

Chapter 1: Kant, Hegel, Freud and the Structure of the Subject

In this chapter I give a sketch of what I take to be the theoretical parameters for the current study. I outline the general view of idealism which I take to be operative in the work of Kant, Hegel, Freud and, of course, Fanon. More specifically, the idealism I am concerned with has three elements: the dialectic between inner and outer, the transformation of the material world via the process of desire-satisfaction into structured subjectivity, and finally the idea that these two previous elements can be understood as a process by which the subject integrates itself in order to achieve a proper self-relation. This proper self-relation is understood as autonomy or freedom.

Introduction: A Common Theoretical Model

The theoretical reconstruction offered in this chapter here has two broad goals, the first is to show that all three thinkers considered in this study subscribe to the basic idea that subjects constitution is also the project of the achievement of freedom. This shared lineage makes their thinking compatible. The second goal is to distinguish between the different levels of philosophical analysis at which these thinkers work within this common conception. Subjectivity integrates itself at many level. Conceived of individually, the subject seeks to satisfy its desires with the material world it encounter. Socially, however, the subject seeks to integrate itself in the larger community by harmonizing its desires to those of the community. The

integration achieved at one level may put the subject at odds with the integration which it seeks to achieve at another level. While the difference between these levels thus presents us with practical problem total integration is nevertheless an imperative. Indeed, the point is that under the idealist model I employ, there can be no satisfactory subject integration unless the subject is completely integrated, not only within itself as an individual body but within the larger social context as well.

Furthermore, it is my claim that the different theorists I consider in this study contribute in unique but compatible ways to an understanding of this demand for total individual and social integration. While Freud has a powerful theory of the individual project of integration, he is less concerned about the political implications of such integration. Hegel, on the other hand, says little about individual self-integration but has much to say about the larger social questions as well as about the meta-theory of such integration. Hegel also has little to say about psychopathology, a subject that is of central concern for Freud and Fanon. Together, however, these three theorists form a powerful theoretical paradigm which presents both the project of the complete integration of the subject as imperative while at the same time being able to diagnose the problem such a total integration presents to the concretely situated subject.

Idealism

In this section I sketch what I take to be the critical idealism operative in all of the thinkers I examine in this study. This account centers on the claim that thinking is both a *response* to the world while also being *constitutive* of the relationship

between subject and world. The idealism I have in mind holds that neither the material nor the conceptual have priority over the other. I will frame this thought in Kantian language since this seems to be more accessible.¹ This account is meant only to give a general indication of the theory of subjectivity I employ throughout this book.

By idealism I mean the idea that the subject plays a central role in the organization of the world.² This thought implies a certain view of the subject's agency, namely one in which the subject is in an important way the *author* of the organization of the world. This is perhaps most obvious in the case of practical reason, where, quite literally, what I do changes the world, even if only in a small

¹ This is not to say that Kant and Hegel are completely in agreement about all tenets of idealism. Indeed, the continued critique of Kantian philosophy is the refrain upon which so much of Hegel's philosophy rests. What is important for our purposes, as Hegel himself acknowledges, is, "Philosophy is idealism because it does not acknowledge either one of the opposites as existing for itself in its abstraction from the other. The supreme Idea is indifferent against both; and each of the opposites, considered singly, is nothing. The Kantian philosophy has the merit of being idealism because it does show that neither the concept in isolation nor intuition in isolation is anything at all; that intuition by itself is blind and the concept by itself is empty; and that what is called experience, i.e., the finite identity of both in consciousness is not a rational cognition either." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Faith and Knowledge* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1977). 68. GW 4:325-26.

² While I give essentially my own reading of idealism here, important contemporary views of idealism which I draw on include the work of Robert Brandom and John McDowell. Robert Brandom, *Making It Explicit: Reasoning, Representing, and Discursive Commitment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); *Articulating Reasons: An Introduction to Inferentialism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000); "Animating Ideas of Idealism: A Semantic Sonata in Kant and Hegel," in *Reason in Philosophy: Animating Ideas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). John McDowell, *Mind and World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); *Having the World in View: Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

way. This idea of agency is named autonomy by Kant and refers to the subject's ability to be the final arbiter of the norms or rules by which it lives.

Another way to put the thought of autonomy is that the subject is *responsible* for its norms.³ That is, when the subject decides to do something, it does so in *response* to an encounter with nature or the world. Being responsive to the world implies a meeting between mind and world, subject and nature, in which the subject's autonomy is always conditioned by what it encounters. Responsibility can thus be understood as seeking to accommodate the world to the subject's projects in a way that is equally faithful to how the world *is* and what the subject *wants* from the world.

Idealism thus always implies an equal consideration for how the world is *to the subject* and what the subject wants *from the world*. It is central to the idealist thought, however, that the world is always framed by the subject, that is, that the subject is the starting point for the encounter with the world. Kant puts it thus: "thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind", meaning that thoughts must be world directed in order to have something to be *about* but it is also only by being reflected in thought that whatever world is (intuition), has meaning for the subject.⁴ The core thesis of idealism is thus that subject and world are in an inextricable and dialectical relation with each other.

³ For this way of putting the thought of idealism see Brandom, *Articulating Reasons: An Introduction to Inferentialism*.

⁴ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood, The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). A51/B76.

Idealism thus opposes the one-sided tendencies of both empiricism and rationalism. While empiricism errs too far on the side of taking objects as given in themselves, rationalism errs too far in the direction of believing that thought alone constitutes the true nature of the world. This opposition was neutralized by Kant who argued that the understanding, the faculty of the mind receptive to experience, stands in dialectical relation with reason, the faculty of the mind which is essentially concerned with agency. This dialectic is radicalized by Hegel at the level of thought itself rather than as different categories into which we separate the world of objects and the world of values.

What, exactly, is the nature of this dialectic itself? That is, what does the subject want from the world, what orients the subject's encounter with the world? Kant's answer is that the subject seeks totality. Distinguishing the faculty of knowledge or speculation from the faculty of practical reason or will, Kant writes: "The interest of [reason's] speculative use consists in the *cognition* of the object up to the highest a priori principles; that of its practical use consists in the determination of the *will* with respect to the final and complete end."⁵ The goal of the subject, what makes the subject a subject, is that it continually seeks to unify itself into a whole or totality, and hence strives to unify all opposition into itself. But this can only occur when the world is appropriately structured to achieve wholeness, self-integration, totality, or what Hegel calls the absolute.

⁵ *Critique of Practical Reason*, ed. Mary J. Gregor, trans. Mary J. Gregor, Practical Philosophy; the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). 5:120.

The idealist position is articulated in many ways by different thinkers but some instances relevant here are the Kantian idea that acting pursuant of the categorical imperative is simply to organize the world according to a normative structure (maxim) that one has determined to be right through one's own rational reflection. For Hegel, *Geist*, humanity as a whole, builds its own social world by reflecting on the norms that most satisfy its fundamental desires. In Freud, who is not usually considered an idealist, this idealism appears in the axiomatic claim that only by investing the world with meaning can meaningful satisfaction be achieved in it.

Switching registers now in order to relate the idea of striving for unification or totality to a more psychoanalytic and Hegelian paradigm, we can say that this striving for totality must at the same time be understood as the desire for the *re-*establishment of a lost totality. The key transition is here provided by Hölderlin's conception of judgment, or *Ur-teil*, which is foundational for Hegel's conception of totality.⁶ According to this conception, the meaning of desire itself, is the desire to extinguish desire by achieving satisfaction, completeness or totality. This means that the constructive notion of self-integration as each subject's project is at the same time driven by the experience of lack to which self-integration is the answer. It is this lack which Hegel calls the negative.

⁶ Hölderlin writes: "**Judgment:** is in the highest and strictest sense the original sundering of Subject and Object most intimately united in intellectual intuition, the very sundering which first makes Object and Subject possible, the **Ur-Teilung**. In the concept of division [Theilung] there lies already the concept of the reciprocal relation [Beziehung] of Object and Subject to one another, and the necessary presupposition of a whole of which Object and Subject are the parts." Friedrich Hölderlin, "On Judgment and Being," in *Hegel's Development*, ed. H. S. Harris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972). 515.

Idealism, Negativity and Materialism

In order to head off the misunderstanding that idealism is in some way opposed to materialism (a charge Marx levels), it is important to emphasize that the sort of idealism I am discussing here is necessarily also a materialism. The core thought here is that the striving for totality is a striving which necessarily takes its departure from a material condition which is simply the fact of materiality, embodiedness.⁷ It is, in other words, only because subjectivity is necessarily embodied or material that the subject strives at all. The subject is thus divided between the demand for unity and the material fact of disunity.

This division has the important consequence that the striving for totality subjectivity is constantly making conceptual sense of the 'fact' of its own materiality. In pursuing its fundamental project of self-integration, the subject also makes sense of nature. Each encounter with the world, that is, each encounter with opposition, prompts the subject to take that part of the world up into itself, making it part of its the project. Subjectivity is thus an attempt at the rationalization of materiality.

At the same time, however, the subject is made rational by its engagement with materiality in the sense that which the materiality subject takes up into itself remains within the subject as a law which gives the subject structure and necessity.

⁷ This is a point made, for instance, by Marx when he says "The question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth — i.e. the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking in practice." Karl Marx, "Eleven Theses on Feuerbach," in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978). Thesis two.

That is, materiality has only been properly taken up when nature informs my orientation, not as nature *per se* but rather as that which has become a norm for me. That is, I can only said to be responding to your need (nature) when my response takes that need and transforms it into a (conceptual) solution. In this mind-nature interaction, the subject achieves the compromise between the absolute freedom of mind and the absolute mechanical determinacy of body. Rule, law or norm is the name given to this compromise.

The full integration of mind and nature is not yet achieved. The striving for integration is thus the subject's constant work to make sense of the world while always falling short of complete integration. This thought, of course, is often put in the language of desire, as I too shall do in this book. Thus, centrally, for Hegel and Freud, subjectivity is the desire for satisfaction as the resolution of the tension between mind's demand for totality and nature's inertia. Desire is thus not, as Freud sometimes tends to think, merely a material interest. It is rather, as Hegel recognizes, a force for subject integration.

It may be in order to say something at the outset about my attempt to connect Hegel and Freud. While I believe that the success of this project depends on the argument as a whole, I should say here what I take to be the stakes of this comparison. It is not my intention to argue that Freud sought to craft a dialectical theory in the Hegelian sense. Freud took himself to be a positivist. Rather, what I show is that Freud's theory can be reconstructed from a dialectical and idealist standpoint and that a theory reconstructed in this way is of significant value for a theory of subjectivity. In pursuing such a reconstruction I stress elements of Freud's

theory which Freud himself regarded as highly speculative, such as the theory of the death drive and Eros. It is my contention that it is only with that theory in place that a proper understanding of the metapsychology can be achieved.

To put the point more forcefully, what I am suggesting is that *any* theory of subjectivity must have a certain structure, moving from the structural to the contingent, and that this structure is most adequately articulated by Hegel. Reconstructing Freud in the Hegelian mode then is not so much making Freud Hegelian as reconstructing Freud's theory as a theory of the subject *tout court*. In doing so I am doing what, in another context, might be called the creolization of theory.

Three Levels of Analysis: the Ontological, the Metapsychological and the Psychological

As I have just argued, the striving for subject integration is all-encompassing and continual. It is not always clear at what level of description as theorist's account of this process is meant to take place. In order to make orientation a little easier, I will distinguish three levels analysis of the striving for self-integration which correspond to the three principle levels of analysis offered by the three theorists considered here: the ontological level, the meta-psychological level and the psychological level.⁸

⁸ The ontological level I discuss here is not to be confused with Fanon's own critique of ontology in *Black Skin, White Masks*. Fanon's critique has, as I shall argue, the same target as the distinction I employ here in the sense that Fanon critique is of the *reified* ontological, that is, the idea that what is

The ontological level is the most fundamental level, the level of the basic structure of the subject itself. It is the level of capacity. As I have just argued following Kant, at the ontological level, each subject is capable of self-organization, that is, of responding to the material world with concepts. This basic activity takes the form of the subject's ability to give itself norms. In Hegel, the ontological level is the level at which consciousness becomes conscious of itself as a subject and simultaneously becomes aware of the distance between its material position and its goal. For Freud the ontological level concerns the basic structure of the experiencing of desire and seeking satisfaction. Hegel and Freud's project coincide at this basic level since both assume that the essential nature of subjectivity consists in being confronted with a problem and having to solve it. The search for a solution has a certain logic which Hegel calls reason but which must reveal itself through experience itself.⁹

actually historical contingent is actually necessary and unchanging. In Gordon's terms, my analysis aims to give a ground what he calls "the existential phenomenological impact of what [Fanon] 'sees'." Lewis R. Gordon, *Fanon and the Crisis of European Man: An Essay on Philosophy and the Human Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 1995). 10. The point is rather that, from the Husserlian phenomenological paradigm that Gordon prefers, the three levels allow a phenomenological reduction to the natural attitude which then permits a critical discussion of what has been thereby been revealed to be in some sense contingent. Indeed, Gordon too proposes a three-level analysis of the standpoint of embodiment: "the perspective from a standpoint in the world; the perspective seen from other standpoints in the world; and the human being is a perspective that is aware of itself being seen from other standpoints in the world" *ibid.* 18-19. While Gordon's way of parsing these levels is different, the underlying concern to understand each perspective in terms of other possible ones is something his project and mine share.

