign and alien world on the basis of their biological and psychological difference. The sadomasochistic character can lessen this fear, of course, by debasing women and creating a superior position for himself from the start, but fear always remains a factor that presses in the direction of homosexuality.

Here, another factor grounded in the social structure of the patriarchal, authoritarian society comes into play. In this society, women are normally the

weaker ones. Since the sadist automatically hates and despises the weak as such, his attitude toward women also bears a mark of hostility and cruelty. Just as women are necessarily despised and hated because of their socially subordinate position, the male hero and leader is worshiped and loved because of his strength and superiority. The love life of this character type demonstrates a peculiar sort of split. Physiologically, the average authoritarian man is heterosexual. Psychically, however, he is homosexual, in other words, in the sense of satisfying his physical sexual impulses with a woman, he is likely potent, and thus capable of the minimum amount of heterosexual activity needed to start a family and have children; psychically, however, he is homosexual and inclined to treat women with hostility and cruelty. With many individuals, this aspect of homosexuality also turns relatively frequently into manifest homosexuality in a more narrow sense, of which ample example can be found in the extreme structures of authority of recent times. But these cases of overt homosexuality are not sociologically important. Much more important is the tender, loving, masochistic attachment of the weaker man to the stronger, which acts as even more important and necessary social cement, especially in light of the irrational nature of this attachment and the ways it contradicts the real interests of the weaker man.

Another characteristic commonly encountered in connection with the sadomasochistic structure is a certain tendency to doubt, or rather, a difficulty in making independent decisions, a trait that is found in its extreme and pathological form with the obsessional neurotic. One root of this tendency to doubt lies in the characteristic ambivalence of the sadomasochistic drive structure, that is, in the simultaneity of conflicting drive impulses and an inability to resolve this conflict. We cannot elaborate on the drive basis of this doubt in more detail here and refer to the clinical psychoanalytic literature. The literature does not emphasize one important basis of the ability to make decisions, which is not found in the drives but rather in the ego. We demonstrated above that precisely the ability to act and decide systematically and autonomously is characteristic of a strong ego, and that the development of this ego is tied to the manner of life enabled by such actions and decisions. Because authoritarian social structures encourage a manner of life that constrains ego development, the difficulty in making decisions, which in terms of drives is fed by the ambivalence associated with sadomasochism, is intensified by the ego itself: someone submitting to authority need not – indeed, should not – make decisions. While in extreme pathological cases like obsessive doubt, the doubt is often so strong that even submission is impossible, in the less extreme structure of which we speak here, liberation from making decisions independently, and thus from doubt, is among the greatest satisfactions that the authoritarian state has to offer its subjects.

We have just spoken of the gratifying functions of authority which are directly or indirectly associated with the sadomasochistic structure. We must now mention two satisfactions that are certainly no less important than those discussed previously, but which show no immediate connection with sadomasochism. Patriarchal authoritarian societies are characterized by a »patri-centric« emotional structure. A person of this society does not necessarily feel any demand for love and sympathy. He believes much more that he only has a right to happiness and love in so far as he fulfills the demands made on him by a paternal authority. Fundamentally, he requires a »justification« to live. In this structure, the only way to feel that one's own happiness and desire for love is even relatively justified is by fulfilling one's duty and obeying authority. This proves to be the way to justify the demand for a minimum of love and happiness. The leader's gratification is the only effective proof of duty done, and thus of the legitimacy of the individual's own demands, especially that of being loved.

Finally, there is one last but decidedly important attribute of the authoritarian attitude to discuss. It obscures and reinforces the social substance of the relation to authority. The fact that the authority figure dominates and exploits those submitting to his authority should be reason enough to arouse their hatred and envy, increasingly so the more irrational his rule is. But, if the creation of the typical attitude toward authority, in which the figure is admired and loved as a superior being, is successful, then not only are the hostile feelings suppressed by the strength of the positive ones, but this admiring attitude motivates submission to authority. If this authority is as magnificent as he believes, then of course it is reasonable and understandable that its holder lives better and more happily than he himself. The biased overestimation of authority thus takes on the important function of internally justifying, deepening, perpetuating and obscuring the subordinate relation, not formally but rather in a material sense of exploitation and domination.