⁹ At this level, reason or what Hegel calls logic, is simply defined as whatever a subject does to answer the problems it is confronted with. Thus both Freud and Hegel's critique of enlightenment

The ontological level is a formal level, containing only the barest of content. It is a philosophical abstraction, a perspective on human subjectivity. It is important not to reduce subjectivity to only this level. Indeed, the argument of this study depends on seeing this as only one of several ways of understanding the subject.

The meta-psychological level is the level of the theory of the subject in the most general sense. For Freud it comprises the theory of psychic organization in both the unconscious, pre-conscious and consciousness as well as the id, ego, super-ego/ego-ideal structures. For Hegel it comprises the categories, that is, the norms the subject develops to orient itself in the world. Paradigmatically, for Hegel, these categories are the ones developed from self-consciousness to recognition. Importantly for my project Freud and Hegel have a developmental view of the categories with each new perspective being born out of a dissatisfaction with the previous way of understanding the world. This is quite evident in Hegel but Freud's second topology is also a developmental model in which primitive conceptualization in the id gives rise to a more sophisticated conceptual apparatus in the ego and finally comes to completion in the super-ego/ego-ideal.

Each element at the metapsychological level is referred to the other terms as well as to the ontological level. Pathology occurs when the constellation of, say, ego and super-ego inhibits the more fundamental project of desire-satisfaction which

conceptions of reason (including Kant) consists in raising doubts about the possibility of constructing a logic independently of the problems arising for the subject. This point can be seen, for instance, in Hegel's refusal to provide an independent method to his *Phenomenology*. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). §73. GW 9:53.

constitutes the subject at its core. Pathology is thus simply the relative deviation from a more successful achievement of the self-integration mandated by subjectivity itself. Pathology is, however, also always relative to the other options potentially open to the subject. Similarly, in Hegel, each new category appears as the response to a previous norm which failed to satisfy the subject's desire. The bulk of the analysis offered by Freud and Fanon takes place at this level.

Finally there is the psychological level. This level is referred to the metapsychological level and constitutes the level of contingent. The metapsychological organization provides the paradigm for the interaction with the empirical world. The metapsychological level frames the world of contingency and thus informs the psychological level of the individual. The psychological level, we could say, is the level of individual character or personality.

However, and this is central, the subject's psychological interaction with the outside world can and does influence her metapsychological organization. That is, to take an example from Fanon, the simple fact of being treated as inferior by the colonial master means that the black child will fail to develop her super-ego in a way that allows it to achieve satisfaction the way a white child would. The material world thus enters the psyche through psychological formations and is then responded to by the metapsychological norms— themselves formalized at the ontological level as self-integration or desire-satisfaction— which govern personality.

The key thing to grasp in terms of the idealist model I've already sketched is that mind and material world are mediated by the metapsychological and psychological levels. There are then, strictly speaking, four levels— the ontological,

the metapsychological, the psychological and the material— but since the material level is the level of contingency nothing philosophically interesting can be said about it (though, of course, natural science is concerned with this material level).

The mediation of the concept of subjectivity (self-integration) by the metapsychological and psychological levels has both a constructive and a critical function. Self-integration is performed by the successively more fine grained response to material problems permitted by meta-psychic and psychological structures. Self-integration only comes about because the ego-id-super-ego relation works together and expresses itself in character traits of some sort. However, the failure of a successful desire-satisfaction reflects on the inadequacy of the psychological and meta-psychological levels to perform their function. The failure of psychological desire-satisfaction to occur thus always prompts the critical question, what is wrong at the metapsychological level that made what looked like a simple problem an insurmountable obstacle. This question is backstopped by ontological level which always insists that self-integration is, in principle, possible.¹⁰

This critical perspective will be of central importance as we shall see in chapter three, where the ontologically secured, and metapsychologically articulated

¹⁰ This point is supposed to capture, in part at least, the critical or negative implications of Hegel's dialectic itself which, while recognizing the need for the construction of norms. No term is *sui generis*. Thus I try to track Hegel's central insight in the *Logic* that reflection is always reflection on something which exists in time and which is at the same time transformed through this reflection. See *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline. Part 1, Science of Logic*, trans. Klaus Brinkmann and Daniel O. Dahlstrom (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). § 112. GW 20:143. For an analysis of Hegel's Logic of Essence along these lines see Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer, *Hegels Analytische Philosophie: Die Wissenschaft Der Logik Als Kritische Theorie Der Bedeutung* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1992).

notion of subjectivity as self-integration is shown to be faulty in the colonial context. The colonial context constitutes two different kinds of subjects, the colonial masters who are free and the colonial subjects who are unfree. Reference to the ontological level at which the subject is fundamentally constituted as free allows the critique of colonial society as failing in the sense that not all are free there. Without this ontological referent, however, there might either be no real distinguishing between free and unfree or, what perhaps amounts to the same, the colonial masters could (as they do) simply claim that the colonial subject is by nature subservient and unfree. Both of these claims can only properly be refuted with reference to the more fundamental level of analysis provided by the metapsychological and ontological levels. Similar, in Freud as in Fanon, ordinary psychological problems can only be treated with reference to a sound or self-integrating metapsychological structure. It is the task of the therapist to help the patient attain such a 'normal' metapsychological structure.

It is thus important to note that these three levels are simply perspectives on our lived experience. The levels are therefore levels of analysis not levels of being. It is important to track the level of analysis because much depends on the dialectical interplay between the levels and the concepts discussed. Thus the proper level of description of a particular practical problem is always at the intersection between two different but adjoining levels. The problem of the colonial subject's demand for freedom against a racist society is understood as a clash between the ontological claim to self-integration and freedom of each subject with the metapsychological

demand that social structures be put in place which permit this freedom to be lived at the metapsychological and psychological levels as well.

The argument then is that we need an account of the ontological theory from which to evaluate metapsychology and only in this way will we be able to clarify and potentially even to cure psychological ailment, political and individual. To claim this, however, is not to claim that it is just a matter of getting the ontological level right and that everything simply follows on from there. To the contrary, what makes the account of all three levels a critical account is that the metapsychological and psychological levels are subject to revision based on the competing ontological and material levels. More over, these relations are historical; for instance, the psychological idea of freedom took on a particular shape in the enlightenment which led to its refiguring in the Kantian turn from a feeling of harmony with the universe to the idea of self-authorization. Kant had not discovered anything new but had put it in new philosophical language which, in turn, influenced how people spoke about their subjectivity in metapsychological and ontological terms.

Idealism and Kant's Categorical Imperative

Returning to the ontological level of analysis which is the most basic and also static, we turn to Kant. We do so because this book is primarily concerned with practical philosophy (moral and political philosophy) and Kant's theory of the categorical imperative is the preeminent idealist and expression of such a theory. Furthermore, Hegel's thought is, as I will argue, a radicalization of many of Kant's central insights. However, since there has been such a lot written about the

categorical imperative, it might be helpful if I outline here what I take the categorical imperative to be expressing. Furthermore, Kant's categorical imperative is also an important reference point for Fanon's engagement with ethics at the level of the individual. My interpretation turns on seeing Kant as expressing the dialectical tension between the ontological and the metapsychological levels of analysis in which the fundamental capacity for organization is actualized as a set of norms which dictate a general social outlook on how to treat people.¹¹

Kant's categorical imperative always articulates the relation between material embodiedness and our fundamental aspiration to complete subject integration. The categorical imperative is the term for the subject's orientation within a world in which it is both bound by its embodiedness, its connection to nature, and necessarily (categorically) in a relation of striving (an imperative) for a harmony between itself

¹¹ Here, again, I present my own view, but I am also indebted to the work of John Rawls and Christine Korsgaard for developing a properly idealist moral theory in the contemporary context. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Rev. ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); "Kantian Constructivism in Moral Theory," in *Collected Papers*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999); "Themes from Kant's Moral Philosophy," in *Collected Papers*, ed. Samuel Freeman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999). Christine M. Korsgaard, "Kant's Formula of Humanity," in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); "Morality as Freedom," in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); "Kant's Analysis of Obligation," in *Self-Constitution; Agency, Identity, and Integrity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

For constructivist theories of morality in a more continental register, see, for instance: Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding : Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance* (London: Verso, 2007); Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. Peter Hallward (London: Verso, 2001). And from a Lacanian perspective: Mari Ruti, *The Singularity of Being: Lacan and the Immortal Within* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).

and nature. Kant conceives of this relation as a project which has, at its core, the harmonious relation between human subjects.

In the second formulation of the categorical imperative, Kant writes: "So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as a end, never merely as a means."¹² Kant is here saying that, given that you cannot help using people as a means to your satisfaction, you should only do so in a way that *at the same time* allows them to pursue the project of their own subject integration. The categorical imperative thus asks us to consider our position within this wider project and to pursue it at the same time as we pursue our more particular (but necessary) satisfactions.

This wider project, Kant always argues, involves placing ourselves in the position of the any subject, that is, of a subject for whom general integration or satisfaction is the goal rather than any particular kind of integration or satisfaction. Kant thus claims that subject integration centrally involves the integration of empirical subjects with each other under a higher but nonetheless intelligible conception of freedom. We should thus act in such a way that we at least do not impede the unification of subject with each other in pursuit of a general integration of the world. More positively, we should make such integration our conscious goal.¹³

¹² Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. Mary J. Gregor, trans. Mary J. Gregor, Practical Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). 4:429.

¹³ The idea of such an integration of the world is given in *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, ed. Allen W. Wood and George Di Giovanni, Religion and Rational Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). chapter 4.

Universal integration, however, cannot proceed in the abstract. It requires a general set of norms to be developed which allow each subject to see itself as integrated into the social whole in a way that the whole constitutes a harmony for her as an individual. In this way, individual subject integration and universal subject integration might eventually coincide.

Kant is an idealist precisely in the sense that he never loses track of the contingent situation in which a subject finds herself, that is, must reflect *from*. The place the individual reflects from is that of finding herself in the midst of other subjects who are, at first pass, obstacles to her satisfaction. Integration occurs when others can be understood not as obstacles but as necessary elements of harmony that is, if the subject understands her the satisfaction of desires as dependent on the satisfaction of the desires of others.

Hegel

In what follows I give a brief account of the fundamental commitments of Hegel's philosophy as they pertain to the project at hand. This account concerns what I consider Hegel's theory of normativity as it pertains to the ontological level, that is, constitution of the subject as desire for freedom, as well as to the metapsychological level of the historical development of norms. Hegel is most fundamentally concerned with these two levels of analysis and is relatively unconcerned with questions of psychology. The actualization of the ontological nature of freedom is only made possible by individuals articulating their particular

desires through the development of metapsychological structures which serve their concrete or psychological goals.

I have already suggested that Hegel's account of norms articulates the same movement as Freud's metapsychological account. Let me head off an objection which might prevent this parallel from making sense. Freud's conception of the metapsychological is generally not something that the individual has any intentional control over. Rather, the ego's develops out of the id is conceived as the condition of subjectivity not it's result. There could be no subject without this development. When we speak of Hegel's account of norms, however, it often seems that humans are creating them and this is, in part, correct. What I'd like to emphasize, however, is that at the more abstract and basic level (as my account will show) norms are the condition of subjectivity just as they are in Freud. That is, a certain type of organization of the relation between nature and mind— perhaps parallel to the relation between ego (mind?) and id (nature?)— is the condition of subjectivity which then permits further psychological norms to be constructed, those which serve the more concrete desire-satisfaction matrix. This runs parallel to the way the development of the ego permits certain of the id's desires to be satisfied which previously could not.

In Hegel's retrospective analysis of the development of the metapsychological norms of freedom attests to this parallel in the sense that norms develop behind the back of the agents in history. We are, one might say, with Heidegger, thrown into the norms we have in the sense that we end up with the metapsychological structures we have. Our agency, however, manifests itself in our desire to change those

metapsychological or basic normative structures through therapy, through political action or in some other way.

Hegel and the Evolution of Norms

Hegel's project, like Kant's, is centrally concerned with an account of how the human subject achieves an ethical society. However, while Kant's project had the general aim of giving an ontological or structural account of the possibility of human freedom, Hegel's project concerns the details of the dialectical movement between the ontological and the metapsychological.¹⁴ That is, Hegel traces the fate of the subject's attempt to make itself at home in the world at a more concrete level than Kant. Such being at home in the world is what Hegel calls freedom or recognition or ethical life. This is the constructive side.

From the other perspective, that of negativity, the account of the striving for freedom is one not of desire and satisfaction but of desire and loss. Hegel's philosophy is thus equally a meditation on the subject's expulsion from the original unity of subject and object. Being a subject means, constitutively, lacking a stable

¹⁴ Kant also offers a developmental account in his history essays, but they remain quite vague. They offer a rational or normative reconstruction of a possible way in which we got to where we are, i.e. how humans became rational. These account is in a sense quite similar to Hegel's aim in the *Phenomenology* except that they do without the internal perspective, offering only the perspective of the philosopher. See "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. H. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); "Conjectures on the Beginning of Human History," in *Kant: Political Writings*, ed. H. Reiss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?."

relation to an object.¹⁵ We are, for Hegel, like for Plato, one half of the original unity.¹⁶ The loss of this original unity, however, means that subjectivity also starts in a place of lack from which it must work its way up to harmony and justice. Hegel's dynamic account, unlike Kant's, foreground the notion of struggle and suffering involved in becoming a subject. This negative side is what I take to be central for the argument in this study.¹⁷

In what follows I take the ontological account of idealist subjectivity to have been adequately elaborated in the above discussion of Kant. That account fundamentally concerns the subject's constitution as striving to integrate itself and nature. This account, however, left vague many details about the constitution of individual subjectivity, and in particular did not elaborate how individual subjects are able to relate to each other at the fundamental level of freedom. Kant simply assumed intersubjectivity while Hegel elaborates it, seeing it, in fact, as the main problem for the achievement of ethical life. We are thus concerned with the particular constitution of subjectivity such that freedom can become a concrete goal and not just remain an abstract possibility.

¹⁵ This can perhaps most clearly be seen in the account Hegel gives in the *Phenomenology of Spirit* itself where *Geist* undergoes the pathway of despair, moving from self-certainty, as the unreflected unity between nature and subject, to ultimate unification in absolute knowing. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. §76. GW 9:55.

¹⁶ Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, Collected Works of Plato (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953). 189c-189d.

¹⁷ In a sense one might say that Hegel's account of negativity is a successor concept to Kant's notion of critique which likewise presents a standard against which certain assumptions can be tested and rejected. The key innovation in Hegel is to see critique as a historical process stretching over all elements of human life.

In Hegelian language, the metapsychological account concerns how the absolute (totality or self-integration) is achieved by the movement of *Geist*. It is a feature of Hegel's philosophy that the movement from ontological to metapsychological account occurs in many ways. Hegel conceptualizes it as the transition from the argument about the categories of the movement of *Geist* given in the *Logic* to the account of subjectivity's development given in the *Phenomenology*. Alternatively, he also argues that the conceptual development achieved in the *Logic* is only possible once self-consciousness has achieved science or *Wissenschaft* at the end of the *Phenomenology*.¹⁸

Our concern is more limited, however, since we are concerned only with Hegel's practical philosophy. More specifically, we are concerned with the particular canonical expression of freedom Hegel gives in his famous discussion of the master-slave dialectic in the *Phenomenology*. This section concerns the birth of the subject as self-conscious, that is, as a subject capable of reflecting on the particular structure of its norms.¹⁹

¹⁸ For the latter point, see Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline. Part 1, Science of Logic*. §25. GW 20:68.

¹⁹ My account is not only differs from most contemporary accounts of Hegel who downplay Hegel's account of loss but also from the most influential account available in the mid-20th Century, that of Alexandre Kojève whose lectures were attended by everyone from Jean-Paul Sartre and Raymond Queneau to Georges Bataille, Merleau-Ponty and Jacques Lacan. Alexandre Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, trans. James H. Nicols Jr (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980). For contemporary accounts see, for instance, Terry Pinkard, *Hegel's Phenomenology: The Sociality of Reason* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Robert B. Pippin, *Hegel on Self-Consciousness: Desire and Death in the Phenomenology of Spirit* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011). But see also, for an account emphasizing loss and desire in Hegel's

The complex relation between the ontological and metapsychological accounts is given expression by Hegel as a narrative differentiation within the text of the *Phenomenology* between the philosopher and the developing subject. That is, the story of *Geist's* development is told at the same time from the perspective of the subject developing an understanding of its own norms and thereby discovering its own freedom and also from the perspective of the philosopher who has already attained freedom and relates in retrospect, his (her?) own journey to freedom.

Hegel's account thus work in two directions. From the perspective of the subject in history, the account moves from the most empirical to the psychological, the metapsychological and finally the ontological understanding of freedom, and is thus a regress on the condition of its own truth. From the philosopher's perspective, however, account can be seen as the development from the most basic conception of freedom (as independence or negative freedom) to a conception of freedom which is inclusive of all other empirical subjects and is experienced even at the psychological level.

The narrative of discovery foregrounds the work of the negative and explains the short treatment of the psychological level in Hegel's account. This is the case because every new achievement or discovery of a more satisfactory normative scheme is predicated on the failure a previous scheme. Further, each new norm is the response to a particular psychological desire. The desire's particular satisfaction,

Phenomenology, Rebecca Comay, *Mourning Sickness: Hegel and the French Revolution* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011). For an earlier, slightly different version of my own account, see Stefan Bird-Pollan, "Hegel's Grounding of Intersubjectivity," *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 38, no. 3 (2012).

for Hegel, can only give rise to a norm if it is in some sense the satisfaction of a more general tendency in all subjects, hence has a certain degree of universality or truth. The discovery by the subject that a certain relation is structural constitutes the metapsychological norm. Other mere psychological satisfactions, by contrast, just fade away because they are too negative or contingent, that is, do not arrange the world in a generally satisfying way. Thus, the advent of self-consciousness for Hegel, what I am calling the metapsychological level, comes when the subject discovers that its nature is desire or striving.²⁰

The Transition to Self-Consciousness

We pick up the story Hegel tells in the *Phenomenology* at the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness. This transition is significant for Hegel because it inaugurates the first appearance of freedom in his account of *Geist*'s development. Whereas the three chapters on consciousness were concerned with *Geist*'s probing of the boundaries of the relation between sensibility and concept, the transition to self-consciousness inaugurates the self-conscious relation of concept to concept, that is, concepts or norms now begin to examine each other. Norms, to put it differently, are now examined in terms of their fundamental normative adequacy to what the nascent subject takes its essence to be.

At issue in the transition from consciousness to self-consciousness is the discovery of idealism itself, the thought that I am in some sense responsible for my

²⁰ Hegel writes that self-consciousness knows itself as "desire in general". Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. §167. GW 9:104.

own norms. That is, the subject discovers that its answers to practical problems involves concepts which remain beholden to nature. The subject now knows itself as creating a world in which concept and nature continue to persist.

The most basic way Hegel puts this thought is that the discovery of normativity coincides with the discovery of the difference between myself and the outside world. "As self-consciousness, consciousness henceforth has a double object: the first, the immediate object, the object of sense-certainty and perception, which, however, is marked *for it* with the *character of the negative*; the second, namely, *itself*, which is the true *essence* and which at the outset is on hand merely in opposition to the first." (PhG §167; GW 9:104) That is, the subject here realizes for the first time that it is divided between sensibility or affect, over which it has not control, and reason which must vouch for the truth of that affect.

The movement to self-consciousness thus introduces a reflective distance in which freedom or autonomy is located. The task of the rest of the *Phenomenology*—and indeed all of Hegel's philosophy—is to fill in the properties of this freedom, to articulate what we are to do with this capacity to distinguish between self and world. This consciousness of the difference between self and world is, for Hegel, also consciousness of loss and separation. Freedom and loss are lived together as the two sides of the same phenomenon: loss of the original unity and desire to refind it in freedom as harmony.

This needs some elaboration especially as this point brings us quite close to Freud's conception of the same problem. The point is to locate in Hegel both a constructive (positive) and a negative element. Construction and negation are two

aspects of the same process; without anything to criticize, negativity would disappear just as construction requires the parts of the world which negativity has separated to do its unifying work. What I want to draw out, and what justifies the claim that freedom and loss are lived at the same time, is just the point that freedom, as construction is the response to the negativity of loss which exists always as yet unreflectedly in every subject. It is, in other words, only by engaging in the project of integration and self-constitution that one comes to understand the extent to which one is actually separated from the original unity, that is, the extent to which one lacks integration. Just as integration and disintegration imply each other, so too do freedom and loss. Construction reveals negativity and negativity reveals the need for construction.²¹ Desire is the term for this two-sided activity of *Geist*.

At the level of the living and breathing subject, Hegel's term for the ontological determination of desire is simply life. Life is constituted out of the dual determination both to be free and to have experienced loss. This freedom and loss is lived at the metapsychological level as desire and satisfaction. Life, Hegel writes "is neither what is first expressed, namely, the immediate continuity and unmixed character of [self-conscious's] essence, nor is it the durably existing shape and what exists for itself discretely [...]. Rather, it is the whole development itself, then dissolving its development, and, in this movement, being the simple whole sustaining itself." (PhG

²¹ The claim that construction and negativity are two aspects of the same process is a structural claim. Empirically it is, of course, possible that a subject can tend too far to one side or another. In psychoanalytic terms, too much negativity can cause regression while too much construction might cause secondary narcissism. This dialectic will be explored below and in greater detail in chapters four and five.

§171; GW 9:107) In other words, life is the unity of subjectivity and nature in the sense that it is both stable (as the life of the subject) and every changing as that which resists the subject's attempt at fixing. Life is the term for the unstable relation between these two in which the subject seeks always to impose form on what can never fully be mastered.

Employing a very similar conceptual constellation as Freud does, Hegel says that life is lived as the activity of desire. "Self-consciousness is [...] only certain of itself by way of the act of sublating this other, which in its eyes exhibits itself as self-sufficient life; self-consciousness is *desire*." (PhG §174; GW 9:107) Desire, for Hegel, is the term for the subject's attempt to integrate itself by sublating the world, that is, by making the world into something in which it can be at home. Desire is the expression of subjectivity as a dynamic striving to integrate itself under the law of reason which is just unity itself. However, just as the subject understand itself to be stable ($I=I$) and contingent, desire is discovered as something both essential to subjectivity (its formal aspect) and also as something which takes on particular forms which the subject is able to evaluate. Desire does not necessitate but rather makes options available for choice.

The newly discovered duality between inner and outer has a further sense, however: "As opposed to that *immediate* unity [of consciousness], which was articulated as a *being*, this second is the *universal* unity which contains all those moments as sublated within itself. It is the *simple genus*, which in the movement of life itself does not *exist for itself as this 'simple'*." (PhG §172; GW 9:107) Thus, self-consciousness comes to see itself as part of a larger group, as a genus, a being of a

certain class. That is, just as I have argued that the ontological level, as the most abstract, contains the other two levels within it, as species and sub-species, so too the genus of life itself contains under it (as extensions) more particular concepts of life, i.e. the life of *this* individual.

The individual's essential activity is the sublation or negation of the difference between itself and the outside world. Here self-consciousness denies the division of the world into self and other, denies loss and seeks to gain the original unity by destroying what appears to resist its power. Hegel writes: "Certain of the nullity of this other [the world around it], [self-consciousness] posits *for itself* this nullity as its truth, it destroys the self-sufficient object, and it thereby gives itself the certainty of itself as *true* certainty, as the sort of certainty which in its eyes has come to be in an *objective manner*." (PhG §174; GW 9:107) Self-consciousness has the capacity to reflect on its commitments to recovering the original unity, and invests these reflections with the criterion of truth or falsity, certainty or uncertainty. Self-consciousness is conscious of the standards it employs in interpreting the world and itself. Here self-consciousness, for the first time, self-consciously or deliberately, develops a standard of agency and the effective use of this to its ultimate end which is itself— its own existence. Self-consciousness, we can now say, has finally arrived at a conception of self, it has a principle through which to represent its own existence to itself. This principle gives self-consciousness a core identity which unify its actions in the world.