The most indispensable requirement of authority is the power of those who hold it. The individual must be assured that authority can provide protection and security, but at the same time the individual must fear authority to the point of forgetting any resistance. In the case of its actual necessity, authority must give the appearance of being fully certain of success, as if it alone could save society from chaos and ruin. Authority must give the impression of invincibility, and thereby enable the gratification of masochistic-fatalistic feelings. At the same time, it must use every means to increase people's fear of authority. This fear is a precondition of the loving, masochistic attitude toward every ruler. In normal times, the production of fear is the most important sociopsychological function of the penal system. The fact that the state decides on the life and freedom of its citizens gives authority the necessary punitive power

to generate at least a minimum of fear. Despite its exceptional inadequacy in fighting crime, this is why the penal justice system was an indispensable aid to the state. Its ideological significance lay more in its impression on the masses of average citizens than in its effect on criminals. The more important the production of fear is for the preservation of authority, the more the state will have to resort to means more radical than the penal system. The fear-inducing effect of terror lies not only in the severity of the punishment, but also in its unpredictability. While under the penal system the individual knows what punishment to expect for one crime or another, terror is distinguished by its lack of rationality and lightning-like suddenness, heightening fear substantially. When terror, officially or in fact introduces especially dreadful punishments, it calls upon, beyond the universal fear of death, the particular, deeply effecting horrors of mutilation and castration. Unshakeable security and cruelty are attributes that authority must possess in relation to its objects, a combination that permits a choice between a fear of punishment or absolute submission only.

A range of psychological and cultural conditions strengthen a belief in the omnipotence of authority. What is most important is generating a feeling of absolute distance and essential difference between the masses and authority figures. If the object is to believe in the authority's omnipotence, then it must also be convinced that the authority is fundamentally different. A primitive logic forces the average man to the conclusion that authority, if it were similar to him, could not possibly demonstrate the strength and security that so impress him. Multiple techniques create this sense of an unbridgeable chasm between authority and its object. They are largely of an ideological nature. This is why authority must be considered natural and thus necessary. The ruler is born to his office, whether he owes his prerogative to his particular family lineage, as in feudal and monarchical systems, or simply to innate leadership qualities. Because authority based on innate capacities is not only natural and necessary, but also simultaneously heaven sent and sanctioned, a sense of its absolute superiority is strengthened. In addition to ideological methods, a host of other measures serve to strengthen this sense of distance. A special form of address for the authority figure, different clothes, exceptionally impressive uniforms, particular social conventions reserved only for the upper classes – from table manners to the aristocratic code of honor – all allow the authority figure to appear as something special. Their sociopsychological impact should not be underestimated. All of these measures help to increase a sense of absolute inferiority and thereby strengthen authority as a psychic phenomenon whose most important function in a society based on conflicting interests is to deepen and simultaneously glorify the existing conflict. (In sociology, the fundamental importance of such measures has been repeatedly emphasized; see for example,

R. M. MacIver, 1933, p. 259: »From of old, ceremony has been recognized as a powerful means of sustaining the social order […] Ceremony proclaims the elevation and fixity of the social order, establishing distance and priority, lest familiarity breed criticism and a lack of respect.«) When a solidarity of interests determines interpersonal relations, such measures are not required. Admiration and veneration of authority are in the service of becoming ever more like the revered authority. Here, authority tends to nullify itself.

But, authority must not only be powerful and frightening, necessarily and absolutely superior on the basis of divine and natural destiny. It must also serve as a moral model for those submitting to it. When authority demands that we forget ourselves, renounce our own happiness, fulfill our duty in the extreme, work tirelessly, etc., then it, too, must exhibit those moral qualities that enable super-ego formation. In order to lend the subsequent dread of authority its dual nature of character discussed above, authority must not only be feared as a force, but also loved as exemplary, noble and valuable. The simple man must believe that his master wants nothing for himself, but rather everything for others, that he works from morning to night without stop and with barely a moment of enjoyment. The ruler is severe, but fair. Through history lessons, the press, photography, and not least by activating pious feelings that marked past authorities as the personification of all virtue, authority is cast in a moral light.