Summarizing now the results of the preceding discussion, we can see that there are two essential movements here: the first is the movement from

consciousness to self-consciousness which occurred through the bare capacity of representation, being able to take something for something else. The world and the self-consciousness were thus differentiated, on as object, the other as agent. The second movement occurred when self-consciousness became aware of its own activity of positing an existing truth about the world as an activity. Self-consciousness became aware of itself *as positing* its own essence, as *doing* the *taking*.

However, and this is the point of the master-slave dialectic to which we now turn, self-consciousness's self-understanding as responsible for all norms is false. By holding to its own authority, self-consciousness limits its conception of what the world is like by excluding other self-consciousnesses who have made the same discovery. Self-consciousness' insistence on its immediate authority prevents it from becoming part of the life of the genus (which all self-consciousnesses share). This narrow interpretation prevents self-consciousness from attaining actual reunification through recognition of the other in Ethical Life. Hegel puts the thought thus: "The *I* that is *we* and the *we* that is *I*." (PhG §177; GW 9:108) That is, the *I must become a we* and the *we must become an I*.

The Master-Slave Dialectic: Articulating the Demand for Freedom

There are two central steps in the master-slave dialectic. The first might be characterized as the advent of self-consciousness which comes, as I've already suggested, with the recognition of the concept of freedom. The second step is acting on freedom and includes the transformational activity of work. While Marxists have

typically made more of the second step, the first is most important for my reading. I will, however, discuss the first briefly.²²

The first part of Hegel's narrative concerns the development of self-consciousness as consciousness of one's own freedom. This reflective relation is the recognition of a divided unity. The first part of the master-slave dialectic shows how the initial psychic division between mind and body in which the subject becomes aware of itself as the authority over its own body can only be resolved once all bodies have come under a universal authority. This section is for Hegel the radicalization of the problem. Hence we move from an initial recognition of the possibility of intersubjectivity, through its radical denial, to the first step in the realization of concrete intersubjectivity as freedom.

The first moment of recognition which is also essentially mis-recognition lays the basis for self-consciousness of freedom. (Since self-consciousness has yet to be achieved, I will use the term 'proto-subject' until it is.) Let us begin with the encounter between the two proto-subjects. "The first [proto-subject] does not have the object [the other proto-subject] before it in the way that the object merely is initially for desire. Instead, it has an object existing for itself self-sufficiently." (PhG §182; GW 9:110)²³ This first encounter introduces the essential contradiction of

²² See, for instance, the young Marx's own heavy reliance on the idea work as agency. Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts."

²³ There has recently been considerable debate about the status of this encounter. While most interpretations take it that Hegel is here speaking of two proto-subjects encountering each others, two recent commentators have argued that Hegel is here speaking about a differentiation of the proto-subject within itself. See Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer, *Hegels Phänomenologie Des Geistes. Ein Dialogischr Kommentar: Gewissheit Und Vernunft*, vol. 1 (Hamburg: Meiner, 2014). John McDowell,

subjectivity: how can I have my self-sufficiency— my authority— outside of myself given that I am fundamentally self-authorizing? That is, if I am what I am by virtue of my authority, how can authority lie outside of me, in the other proto-subject?

And yet, Hegel writes this is what they recognize: they “*recognize themselves as mutually recognizing each other.*” (PhG §184; GW 9:110) That is, the notion of authority or, to be more basic, control or power, is submitted to a radical test. The proto-subjects recognize each other as under a shared authority: they recognize, here at the very beginning of human subjectivity, the inherently dual nature of authority or freedom.

The problem Hegel points to in this passage is that this recognition is a surprise to each proto-subject. That is, stumbling upon the other proto-subject, the first proto-subject *finds itself* recognizing the other’s authority, *finds itself* caring what the other thinks of it. It *finds* itself recognizing the other and as being recognized back. I want to emphasize here, in order set up better the dialectical reversal about to come, that what is recognized in this brief recognition is not only completely surprising but also completely vague: what is recognized is that, as Hegel puts it “I that is ‘We’ and ‘We’ that is ‘I’”. But it is at this moment completely unclear what an ‘I that is we’ could possibly look like given the context, both conceptually and ‘socially’.

"The Apperceptive I and the Empirical Self; toward a Heterodox Reading of *Lordship and Bondage* in Hegel's Phenomenology," in *Having the World in View: Essays on Kant, Hegel, and Sellars* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). My view is that since differentiation must be prompted by an event which is ‘outside’ of the subject’s conceptual matrix both internal and external differentiation must be occurring at the same time. It seems clear, however, that this initial encounter should not be taken as the encounter of two fully formed subjects as in the Hobbesian interpretation offered by Kojève, *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*.

It is only through the creation of more concrete conceptual structures which give normative content to recognition that recognition can become intelligible, can become a goal in the first place.

Because the meaning of the moment of recognition remains hidden from the two proto-subjects, they continue in their previous mode of encountering the world, each is certain that it is the final authority over nature. Given this way of encountering the world, the experience of recognition turns into its negativity: how can the other claim to grasp the standard of my subjectivity given that only I possess that authority? How can the other claim to recognize me, knowing nothing about me?

The expression of this second *mis*understanding of recognition is this: "The other for it [the first proto-subject] exists as an unessential object designated by the character of the negative." (PhG §186; GW 9:111) The proto-subject asserts its independence or autonomy against the other by insisting on its essential independence from any determination. In its most radical form, this independence is independence from life itself.

Independence from life means the proto-subject's independence from even its own body, that is, its complete authority over itself. Each endorses absolutely its intellectual side at the expense of the body. At the same time, by engaging in the struggle to the death against the other, each proto-subject asserts the other's complete embodiment and particularity. Each asserts that the other is nothing but body. And in thus asserting the other's particularity, each also asserts that it is the authority over the other's life and hence can do with the other's life just what it can

do with its own life: completely negate it. Hegel comments: “the relation of both self-consciousnesses is thus determined in such a way that it is through a life and death struggle that each *proves his worth* [*bewähren*] to himself, and each *proves his worth* to each other.” (PhG §187; GW 9:111)

However, the consequence of each proto-subject’s assertion of authority over itself and the other is that the mode of proof (killing the other) cannot do the work of *being* a proof since the only the successful proof— killing the other— is also the destruction of the very basis for that proof. Consequently the proto-subject who appears capable of radical self-determination turns out to be fundamentally incapable of self-determination because self-determination now includes determining that particular other who has already recognized the first proto-self-consciousness. Killing the other now undercuts the proto-self-consciousness’ own self-determination. Hegel comments: “This trial by death equally sublated the truth which was supposed to emerge from it and, by doing so, completely sublates the certainty of itself.” (PhG §188; GW 9:112) The struggle to the death is thus a failure. It is a failure because by engaging in the struggle to the death both proto-subjects misunderstand the dual nature of life; they misunderstand that life is constituted as a relation between the authority of mind and the materiality of the body and not simply one or the other.

If the killing of one by the other is the complete failure of this process of mutual recognition, the survival of both at least provides the initial starting point for a possible recognition, albeit in a most radically unequal way, “one is self-sufficient; for it, its essence is being-for-itself. The other is non-self-sufficient; for it, life, that is,

being for an other, is the essence.” (PhG §189; GW 9:112) In other words, one is master and the other one slave.²⁴

Let me elaborate this point from both perspectives, starting with the master. The master has retained his previous supremacy over the world by subjugating the slave. In doing so, however, he has failed to come to terms with the experience of recognition in the sense that his attempt at asserting his independence, that is, at having his independence recognized by an other, has failed because the other who could have recognized the master's independence is no longer an equal and does not have the authority to recognize the master. The master remains where he was, having acquired a slave who is no more than an appendage to him: he is, so to speak, an external body, doing whatever the master demand of him, mediating the world for the master.

The focus in Hegel's narrative now shifts to the slave for the slave is the one in whom the concept of recognition has come to be expressed, albeit negatively. I say 'come to be expressed' because the slave has not yet become conscious of this concept, has not yet become conscious of his freedom. In order to understand this point let us return to the concept of life. During the struggle in which each disregarded his own life, the slave sees that there is more to him than *independence* and so realizes that life is made up of both mind and body. So he gives in, pleads for

²⁴ I use this translation for Hegel's *Herr* and *Knecht* not because it is the most accurate but, as Kojève rightly saw, because it conveys the existential conditions here most clearly. It is also at this point that the use of pronouns, which has so far been avoided, becomes inevitable. Though these figures in Hegel are no gendered, it seems artificial to employ the usual feminine pronoun in this context. I will hence follow Hegel's German in which both master and slave are masculine nouns.

his life and he retains his life in the mode of being a mere thing. He has sacrificed mind to preserve his body. But as a constitutive element of life his mind is not lost but exists for him as negation, hence as complete dependence.

Being under someone else's authority, however, really just means sharing authority. For it is impossible for the master to completely control the slave without actually himself *becoming* the slave. The slave (and subjects in general) must now learn that all authority is actually shared authority. This thought of shared authority is initially lived negatively, as oppression. But, and this is the dialectical point Hegel is here making, even dependence in its most extreme form relies in its most basic form on the *recognition* of the other as having authority and this recognition of the other's authority itself attests to the dominated subject's own authority.

To put it in a different register, the outcome of the struggle to the death is recognitive in the same sense that the initial recognitive encounter was, only with the emphasis on the negative: for here too the slave *finds* himself to be recognizing the master as the authority over his body. One of the two options has come true: the slave's authority is completely receptive to the authority of the master. But this experience of being completely outside himself carries with it the essentially constructive experience of learning what it is like to *share* authority with an other. Hegel thus comments that "the *truth* of the self-sufficient consciousness is the *servile consciousness*." (PhG §193; GW 9:114) What was initially unintelligible in the experience of recognition has been given a concrete social form: oppression. Radical oppression is the first form of intersubjectivity. Hegel's point is that

domination is a necessary step toward freedom, containing within it, as it were, the seeds of freedom.

The Master-Slave Dialectic: Freedom and Work

The second part of the master-slave dialectic introduces the idea of work as agency or the struggle for freedom as the negation of oppression or dependence. The development of the concept of work allows the slave to become self-conscious of his own fundamental activity, the activity of organizing the world according to his own norms.

As we just saw, in slavery the subject's authority is outside itself because the master represents the slave's authority. However, the master's authority over the slave manifests itself only as only an external authority, an authority over the slave's actions or body and not over the slave's intentions. The slave may be doing the master's bidding but does not necessarily think the master's thoughts.²⁵ Hegel programmatically says: "As a consciousness *forced back* into itself, [the slave] will take the inward turn and convert itself into true self-sufficiency." (PhG §193: GW 9:114) That is, though work, the slave comes to understand that he is the ultimate authority behind his actions and not the master. That is, the slave must move from the passivity of simply taking the master's word as authoritative to the reflective activity of endorsing what the master tells him as right.

²⁵ The problem of ideology appears here in its most basic sense. Hegel moves over the issue quickly but this question will be central to the analysis of Fanon and even of Freud in subsequent chapters.

Hegel conceptualizes this transition from complete lack of authority to the idea of relative autonomy as occurring through the activity of labor. In order to properly understand this concept, it is worth recalling that the experience of recognition shifted the focus from the previous subject-world relation to a subject-subject relation. The subject-subject relation, though it has revealed itself as a fundamental structure, is insufficient to actualize the relation of recognition since it turns into a relation of oppression. The master is the slave's everything to the exclusion of other relations. It is thus by returning to nature, to the slave's bodily occupation, that the master-slave relation can be mediated.

Recall also that it was the material world that was at issue in the initial struggle, each proto-subject wanted to preserve its absolute authority over the world. Authority over the world, it appears, is completely with the master. Hegel's analysis, however, aims to show that it is really the exact opposite, namely that authority over the world actually lies with the slave. Hegel says that it is "by means of work [that] this servile consciousness comes round to itself." (PhG §195; GW 9:114)

Let us return then to the initial situation after the struggle. The master is the absolute authority over the slave. The slave procures whatever the master wants in the world so that the master may consume it. The master's nature, even in this new phase, remains essentially negative— that of consumption. This total consumption, carried now by the slave, means that the master's existence leaves no mark and consequently that the master disappears from view as an agent.

For the slave it is different. The slave's essential activity, as mandated by the master, is that of creating or producing. In a famous phrase Hegel writes that: "work

is desire *held in check*, it is vanishing *staved off*, that is, work cultivates and educates". (PhG §195; GW 9:115)²⁶ That is, the slave's essential activity is the negative of the master's consumption and is construction and integration. These two necessarily go together since the slave must first *make* what the master then *negates*, consumes.

Work thus has this double property, it is positivity and negativity at once. The real question, however, concerns not the activity of work but how the slave understands his work.

This *negative* middle term [work], this formative *activity*, is at the same time *individuality*, the pure being-for-itself of consciousness, which in the work external to it now enters into the element of persistence.

Thus, by those means, the working consciousness comes to an

intuition of self-sufficient being *as its own self*. (PhG §195; GW 9:115)
Hegel's thought is that it is through the activity of creating or constructing that the slave gradually comes to understand himself as authoritative— and, accordingly, the master as the inessential authority. (It is worth noting that while this point is made with regard to the particular context of the master-slave dialectic, the idea extends to the whole of human history since the history of the subject essentially consists in the process of self-authorization, the achievement of freedom.)

In order to appreciate the depth of Hegel's point let us recall the two initial experiences of passivity we have so far encountered. First there was the *finding oneself* recognizing the other. Second there was the slave's *finding* himself yielding to the authority of the master in servitude. The second of these two experiences of

²⁶ "Die Arbeit [...] ist *gehemmte* Begierde, *aufgehaltenes* Verschwinden, oder sie *bildet*."

passivity, undergoing slavery, was a version of the initial experience of recognition in the sense that in order obey the master, the slave had to recognize the master as his master. Out of this second recognition, Hegel now argues, springs the most primitive determination of activity or agency:

In forming the thing, [the servant's] own negativity, that is, his being-for-self, only becomes an object in his own eyes in that he sublates the opposed existing form. However, this objective negative is precisely the alien essence before which he trembled, but now he destroys this alien negative and posits himself as such a negative within the element of continuance. (PhG §196; GW 9:115)

What Hegel has in mind here is that through work the slave overcomes the “objective *negative*” of his own passivity, nature within himself, and appropriates or “posits” himself as that negativity. By positing himself as the negativity of his own negativity, of course, the slave posits himself as activity or agency.

Why? One way of understanding this is to see that by working, by negating the world in order to preserve it for the master, the slave gradually comes to realize that the essential part of this process is done by him. *He* is the one who negates and creates in the physical sense. But, and this is the decisive point, he is also the one who *organizes* the world, that is, the slave is the source of the intellectual structure of the activity of working. To take a simple example, the master's demand is always finite (‘bring me food’), which means it falls to the slave to determine what ‘food’ is and how to prepare it. The slave thus realizes that it has been up to him all along how to live the master's authority over him.

Hegel puts it thus: “by way of this retrieval [of his being-for-itself, the slave] comes to acquire through his own means a *mind of his own*, and he does this precisely in the work in which there had seemed to be merely some *outsider’s mind* [*fremder Sinn*].” (PhG §196; GW 9:115) The slave understands that his subservience to the authority the master is itself *authorized by him*. That is, the slave recognizes that the master can only have authority over him to the extent that he, the slave, grants the master such authority. For this too the slave has learned: death at the hands of the master is a choice that the slave can authorize.²⁷

The process of negating the material world has thus taught the slave that he is the one acting in or negating the world and that this necessarily proceeds on his authority. He has, however, and this is central, learned that his authority is bounded by the authority of the other in the sense that the other may still kill him. Oppression does not go away, it is simply lived in a more varied way. The slave learns to exert his authority within the parameters set for him by the other. To put it another way, through work the slave has come to recognize that his freedom to act in the world can and does coexist with the authority of the other over him. Freedom is thus a concept which necessarily relates to the freedom of other.

²⁷ In metaethics the position arrived at is internalism, the idea that in order for a reason to be motivating for me, it must be recognized by me as a good reason. The goodness of a reason (or, its rationality) comes from my assessment of it rather than from some extrinsic quality the reason has. This point is of central importance to the argument given in this book. I will, however, refrain from framing my argument in the terms of contemporary metaethics. For canonical accounts of internalism see Thomas Nagel, *The Possibility of Altruism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). 7 and Bernard Williams, “Internal and External Reasons,” in *Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers, 1973-1980* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

The slave has finally achieved self-consciousness in that he has become conscious of his self-relation as being divided between freedom and domination. He recognizes the Kantian point that his authority is both absolute (in mind) and relative (in body). But, put with a lesser level of abstraction, and in a more Hegelian vein, he also recognizes that the meaning of freedom is dependent on the other just as his body partially his and partially the master's. Freedom is thus lived by the slave in the context of the authority of the master just as the slave's bodily integrity is preserved against the constant threat of physical annihilation by the master. Oppression has not so much been overcome as provided the impetus to become free. Freedom has been understood to be the working of authority in the context of a communal body.

Conclusion

The interpretation of Hegel's master-slave dialectic given here is meant to supplement Kant's theory of freedom with a dynamic account of how ontological freedom comes to be experienced by the subject at the metapsychological level. That is, I interpreted Kant's categorical imperative as insisting on the necessity of conceiving subjectivity as the capacity for freedom and hence as the process of self-integration as harmonization. This necessary structure of subjectivity constitutes the ontological level. I have now used Hegel's master-slave dialectic to show how this Kantian idea of freedom appears at the metapsychological level, that is, as a necessary structure in the psyche of the individual in terms of this project. I have thus tried to show that the subject, even in deepest slavery, cannot help but conceiving of himself as free. The way the slave sees himself as free is the product

of a complex process of metapsychological self-integration. That is, the slave must develop a conception of self, of agency, of oppression in order to come to the conclusion that all though he is dominated in body, he is nonetheless free in mind. Furthermore, the slave comes to recognizes his desire as the desire for freedom.

We can use the difference between the ontological level and the metapsychological level to draw certain critical conclusions from the above account. The master-slave dialectic is also a theory of how freedom comes to be experienced as shared even if this shared freedom is initially lived as unfreedom. Oppression, however, it is central to see, can only occur in the context of a more fundamental determination of freedom. Oppression implies freedom. Moreover, oppression is a necessary step in the achievement of freedom because it is the experience of the authority of the other and only this experience permits one to become a full fledged subject in the sense of the thesis subjectivity is intersubjectivity.

Freud, Negativity and the Self-Consciousness

In this section I take up the second theoretical structure through which I examine Fanon's work in subsequent chapters. What I present here is an outline of what I take to be the most salient features of Freud's discussion of what I've been calling the ontological and the metapsychological levels, especially as they relate to the issue we will take up in the discussion of Fanon. This section, like the preceding sections, are meant to provide a basic theoretical orientation rather than to address the particular pathologies which will be the concern of future chapters. In this

account of Freud's work I first give an account of the drive theory and then showing how the drive theory relates to the second topology (id, ego, super-ego/ego-ideal).²⁸

In presenting this account I am also concerned to say some of the things I have just argued for in the Hegelian (and Kantian) accounts in a psychoanalytic register. Again, my aim is not to argue that Freud intended to produce a dialectical theory of the sort I am presenting but rather to show how his thinking can be employed to make the sort of argument about the constitution of subjectivity I am making here.

A basic feature of Freud's account which I intend to make use of in my dialectical reading is the fact that the drives are essentially dynamic. The human condition, according to Freud is characterized by a push and pull between the forces of construction (erotic unification with the all) and destruction (the thanatotic return to inanimate materiality). This Freudian dialectic parallels Hegel's dialectic of positivity and negativity closely.

A second parallel I will be concerned with is the metapsychological structuration of these drives. Thus, in Freud, the ego is the manifestation of the organism's need to harness the two drives in order to maintain the stability of the organism. This stability is achieved, however— another Hegelian point— by the *integration of the subject* according to the subject's own most criterion: maintaining

²⁸ It is perhaps unusual to be speaking of four psychic elements in Freud's second topology but the introduction of the ego-ideal as a somewhat separate faculty is essential for the argument I will be making here. As I will elaborate below, I take the ego-ideal to be the narcissistic analogue to the aggressive super-ego. While Freud did not develop the concept of the ego-ideal I believe that it plays a central role in the theoretical understanding in normal psychic development which, of course, Freud was relatively little interested in.

self-identity. This integration, however, is constantly under threat from the forces of the negative which, in Freud, are expressed by the death drive. The psyche, as unification of the Erotic and the death drives is a compromise which lasts as long as it lasts.

Finally, the increasing pressure generated by the dialectic of the drives forces the ego structure to undergo a further development in which it becomes *self-conscious* of its integrating activity. This self-consciousness occurs in the Oedipus complex in which the ego undergoes a separation into a tripartite structure in which the ego is reflected according to the death drive (super-ego) and according to Eros (ego-ideal). (I discuss the ego-ideal in chapter 4 and 5, and will examine only the super-ego here.)

Methodologically speaking, I again provide a very schematic but, I hope, systematic reading of (for Freud) disparate elements of the psychoanalytic corpus. While I focus mostly on reconstructing a systematic basis for Freud's version of psychoanalysis, the vocabulary I use will occasionally depart from Freud's terminology in order to make the connections to Hegel's theory more clear. Since this is a reconstruction I will not note particular instances in which I depart from the letter of Freud's texts.

Freud and Idealism

In what follows I will be interpreting Freud as in the tradition of idealism in which Kant, Hegel, and Fanon (for reasons I will pursue below) must be situated. In the present context this means interpreting Freud in some sense against his own

wishes, that is, interpreting Freud in a far more philosophical way than he would have found acceptable.²⁹ The reasons this makes sense will, I hope, become evident in the discussion itself. I say that Freud would have rejected being characterized as an idealist because he thought of himself as the other thing, a realist, a scientist, someone who looks to the facts first. He often regrets not being able to give a biological or chemical account of what his insights into the human psyche have forced him to postulate.³⁰ Freud always thought that one would, eventually, be able to give a biological account of the mind which would bear out his metapsychology.

Here is not the place to argue with this claim. However, it is important to see that Freud's scientific ambitions did not prevent him from forging a complex theory of the subject which takes as its basis not biology but rather the phenomena of psychic

²⁹ Habermas has here rightly pointed out that Freud's significance for the development of a critical theory of knowledge lies not so much in his own positivistic self-understanding, but rather in the fact that in order to develop the discipline of psychoanalysis, Freud had to develop a deeply reflective attitude toward positivism. I thus concur with Habermas that psychoanalysis is often plague by a misunderstanding of its own theoretical origins and method. Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Boston, MA Beacon Press, 1971). 214-215. DiCenso too has argued at length that one should not follow Freud in his own positivist professions. As I will argue below, DiCenso is right to see Freud's cultural writings as elaborating what DiCenso calls an open system in which ideals play an important role. See James DiCenso, *The Other Freud: Religion, Culture, and Psychoanalysis* (London: Routledge, 1999). chapter 2.

³⁰ Emblematic of this concern is Freud's lament, concerning the hypothesis of the death drive: "The deficiencies in our description would probably vanish if we were already in a position to replace the psychological terms by physiological or chemical ones. It is true that they too are only part of a figurative language; but it is one with which we have long been familiar and which is perhaps a simpler one as well." Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, ed. James Strachey, vol. SE XVIII, The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74). 60. SA 3:268.

life themselves which include not only dreams, slips and imaginative accounts but also the sort of thing people say about themselves when in therapy. That is, what Freud sought to understand was how to account for the meaning people gave to things which are nonsensical from a traditional scientific point of view. In doing so he elucidated the human capacity for the production of meaning which is far greater than had previously been assumed.³¹

Freud thus finds himself in the same position as Claude Bernard, of whom George Canguilhem says that “on the one hand, he senses the inadequacy of analytical thought to any biological object; on the other, he remains fascinated by the prestige of the physico-chemical sciences, which he hoped biology would come to resemble, believing it would thus better ensure the success of medicine.”³² This vacillation places Freud in the vitalist tradition which is, again according to Canguilhem, the expression of a dissatisfaction with the exclusive use of mechanistic concepts in biology. Rather, vitalism “translates a permanent exigency of life in the living, the self-identity of life immanent in the living.”³³ The point is that Freud’s biology and psychoanalysis starts from the midst of life, from the practical

³¹ Freud delights in turning conventional wisdom upside down as when he claims, echoing Hobbes, that it is not moral laws which give rise to restrictions on action but that restrictions on action based on the constraints of the physical world, give rise to morality. *Economic Problems of Masochism*, ed. James Strachey, vol. SE XIX, The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74). 169. SA 3:354.

³² Georges Canguilhem, *Knowledge of Life*, ed. Paola Marrati and Todd Meyers, trans. Stefanos Geroulanos and Daniela Ginsburg (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). xx.