First the family establishes an openness to this image. The child is supposed to believe that its parents have never lied and have actually fulfilled all of the moral demands that they impose on the child. The child should believe that everything the parents do is in its best interests, and that nothing could be further from their thoughts than to pursue egoistic goals in their child's education. Precisely, one of the most important functions of the family's moral education, which the child learns to associate with authority from the beginning, is the creation of the authoritarian character. It is certainly one of the greatest shocks in a child's life when it gradually sees that in reality its parents very rarely meet their own demands. But since the child, first through school and later through the press, etc., substitutes new authorities in place of the old ones, authorities that remain inscrutable to the child, the original illusion of a moral authority remains. This belief in the moral quality of power is effectively supplemented by continual emphasis on one's own sinfulness and moral unworthiness. The stronger the sense of guilt and one's own nothingness are, the brighter shines the virtue of one's superiors. Religion and a strict sexual morality play the leading roles in the creation of guilt feelings, which are so important for the relation to authority.

As firm as attachment to an authority may be, the history of individuals as well as society is one of defiance. Defiance of authority can be divided

into two fundamentally different psychological phenomena: first, a decline of authority in which the authoritarian character structure with its specific needs and satisfactions is retained; we call this case *rebellion*. Contrasted with this is a fundamental change in character structure, in which impulses that seek a strong authority weaken or disappear altogether. The object's renouncement of authority on the basis of its change in character structure can be described psychologically as a *revolution*. Defying a particular master, not for want of a different master but for want of none, relies upon the individual ego no longer requiring a masochistic dependence on and partaking in the authority's power.

The case with *rebellion* is completely different. Here, two possibilities are to be distinguished: first, normally hostility to authority breaks through and authority is now hated as ardently as it had once been loved and honored; but, a new authority is not yet substituted for the old. One often finds that whenever such people encounter authority they automatically react defiantly and rebelliously, while the authoritarian type is submissive and reverential. This reaction tends to be just as irrational as the positive authoritarian reaction. It does not matter if an authority is reasonable or unreasonable, appropriate or inappropriate, useful or damaging; the presence of any authority at all immediately leads this character type to adopt a rebellious attitude. Superficially, he shares an anti-authoritarian attitude with the revolutionary type described above. While the positive authoritarian character represses the hostile side of his ambivalent feelings for authority, the rebellious, negative authoritarian character represses his love. All of his defiance is only superficial. In truth, he has the same longing for the love and recognition of those in power; his defiance is usually the result of overly strict, unfair or simply unloving treatment. Basically, he uses all of his spite to fight for the love of authority, no matter how defiant and hostile his behavior. If only given the chance to satisfy a minimum of his desire for justice and love, he is always ready to capitulate.

Anarchist types often exemplify this rebellious character; when they shift to admiring power, very little has changed psychologically. Many intermediate stages lead from this type of rebel to the one who gives up one object of authority only to submit to a new one. The reason for this can be resentment about unjust or loveless treatment by the old authority. An additional reason is often that the existing authority has forfeited its essential quality, namely that of absolute power and superiority, whereby its psychological function also necessarily ends. The hostility suppressed until now directs itself with particular strength against the former authority, and with love and admiration toward the new. (Luther is a classic example of this type. His life is characterized by a constant back-and-forth between a hostile, defiant attitude to *one* authority and

masochistic submission to *another*. In all other relationships, too, he exhibits the sadomasochistic characteristics described here.)

This »rebellion,« in which only the object changes but the authoritarian structure remains the same, or even intensifies, and its ideal, namely the rebel who has now come into power, is of the greatest sociological importance. Often rebellion appears as a »revolution.« The new authority makes use of the outrage against the old and encourages the illusion that the battle against the old authority's oppression is a battle against oppression in general. All strivings toward freedom and independence appear to have been realized. But, since nothing has changed in the fundamental psychic structure, the revolt proves to be a temporary outbreak of defiance and protest. The new authority assumes the place which the old one could no longer retain.

We have explored the extreme structure of authority as it has recently developed in Europe in such detail, not only because its main features have been relevant for the present as well as most of history as we know it, but also because certain features of its structure are present in any situation involving authority that is not based on a solidarity of interests between superiors and subordinates. As has already been pointed out, however, the social as well as psychological structure of authority changes when the interests are not shared, all the more so when satisfying the authority figure's interests also serves the interests of those subject to authority. The typical European democracy of the 19th century offers an example of authority based on reciprocal, if unequal, satisfaction of interests. In contrast to the hierarchy characteristic of monopoly capitalism, in which a small, economically dominant class confronts an immense majority of ever more dependent and economically helpless masses, the social structure of this epoch was marked by complexity. The bourgeoisie had many gradations of power and ownership, and upward movement took place. Authority in this society was not primarily determined by the formal nature of sovereignty, but at least to a certain degree by something more qualitative: achievement. The quality of the leader was no longer considered innate in a metaphysical sense, but largely determined by economic achievement: the ideal authority was he who best realized himself, something every individual wanted. To become a leader in business was the best guarantee of success and prosperity.