³³ Ibid. 62. Canguilhem continues: “this explains one of the characteristics that mechanist biologists and rationalist philosophers criticize in vitalism: its nebulousness, its vagueness. If vitalism is above all an exigency, it is normal that it would have some trouble formulating itself in terms of determinations.” 62.

question of pleasure and displeasure rather than from the theoretical perspective which purports to tell us what life without the living of it really is. Life, one might say from the idealist perspective, is always in the midst of its own existence. Having a life, as Cungiham says, is a certain kind of self-relation: “Vitalism is the expression of the confidence the living being has in life, of the self-identity of life within the living human being conscious of living”.³⁴

My argument thus deemphasizes Freud’s realist claims and proceed from the idealist paradigm of meaning instead. This is licensed by the fact that Freud repeatedly find that he has to make theoretical— he does not call them philosophical— assumptions about the structure of the psyche which will, in turn, make it possible to diagnose certain physical manifestations of a problem which is really one of meaning. In keeping with the idealist framework here, meaning and normativity coincide in the sense that both mediate between necessity and freedom which is the perspective from which the human agent is properly understood.

From the Mechanistic Model to the Idealist Model

Continuing the above argument about Freud’s idealism, I propose in this section that Freud conceives of the subject as unified by its essential activity of seeking pleasure and that this conception is not hydraulic, as Freud himself conceives of it, but rather a model akin to self-integration. That is, seeking pleasure must be understood on the model of a Spinozistic *conatus*, striving or process, rather than on a mechanistic or instrumental model. Freud’s insight that seeking

³⁴ Ibid. 62.

pleasure is really self-integration is what led him to posit the dialectic of Eros and the death drive at the outset of the second topology (which I examine in the next section).

To show that Freud is indeed an idealist I must show that Freud understands the stimuli coming from the world as intelligible only through a conceptual structure. For Freud, the organism, at the most basic level is the passive recipient of irritations from nature and acts to avoid or overcome these irritations. The activity of overcoming irritation and attaining pleasure by discharging the irritation is the basic characteristic of the psyche. The question which concerns us here is how to make sense of the subject's response to the stimuli, that is, what, exactly, 'response' is supposed to be: is it merely the interaction between two biologically determined entities completely intelligible on the mechanical model of cause and effect or is there something about the psyche that cannot be reduced to natural laws. Freud's idealism appears as he struggles with this question and ultimately comes to the conclusion that what makes psychic life different than a mere mechanical relation is that the way the stimulus is discharged matters to the subject in a way that it cannot matter to the mechanism.

It should be clarified at the outset of this account that in the idealism I am proposing the difference between inner and outer does not coincide with the traditional distinction between my body and the outside world. Mind or psyche is here conceived of as the dialectical opposite to materiality which means that my body can, and often is, an outside to me as well. Control over the body is gradual and never complete. Moreover, it might be that I can have more control over

someone else's body than my own. The conception of the body as the seat of my subjectivity is an empiricist assumption which idealism seeks to undercut. Freud's work is central to this project since the idea of the unconscious is just the kind of thing which is both in me and not me and so requires a more nuanced understanding.

Mechanistic though Freud's theory is designed to be, it nonetheless based an postulate which cannot be accounted for physiologically: the drive. This can be seen in Freud's contention that the drive can be explained only *analogously* to causal forces. The stimulus or *Reiz* is the physiological counterpart to the psychic drive.³⁵ The crucial distinction between drive and stimulus is that the drive comes from the inside while the stimulus comes from the outside. Coming from the outside, the stimulus functions like a single "*momentary impact*". Drives, on the other hand, evince a constant power. "We ought", Freud elaborates, "rather call drive stimuli needs; what does away (*aufhebt*) with these needs is 'satisfaction'".³⁶ We thus have internal stimuli or irritations which contrast with external impacts. This distinction is important for Freud in the sense that he wants to account for these internal drives on the mechanistic model of external, physical causality. However, and this is the point, we can here see that the analogy goes the other way around. Freud is actually explaining stimuli with reference to the drive rather than the other way around. The structure of the drives is what makes the stimulus (as an external instance of it)

³⁵ Sigmund Freud, *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes*, ed. James Strachey, vol. SE XIV The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74). 18. SA 3:82.

³⁶ Ibid. 18-19. SA 3:82.

intelligible. The deep structure of the drive, as we will shortly see, is that it is the condition of intelligibility itself.

Freud thus reorients his theory from its naturalistic scientific perspective to the metapsychological level of explanation at which the argument becomes philosophical and normative rather than an investigation into the hydraulics nature. Freud notes that it is only possible to understand the subject's response to the stimuli if we understand the internal stimuli as interrupting a more basic state of equilibrium inherent in the subject. Freud calls this equilibrium the principle of constancy.³⁷ That is, it is only against constancy, a sort of stasis in movement or momentum (what I have called *conatus*) that irritation, *Reiz*, can appear. I know an irritation only because it *irritates* me where the 'me' is conceived of as a 'normal' condition which is altered by the stimulus.

From this vantage point we can make some observations about the concept of pleasure in Freud. Freud's naturalistic claims about the discrete energy level required by the subject (not too high not too low) can be seen from this subject internal perspective as the claim that the subject's activity is essentially to maintain itself in a certain relation to its environment. The subject thus seeks a self-organization which requires processing the world to fit that organization or what I have called the activity of self-constitution. Self-regulation is an activity.

I'd like to propose the pleasure principle, which Freud glosses as the "sensation of displeasure coincides with an increase, the sensation of pleasure

³⁷ *Economic Problems of Masochism*, SE XIX. 159. SA 3:343. But see also *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes*, SE XIV 19-20. SA 3:83.

coincides with a decrease of the stimulus” is the principle of self-regulation or of self-integration.³⁸ What I’ve been calling the normal structure is thus given by the process of avoiding the excesses of stimuli or lack thereof. This is of course not to deny forms of regression and other pathologies. The point rather is to see that these forms of subjectivity are essentially characterized by a lack or even an undoing of the relative level of integration of which they are the deprivation. Integration always carries with it the danger of disintegration, as the discussion of Fanon will make clear.

The Ontological Level: The Drive Theory

In this section I want to introduce the structural centrality of the drives as it pertains to self-integration and, negatively put, the loss of the original unity. In this section I want to clarify what is at stake in a drive theory and why Freud needs one. My larger contention is that the drive theory is not only basic to Freud but must be the basis of any possible theory of the psyche which seeks to give an account of experience in a normative rather than mechanistic sense. To put it generally, the drive theory is for Freud what the dialect is for Hegel: the name for the most basic interaction between subject and world. By showing that the drive account is dialectical I want to show that Freud’s theory can be conceived of as basically concerned with self-integration.

Freud clearly sensed that his conception of the drives was dialectical and felt himself indebted to two philosophers: Plato and Schiller. We will get to Plato’s role

³⁸ *Instincts and Their Vicissitudes*, SE XIV 20-21. SA 3:84.

below but before we do so I'd like to deepen the problematic of the drives with the help of Schiller's drive theory since it is both the simplest and also clearest model available. Schiller develops his drive model as a way of making sense of the two aspects of humanity: material content and intellectual reflection. The former he calls the sensuous drive and the latter he calls the form drive.³⁹ Schiller's insight consists in understanding that these two drives, seeming always at odds with each other, are actually two manifestations of a more originary drive, the play drive, which is the activity of life itself. That is, what we understand to be basic, form and content are actually only abstractions of the original unity of the two, for it is only because of the original unity of the two that sense and form can be separated, abstracted, placed in dialectical relation.⁴⁰

Freud introduces his revised drive theory in "Beyond the Pleasure Principle". The proximate cause for this new theory is the discovery of the repetition compulsion in war neurosis in which the subject is drawn again and again to an unpleasurable experience. Freud now seeks to refigure his old reality vs. pleasure dichotomy into the new death drive vs. Eros paradigm. Before exploring the important implications for metapsychology of the theory of these two new drives, I want to show that

³⁹ Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man: In a Series of Letters*, trans. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L. A. Willoughby (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992). Letter 12.

⁴⁰ See *ibid.* especially letter 11-13. See also Dieter Henrich, "Beauty and Freedom; Schiller's Struggle with Kant's Aesthetics," in *Essays in Kant's Aesthetics*, ed. Ted Cohen and Paul Guyer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). and Gregg Horowitz, "The Residue of History. Dark Play in Schiller and Hegel," *Internationales Jahrbuch des Deutschen Idealismus* (2006).

Freud's theory does indeed follow the model of the original unity the breaking apart of which, as life, is conceived as two antagonistic drives.⁴¹

Let us begin with the death drive. The conclusion to be drawn from the traumatic war neurosis, Freud argues, is that "*an instinct is an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things* which the living entity has been obliged to abandon under the pressure of external disturbing forces".⁴² That is, according to this description of the death drive, the living thing has been somehow energetically animated and seeks to return to its original state of rest by dissipating its energy. Freud writes: "The tension which then arose in what had hitherto been an inanimate substance endeavored to cancel itself out. In this way the first instinct came into being: the instinct to return to the inanimate state".⁴³ The death drive, then, is the thought that the original unity toward which the subjectivity strives is to be achieved by rejoining material nature. Freud conceives of this rejoining as the return to a state of constancy.

It is important to note, however, that the principle of constancy can be either complete lack of energy in death (as Freud does) or, alternatively, the incorporation of *all* energy so that complete self-identity is achieved. This latter possibility is the basis of the theory of Eros which Freud did not fully conceptualize but which I'd like to elaborate.

⁴¹ For an important discussion of the death drive which is broadly consonant with mine see K. R. Eissler, "Death Drive, Ambivalence, and Narcissism," *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 28 (1971).

⁴² Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, SE XVIII. 36. SA 3:246.

⁴³ Ibid. 38. SA 3:248.

If, as Freud admits, the death drive is speculative, the evidence for Eros is just as speculative. Freud uses the results of Weismann's experiments with protozoa which seem to suggest that single celled organisms can continue to live by continuing to split if only they have fresh nutrients, suggests that life also obeys the principle of constancy.⁴⁴ Freud sees quite clearly that what applies to the structure of the death drive also must apply to Eros. Eros too must intend to maintain its original energetic investment, not by dissipating it but rather to absorb all materiality into itself by animating it.

Freud sees, however vaguely, that the opposition of the categories death and eternal life must be philosophical abstractions. This leads him to the hypothesis that human (individual) life is the result of an original breaking apart (or perhaps coming together) of the two fundamental drives. Freud asks, in a passage worth quoting in full:

Shall we follow the hint given us by the poet-philosopher [Plato], and venture upon the hypothesis that living substance at the time of its coming to life was torn apart into small particles, which have ever since endeavored to reunite through the sexual instincts? that these instincts, in which the chemical affinity of inanimate matter persisted, gradually succeeded, as they developed through the kingdom of the protista, in overcoming the difficulties put in the way of that endeavor by an environment charged with dangerous stimuli—stimuli which compelled them to form a protective cortical layer? that these splintered fragments of living substance in this way attained a

⁴⁴ Ibid. 45-49. SA 3:254-58.

multicellular condition and finally transferred the instinct for reuniting, in the most highly concentrated form, to the germ-cells?—But here, I think, the moment has come for breaking off.⁴⁵ Speculative as it is, this passage is a consistent counterpart to the hypothesis of the death drive and Freud deserves credit for venturing this far down a road which, as a scientist, he was surely loathed to travel. Nor does he shy away from the theoretical uses of his conclusion even if he repeats its basis only this one time. Concluding this section Freud writes in a footnote: “Our speculations have suggested that Eros operates from the beginning of life and appears as a ‘life-drive’ in opposition to the ‘death-drive’ which was brought into being by the coming to life of inorganic substance. These speculations seek to solve the riddle of life by supposing that these two drives were struggling with each other from the very first.”⁴⁶ Here Freud is quite clear that organic (individual) life is in fact only intelligible on the basis of these two prior suppositions, namely the principle to compose (call it the form drive) and the principle to decompose (call it the sense drive).⁴⁷ Summarizing his previous work, Freud says in *Civilization and its Discontents* that “as well as Eros

⁴⁵ Ibid. 58. SA 3:267.

⁴⁶ Ibid. 60. SA 3:269.

⁴⁷ “In (multi-cellular) organisms, the libido meets the there-existing death drive which seeks to decompose each cell and aims to return each of these elementary organism to their previous inorganic stability (even if this stability should turn out only to be relative).” *Economic Problems of Masochism*, SE XIX. 163. SA 3:347.

there was an instinct of death. The phenomena of life could be explained from the concurrent or mutually opposing action of these two instincts.”⁴⁸

Freud sees quite clearly that the individual is essentially constituted by a dialectic between what seeks to return her to material nature and what seeks to keep her alive forever. While death is perhaps easier to conceptualize, the idea of living forever is probably related for Freud to the continuation of the species as the passing down of genetic material which, in some sense, never dies.⁴⁹ For Freud, of course, these ontological postulates were secondary, central though they are to the theoretical basis of his theory. Freud saw his real accomplishment as having formulated of the relation between metapsychology and psychopathology. It is my claim, however, that we can only get clear about the psychological (normal or abnormal) if we become clearer about the metapsychological for which the drive theory is in turn, the basis. We are now in a good position to understand at least the basic meaning of Freud’s second topology, to which we now turn.

⁴⁸ *Civilization and Its Discontents*, ed. James Strachey, vol. SE XXI, The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74). 119. SA 9:246-47.

⁴⁹ This thought about the eternal life of the species gives Freud’s worries about civilization and its impending doom in *Civilization and its Discontents* a particular urgency. Neurotic and destructive behavior on the individual level is there seen to endanger the entire project of the species, threatening to hand the death drive a final victory.

The Metapsychological Level: The Second Topology and the Possibility of Social Critique

The task in the following sections will be to show that the metapsychological theory of id, ego, super-ego and ego-ideal are the product of the self-integration of the phenomenon of life which receives its structural formulation in the dialectic of the drives, as formulated above. It is a central feature of the view I am suggesting that the second topology is essentially the result of psychic *development*, a point not often remarked on, though an important connection to the dynamic drive model. The view I am advocating thus claims that the structural moments of the psyche develop in response to the tension arising between the two drives on the one hand and in response to material nature on the other hand.⁵⁰

Schematically we can say that the id is the repository of the drives itself. The ego develops, Freud is explicit about this, as a response to the contact of the drives within the organism to the world outside. Finally, the super-ego and the ego-ideal are advanced structures which reflect the ego-id relation at a self-conscious level, the former on the side of the death drive and what I shall call aggressivity, the latter on the side of Eros and narcissism (by which I mean the process of seeking union with the all).⁵¹

⁵⁰ Seeing the second topology as developmental also allows us to make sense of the alteration of these structural elements in the obvious sense that the ego itself can be strengthened through analysis but can be weakened by life events. Of course it is central to Freud's theory and the discussion of it that the super-ego develops only during the Oedipus complex.

⁵¹ On the relation of the drive theory to the second topology, two important contributions are Cordelia Schmidt-Hellerau, "Libido and Lethe; Fundamentals of a Formalized Conception of

The account I give in this and the following sections is thus a developmental account of a metapsychological level of the psyche. In developing Freud's account I employ the same model as I did in sketching the move from consciousness to self-consciousness in Hegel. I argued that the process of becoming self-conscious is both a contingent feature of life, in the sense that it is not always achieved, and nonetheless essential for what we call 'being a subject'. Similarly, a person who has not, on the Freudian model, developed some sort of a super-ego might not properly be considered a complete subject. Developing a super-ego/ego-ideal is thus in Freud what developing self-consciousness is in Hegel.

The significance of this differentiation between a relatively complete, self-conscious subject and one who is not will emerge when we turn to Fanon's diagnosis of colonial psychopathology where the central problem is the colonial subject's falling or being pushed back below a certain level of self-consciousness which means that the person cannot make autonomous (in the widest sense) decisions. Concretely, as we shall see, the colonial subject, in Fanon's account, does not have her own super-ego but rather lives the super-ego of the colonial master.

Given the broad social critical intentions of this study it is thus particularly important to appreciate the relation between the metapsychological account of the psyche and the psychological account in the sense that psychological injury can adversely affect subjecthood itself and that adverse affects at the metapsychological

level will, given the ontological dialectic between Eros and death drive, produce 'subjects' who are structured in ways that are incompatible with their most fundamental goals, namely autonomy or self-integration. In order to draw this out, I will proceed here with an account of what I will call 'normal' human development, i.e. the development of the usual psychic structures which lead to at least the possibility of well-adjusted adulthood (where that concept, of course, remains somewhat culturally specific).

Eros, Narcissism and the Object

This section has two basic goals. I argue that at the metapsychological level Eros should be understood in terms of narcissism, by which I mean a basic sort of seeking of unity, and I argue that this narcissistic seeking of unity is instantiated by the ego's self-integration. In more broadly philosophical terms, I take the narcissism-ego axis to represent the organism desire to structure the world according to its own standard which simply is being a whole, remaining constant. In terms of the developmental history of the subject, I take this stage to be parallel to the stage of human development prior to the proto-subject's encounter with the other in Hegel. The pre-Oedipal is thus parallel to the stage of self-certainty or natural consciousness.⁵² This is an argument which Freud himself only gestures at but it is necessary to pursue this line of thought in order to make sense of other key concepts in Freud's metapsychology like loss, striving and self-integration.

⁵² On Self-Certainty, see Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*. §§166-177. GW 9:63-70.

Given my argument above that Eros and the death drive must be understood as essentially parallel manifestations of human life it is now necessary to say something about why the manifestation of Eros is to be understood as somehow preceding the manifestation of the death drive. The reasons of several: first there is the contingent matter of Freud's 'discovery' of Eros before the 'discovery' of the death drive in his later theory. Much of what Freud has to say about Eros and narcissism is thus connected to his theory of early childhood. The second and more weighty reason is that, given my interpretation of the death drive as essentially negativity, it seems to make more sense to proceed from the positive or constructive side before taking up its negation. Hegel too proceeds from Being to Nothing in his *Logic*, understanding the emergence of subjectivity as appearing in the mediation of the former by the latter.⁵³ This to say then, that while I am privileging the constructive elements of Eros, these are always also under the pressures of negativity, that is, of the death drive.⁵⁴

I'd now like to suggest that the metapsychological manifestation of Eros can be fruitfully understood as narcissism and that this narcissism underlies the subject's

⁵³ See the beginning sections of *The Science of Logic*, trans. George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).. Andre Green has been the psychoanalytic thinker who has done most to explore the idea of the negative in Freud and psychoanalysis. My interpretation, however, remains at a much more general level than does his. For an overview of the concept of negativity in psychoanalysis see André Green, *Key Ideas for a Contemporary Psychoanalysis : Misrecognition and Recognition of the Unconscious* (London: Routledge, 2005). chapter 13. For Green's own attempt to think the negative, in particular as it connects to Hegel, see *The Work of the Negative* (London: Free Association Books, 1999). especially chapter 2.

⁵⁴ Klein, of course, is the theorist who is most concerned with locating the death drive in the infant. See, for instance, Melanie Klein, "A Contribution to the Psychogenesis of Manic-Depressive States," in *Love, Guilt, and Reparation, and Other Works, 1921-1945* (London: Hogarth Press, 1975).

relation to the world of object itself.⁵⁵ What I have in mind is simply that if Eros is, as I have argued, the drive toward unity with all living organisms, then this drive must also have a metapsychological manifestation which can direct the subject toward the goal of achieving this unity with the whole. At the metapsychological level the desire to maintain, or achieve unity is called narcissism.⁵⁶ I use the term narcissism because for Freud, in its most primitive form as primary narcissism, the term expresses the organism's desire to remain self-same in the sense of integrating the outside world into its own pleasure scheme, hence maintaining itself by keeping to the principle of constancy. We have already seen above that this principle of constancy as self-integration is the same as the desire for pleasure.

In the *Three Essays on Sexuality* Freud begins his periodization of the infantile development with the auto-erotic stage. In this stage, pleasure and

⁵⁵ Leowald, whose account I am very close to here, has shown that the difference between the internal and the external is to be understood as a dialectical development which the ego comes to mediate. The ego is here seen as an integrative or synthetic agency which seeks to structure, hence make intelligible, the relation between inner and outer. Hans Loewald, "The Ego and Reality," *The International journal of psycho-analysis* 32 (1951).

⁵⁶ Again Leowald is a central reference in understanding narcissism as the way in which the original unity at the ontological level is manifested. "In other words, the psychological constitution of ego and outer world go hand in hand. Nothing can be an 'object', something that stands against something else, as long as everything is contained in the unitary feeling of the primary, unlimited narcissism of the newborn, where mouth and mother's breast are still one and the same.. On the other hand, we cannot, in the strict sense, speak of an ego, a mediator between an id and an external world, where there is as yet nothing to mediate." Ibid. 11. Marcuse too notes this point: "Primary narcissism is more than autoeroticism; it engulfs the 'environment,' integrating the narcissistic ego with the objective world." (168) "Beyond all immature autoeroticism, narcissism denotes a fundamental relatedness to reality which may generate a comprehensive existential order." (169) Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization; a Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

sustenance are identical in nursing at the mother's breast.⁵⁷ However, and this is perhaps the first entrance of something like 'reality' into the infant's consciousness, nursing is not always an option. Here the infant seeks to satisfy herself by sucking on a surrogate. Thus the moment of frustration has already forced the infant to explore other avenues of pleasure than that of the mother's breast. This leads to the finer determination of the world and a reclassification of the world into the subset non-satisfying object (non-breast) satisfying object (breast).

Freud explicitly links this initial auto-eroticism to narcissism via the structure of the ego, claiming that: "we are bound to suppose that a unity comparable to the ego cannot exist in the individual from the start; the ego has to be developed. The auto-erotic instincts, however, are there from the very first; so there must be something added to auto-eroticism— a new psychical action— in order to bring about narcissism."⁵⁸ Let me elaborate a little. We can here see Freud claiming that Eros, the auto-erotic tendencies— understood here as striving for unity— are primordial, but are manifested as directional or intentional only by being given particular content by the ego. That is, the rise of the ego is the advent of as

⁵⁷ Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* ed. James Strachey, vol. SE VII, The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74). 181. SA 5:88. Here it is perhaps tempting to infer, as Freud seems to, that pleasure is *produced* by feeding, however, according the view I have been advocating, we must actually think of the phenomenon that feeding is pleasurable as rather a consequence of the original organization of life itself, in which the search for pleasure is basic. Only through the concept of life does nursing itself become meaningful. Life itself, of course, receives no account here except as a postulate, something we are always, as it were, in the midst of.

⁵⁸ *On Narcissism: An Introduction*, ed. James Strachey, vol. SE XIV, The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74). 76-77. SA 3:44.

stabilization of a certain world-directedness in the psyche's activity. Henceforth this sort of activity and not that, will count as satisfaction. What counts as satisfaction is crucially determined both by what is on offer and what the ego decides to do.

From this vantage point it is possible to clarify further the question of pleasure in Freud. If I am right in interpreting Freud as I have, then Freud's talk of pleasure must be understood in the deepest possible sense, that is, on the side of ultimate subject structuration rather than at the more contingent level of happiness. I propose then to consider Freud's concept of pleasure equivalent to Kant and Hegel's claims about practical reason. I mean this in the following sense: if pleasure seeking is really the subject's most fundamental activity in the sense of maintaining itself then 'pleasure seeking' (or auto-eroticism, as above) cannot mean seeking pleasure as opposed to seeking something else (say aesthetic appreciation or morality) but is simply Freud's term for the subject's fundamental practical orientation.⁵⁹ Whatever will turn out to be the logic of the psyche takes its point of departure from this basic relation. We should not be tempted, as Freud often is, to specify what this practical orientation will turn out to be, seeking to supplant the moral paradigm with one supposedly based on self-preservation.

Another important role performed by the ego is that of being the guardian of the two different equilibriums, that between Eros and the death drive on the one

⁵⁹ It is worth noting that this reading of pleasure too has important consequences for Freud's conception of sexuality. When Freud thus speaks about sexuality he does so in the broadest terms, including here all pleasurable activity as opposed to simply intercourse. But it is Freud's point that more narrowly sexual activity can only be properly made sense of given a theory of the more broad and even fundamental theory of pleasure.

hand, and that between Eros-death drive and reality on the other. The ego is mediator between inner and outer hence responsible for stasis (as controlled striving) between not only the two inner drives but external nature as well. The other two psychic faculties, the super-ego and the ego-ideal represent meta-level structurations of each of the drives in relation to reality and so each seek to encroach on the authority of the ego. While I will elaborate these two central dyads in chapter four, I should say that I understand the ego/super-ego dyad as an expression of the aggressive process of differentiation while I understand the ego/ego-ideal dyad as an expression of the narcissistic process of the search for complete unity. That is, both the super-ego and the ego-ideal represent an idealization of the particular outcome of the drive which motivates one side of subjectivity. Together these drives constitute a somewhat stable subjectivity.

I will elaborate the theory of narcissism at greater length in chapter four (via the concepts of idealization and identification), but let me indicate briefly how the dynamic of narcissism relates to the object before we move on to a discussion of the death drive. Freud summarizes his basic statement of the relation between Eros, libido and object helpfully, writing: "the ego itself is cathected with libido, [...] the ego, indeed, is the libido's original home, and remains to some extent its headquarters. This narcissistic libido turns towards objects, and thus becomes object-libido; and it can change back into narcissistic libido once more."⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, SE XXI. 118. SA 9:246.