This results in a decisive difference between the psychological structure of democratic authority and that of the totalitarian state. For the latter, the fact of unbridgeable distance between authority and its object is fundamental. An essential difference exists between those who were born to give orders and those born to obey them. This is why the subordinate must be satisfied with his position and content himself with finding happiness in joyful subordination to the

will of the powerful. He partakes in their glory to the extent that he cannot identify himself with them. The psychological distance between leader and led here is only a displaced expression of interpersonal relations within the hierarchy, namely the unbridgeable economic distance between a small class of economic leaders and the great mass. Democratic authority is different. The gap between authority and its object does not appear here as unbridgeable. The achievements of those in authority would seem attainable for everyone. People can identify with democratic authority, rather than content themselves with merely partaking in it. Here, therefore, the psychological function of authority is largely to serve as an example to those subordinate to it, and to impart a feeling of reverence and admiration for authority which motivates its objects to resemble it more and more. Indeed, it enables them to achieve authority for themselves.

Whether or not this function of authority is real or ideological depends upon the social situation as a whole and the role of a particular individual. For those individuals and groups who can in fact ascend into the higher spheres of society, this function of authority is real. The more they resemble a leader, the better their prospects to actually become one. In early eras of this social order, such a possibility was the case for broad strata of the bourgeoisie, in a certain sense even for the proletariat. Authority was loved and admired as the epitome of what the individual himself wanted to become, and, depending on circumstances, occasionally also really could become. For the vast majority of society, however, the idea that the distance to authority was only coincidental, and anyone who only made enough effort could achieve the same, was pure illusion, whether in the sense that only members of certain classes could move up, or that the number of successful individuals in general was extremely low. As long as the economic situation permitted at least the belief that moving up and closer to authority would continue, this illusion and thus the democratic structure of authority could be maintained. Only as the grounds for this illusion disappeared, as a consequence of the increasing economic inferiority of the vast majority of the population, did the typical authoritarian structure emerge, as described above. But even under the democratic structure of authority, which not only largely concealed its dynamic of domination, but also encouraged the tireless striving and industriousness of the great masses so essential for the growing bourgeois economy, the same feature remains which we described in the context of the extreme authoritarian structure, namely the passive, fatalistic acknowledgment of a higher power. This higher power, however, was not embodied by a leader predestined from birth, but rather by »economic necessity,« »human nature« and so on. These hidden, depersonalized authorities are discussed so extensively elsewhere in this volume [*Studies on Authority and the Family*] that we need not explore them here.

Relations of authority also exist in a society built upon a solidarity of its members' interests. These relations are determined by the complicated process of administrative production which makes leadership and executive functions objectively necessary, as well as by differences in age and talent that establish subordinates and superiors. But since every individual has the possibility for optimal development of his capacities, and even the greatest of talents does not conflict with other peoples' development, and cannot be used to dominate and exploit other people, this kind of authority possesses a different sort of psychic structure and dynamic. It differs fundamentally from all other societies built on conflicting interests: this authority is rational. This also effects the relation of the small child to authority. Without a doubt, in terms of physical strength and intelligence, authority is superior to the child in any society. Doubtless, too, the child requires the help and support of adults for its development. But because the child's relation to its educators, be they parents or others, is determined by the position that it will one day assume as an adult in society as a whole, authority has a completely different function for the child than it did in earlier sorts of families. Authority exclusively serves the development of child, and to the degree it must encourage the suppression of certain impulses, even this drive-constraining function is different, because it is in the interests of the development of the child's entire personality.

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First published under the title *Studien über Autorität und Familie. Sozialpsychologischer Teil,* in: Max Horkheimer (Ed.), Schriften des Instituts für Sozialforschung, Vol. V: *Studien über Autorität und Familie,* 1st Section: Theoretische Entwürfe über Autorität und Familie, Paris, 1936, pp. 77–135. Reprint in the German *Erich Fromm Gesamtausgabe in zwölf Bänden,* München (Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt and Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag) 1999, Vol. I, pp. 139–187.

Translation from the German by Susan Kassouf.

KSG Karl Schlecht Stiftung
Sponsored by the Karl Schlecht Foundation