I would like to take three points from this passage. The first is that the ego mediates libido coming from the id. This mediation pertains to both Eros and the death drive in the sense that the ego works to keep these two in balance thereby maintaining the subject's constant structure. Secondly, the ego can appear also as the "libido's original home" in the sense that it is only through the ego's mediation that the drives *turn into* libido, i.e. energy which is to be disposed of through the activity of the organism's life. (For failure to dispose of this libido would result in death.)⁶¹

Finally, as Freud points out elsewhere as well, object cathexis arises once the libidinal investment of the ego has reached a certain level and the ego can no longer contain or disperse of its own accord its libidinal energy.⁶² That is, there is only so much energy that the auto-erotic stage can process. The ego releases this energy by seeking a second self, the love object, into which to pour its libidinal energy. It is not initially important whether this object exist or not.⁶³ The concept of narcissism covers both autoeroticism and the shifting of libidinal energy to the object *while at the same time maintaining the subject's original pleasure schema*.

The key issue is that narcissism provides the structure or set of norms which is meant to recover the original unity between self and other. The ego finds itself in a difficult situation in the sense that in order to preserve its own libidinal equilibrium it

⁶¹ Rosenberg connects narcissism to the ego particularly closely, arguing that the ego is indeed produced by narcissism. Benno Rosenberg, "Les Sources Pulsionnelles De La Négativité," in *Le Négatif; Travail Et Pensée*, ed. André Green, et al. (Paris: Esprit du Temps, 1995). 192.

⁶² Freud, *On Narcissism: An Introduction*, SE XIV. 85. SA 3:52.

⁶³ Ibid. 85. SA 3:52.

is forced to externalize some of its energy by cathecting the world. But as it cathects the world, making sense of it, the ego is also constantly threatened with the loss of the energy it has externalized because the object might fail to satisfy it.

The ego-ideal, which I will discuss in chapters 4 and 5, plays a central role in this process. It is a meta-level structuration of the ego in the sense that the ego-ideal represents the self-conscious pursuit of unity under the aegis of a model of power and unity, which Freud links to the parents. The important point here is that egoic meta-structuration in the ego-ideal is achieved under the auspices of Eros rather than the death drive. It is thus a constructive image of totality rather than a destructive image of the complete loss of energy and a return to the original unity as inanimate matter.

Before turning to the death drive and its influence in subject structuration, let me underline the salient points of this discussion of narcissism and the role of the ego. I argued that the death drive and Eros combined in the id are necessarily mediated by the ego as they seek their respective satisfactions with regard to the material world outside the subject. The ego mediates between the two drives and reality by maintaining the delicate balance of energy needed to keep the organism alive. As energy increases, the ego must externalized this libidinal energy onto objects which it treats as extensions of itself. But these external 'colonies' of egoic energy are always in danger of breaking away.

The Super-Ego, the Oedipus Complex and Self-Consciousness

In turning now to the death drive and the Oedipus complex I want to draw attention to the relation between the death drive and the super-ego as well as to the death-drive's essential role in the constitution of the subject-object relation. Indeed, it is in the Oedipus complex, which I will elaborate according to the same model used in discussing Hegel's 'life and death struggle', that the ego's protective omnipotence is finally given up in the face of the hostile father-mother. The outcome of the Oedipus complex, like the outcome of the master-slave dialectic, is the achievement of self-consciousness. (I elaborate this point further in chapter three.) This new relation to the other is achieved because the subject becomes aware of itself as a desiring subject, that is, as seeking a reunification which it now realizes will forever elude it.

In this subsection I have three aims: the first is to show how the death drive differentiates the subject from the object; the second is to show that this differentiation becomes structural and permanent in the Oedipus complex; and, finally to show that the result of the Oedipus complex, the super-ego is the dynamic expression of this differentiation. As such, the super-ego opposes the drive toward unity expressed by Eros, narcissism and the ego-ideal. This last point is only adumbrated here and will receive a fuller discussion in chapter four. I also skip over the important metapsychological distinction between narcissism and aggressivity which I turn to only later, the objective here being to move from the problem of narcissistic object choice to the object as independent from the subject. The

metapsychological and psychological consequences of this important shift will be drawn out later as well.

Let me begin with the first point, that the death drive expresses itself in the drive for differentiation. One way to put the point is to say that the death drive, as the search for the absolute dissipation of energy, requires a place to dissipate that energy *to* or *onto*. That is, the death drive requires an object which is both identical to the subject and different from it. The object must be identical to the subject in the sense that the object must be capable of receiving energy and preserving it. But, to satisfy the death drive, the object must be different in the sense that libidinal energy can be transferred to it to alleviate the tension within the subject's ego. The paradox is thus that in order to release energy the ego must find an object close enough to receive that energy but distant enough to provide genuine relief.

This is the fundamental dialectic of unity and individuality which characterizes the existence of the human subject. This dialectic is fixed through the development of the super-ego (and in the ego-ideal) during the Oedipus complex. In the reading I want to give here I understand the Oedipus complex on the model of the master-slave dialectic which is also centrally about the recognition of independence (as subjectivity) and the desire for unity (recognition) with the other. In Hegel's account too, the subject is driven out of its contented self-certainty by the appearance of something that resists the subject's satisfaction in a way that threatens to extinguish it. The threat can only be overcome by understanding the self as fundamentally limited by other people who seem to oppose the subject's pleasure. Because this

hostility on the part of the other is intolerable to the subject, the subject seeks to incorporate— or perhaps re-incorporate— the other into the psyche so as to control the other's desires as well. The project of this reincorporation and the necessity of that project's failure appear most fully in the Oedipus complex.⁶⁴

My account of the development of the super-ego in the Oedipus complex must begin with the child whose autoeroticism has become more and more elaborate eventually leads it to come in contact with an element of the outside resists the child in a particular way but which the child must nonetheless incorporate to maintain itself. The child thus moves, one might say, from having the fantasy of a mother to having a real mother, of flesh and bones and reality. This shift occurs gradually through the tiny frustrations the child notices in its pursuit of satisfaction. The paradox of the extension of the ego's energy is clearly in play here: greater pleasure requires greater risks. As the mother becomes more real, the affections she lavishes on the child become more satisfying because they are themselves more real, but frustrations also become more acute.

In Freud's theory, the Oedipus complex is the process through which the subject becomes aware that it has finally lost control of the object and that satisfaction now depends on factors involving not only its own wishes but also the wishes of the other. That is, in the Oedipus complex, the subject recognizes for the

⁶⁴ Freud gives two account of this development, an earlier one in *Totem and Taboo* (1912) which is extended slightly in "On Narcissism" (1914), and a second elaboration in the period of the topology which we have been looking at, in "The Ego and the Id" (1923) as well as in "The Dissolution of the Oedipus Complex" (1924). I shall keep to the second formulation, referring occasionally to the first formulation.

first time that it seeks to achieve satisfaction via an object which is intrinsically separate from it. In the Oedipus complex the subject, for the first time, comes to understand the object *as an object and itself as a subject*. That is, it experiences its separation from what satisfies no longer as contingent but as structural. Loss is experienced *as loss*, i.e. as an essential self-relation.⁶⁵

Moving now to the third point, that the super-ego is the structural manifestation of negativity as hostility, Freud's important claim that the introjection of the authority of the mother and father constitute the super-ego can now receive a better explanation.⁶⁶ The child's experience of loss move it to a new level of the self-world relation and with it the division between subject and object takes on a new form.

⁶⁵ Freud elaborates this point which has been so important here in Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*, SE XIV ; *Trauer Und Melancholie*, ed. Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards, and James Strachey, vol. SA III, Sigmund Freud Studienausgabe (Frankfurt: Fischer Verlag, 1969-74).

⁶⁶ Here is important to see that the separation of mother and father is essentially heuristic or metaphorical. The child loves both parents in the sense of having constituted them out of its relation to satisfaction through them. That this should include the mother a little more than the father makes some sense, though it is not necessary. Similarly, the child hates both parents as having become separate from it. That this is something which applies a little more to the father (whom the child was always a little less attached to?) also makes some sense, though these seem to be psychological and sociological generalizations which can clearly vary within and across cultures. This important duality of each parent is elaborated by Loewald: "The foregoing analysis leads us to the assumption of two pairs of relationships to the parent figures: (1), in regard to the mother, a positive libidinal relationship, growing . out of the primary narcissistic position; and a defensive, negative one of dread of the womb, dread of sinking back into the original unstructured state of identity ·with her; (2) in regard to the father, a positive, 'exquisitely masculine ' identification with him, which lends powerful support against the danger of the womb; and a defensive relationship concerning the paternal castration threat." Loewald, "The Ego and Reality." 16.

Ever so briefly: in terms of the story Freud tells about the mother-father-child triangle, we can see that the 'father' who interrupts the 'mother-child' dyad is really just the structural expression of the ever widening gap between the subject and its satisfaction. We here presume— as we did in the master-slave dialectic— that at some point a qualitative shift in the subject's outlook takes place so that the child recognizes for the first time that it no longer (completely) controls its own means of satisfaction. The 'father' is the name given to this frustration as the source of dissatisfaction.

In order to overcome this dissatisfaction, the child must claim its frustration, saying in effect that it has *chosen* dissatisfaction, thereby recovering agency and satisfaction where there was none. This is structurally parallel to the slave's *choice* of slavery over death. This 'choice', however, constitutes the child as an agent who recognizes (however obliquely at first) that its satisfaction depends on the agency of others with whom it is from now on in constant negotiation for satisfaction.

My argument here is that the *owning* of the 'father' as frustration or perhaps better aggressivity, means that that every frustration can be made to fit with the death drive's goal of energy dissipation. Just as the Hegelian slave soon finds that even in slavery he can make choices and recover small satisfactions for himself, the child recognizes that it can use aggressivity to dissipate energy by denigrating rather than by cathecting the object. In a certain sense, then, the child has discovered the power of the negative, realizing that satisfaction can also be achieved not only by cathexis but also by withholding satisfaction from Eros. The point is that the death drive now compensates the subject for now having the conditions of its satisfaction

reside outside of itself making positive libidinal use of the power to withhold satisfaction from other. Indeed, the child realizes that it is even possible to inflict suffering on others as a compensation for their unwillingness to satisfy her and that this too causes satisfaction.

The development of the super-ego through which the death drive expresses itself constitutes a new sort of self-relation, a more sophisticated organization than the ego-id dyad. What the super-ego adds to the previous model is self-consciousness in the sense that it is only through the recognition of separation that the child gains the distance to articulate its own authority over its desires. It is only with the advent of the super-ego, as I have said, that the subject becomes aware of the object *as* an object for it, i.e. as something which is both *constituted by* but also *independent of* the subject. And it is only because the object is separate that the death drive can become a source of satisfaction.

A final note: for the same reasons that Hegel's master-slave dialectic issues in the recognition of the essential intersubjective constitution of desire, the development of the super-ego and the ego-ideal bring the object to the level of intersubjectivity in the sense that, from now on, the object is quintessentially a *human* object (though it can, in psychopathology, dip below this level). For this reason Freud associates the super-ego with morality, religion and social feeling.⁶⁷ Morality is associated with the relation to the other because the other is to be taken as existing in her own right and that means for Freud, as existing in opposition to the self. The other thus becomes an opportunity both for satisfaction, insofar as she can

⁶⁷ Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, SE XIX. 37. SA 3:304.

be made the object of erotic desire, and for frustration, insofar as she refuses to conform to the libidinal structure the subject seeks to impose on her. But the basic thought, which animates Hegel as well as Kant, is the same in Freud: the other is another I and, as such, subject to the same ambivalence which the subject experiences within itself.

Conclusion:

The aim of this Freud sub-section has been to show that Freud's theory can be read as following a similar trajectory as Hegel's: both move from a dialectic between the drives of construction or unity (Eros) and negativity (the death drive) to a notion of subjectivity in which the subject achieves self-consciousness of this dialectic. This self-consciousness is achieved, for Freud, in the Oedipus complex and for Hegel in the slave's escape from the master's immediate power.

The account here has proceeded on what I have called the ontological and the metapsychological levels, levels which constitute subjectivity as individuality *per se* but do not yet say anything about how the individual lives her individuality. In the chapters that follow I use the theory developed here to give a more powerful analysis to Fanon's diagnosis of colonial psychopathology. The metapsychological idealization of subjectivity I have provided in both the Hegelian and the Freudian accounts is meant to buttress any account of social pathology by providing a structure which pathology can be measured against. This way of proceeding makes it possible not only to see injustice but also to correct it by using

psychoanalysis and the political process itself to achieve a society in which subjects can achieve individual and collective ends.