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CRITICISM OF FREUD'S PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMAN

BY

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"Certain biological differences result in characterological differences ; such differences are blended with those which are directly produced by social factors ; the latter are much stronger in their effect and can either increase , eliminate , or reverse biologically rooted differences ."

From

Freud was ,probably ,the first psychological theorist to emphasize the developmental aspects of personality and in particular to stress the decisive role of the early years of infancy and childhood in laying down the basic character structure of the person . Freud believed that the child passes through a series of dynamically differentiated stages during the first five years of life , following which , for a period of five or six years - the period of latency -the dynamics become more or less stabilized. With the advent of adolescence the dynamics erupt again and then gradually settle down as the adolescent moves into adulthood . According to Freud , the first five years of life are decisive for the formation of personality .

In several occasions , Freud wrote about women's sexuality , he devoted one lectures of his New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis about the psychology of women .

Freud paints a dolorous picture of women in his lecture about the psychology of woman . He pictured woman as a being whose destiny is forever keeping her irremediable genital wound as she lingers disconsolate in the oedipal doldrums . Principally from her festering penis envy stems her narcissism , her passive aims , the blunting of her moral sensibility , her envy , jealousy and her self -depreciation . She seems fit only to satisfy the sexual needs of her master ,man , but even here frigidity renders her disappointing .(1)

The objective of this paper is to discuss the different stages of woman's development a la Freud , as related to the problem of penis envy .

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FEMAL SEXUALITY

Before we start discussing the different developmental stages, we should do that in accordance with Fenichel's assertion. The concept of developmental phases is a relative one, serving as a better means of orientation only. Practically, all phases gradually pass into one another and overlap. (III)

According to Freud the child (boy or girl) passes through a series of stages during the first five years. Each stage of development is defined in terms of the modes of reaction of a particular zone of the body. These stages are the oral anal and phallic which are known as the pregenital stages.

I. The oral stage

The principal source of pleasure derived from the mouth is that of eating. Eating involves tactual stimulation of the lips and oral cavity and swallowing or, if the food is unpleasant, spitting out.

Abraham differentiated two subphases of the oral stage: the first, oral-erotic phase which subjectively no object exists and only pleasurable sucking is sought. The second, oral-sadistic, which is an ambivalent phase, appearing after the eruption of teeth, which has the aim of biting the object. (XV)

II. Anal phase

It is the second stage approximately from the second year of life to the third of libidinal development, in which the discharge of dammed-up instinctual energy is connected with the act of defecation and the pleasurable organ sensations. The expulsion of the feces removes

the source of discomfort and produces a feeling of relief. When toilet training is initiated, usually during the second year of life, the child has his first decisive experience with the external regulation of an instinctual impulse. Depending upon the particular method of toilet training used by the mother and her feelings concerning defecation the consequences of this training may have far-reaching effects upon the formation of specific traits and values.

According to Abraham two stages of the anal phase may be observed: in the first stage, the feces represented the object in which the child was interested; in the second stage, the child was primarily interested in the act of defecation as it related to a parental object. (II)

As compared with the oral stage in which the infant is pre-occupied with sucking the mother's breast and only slowly discovers her importance as the external object which is necessary for this gratification, the anal phase permits the infant a certain amount of independence.

III. The phallic stage

Freud (1905) originally called the third stage of libidinal development, the genital phase. Later (1923), he recognized that the genital phase would be more properly characterized by the male's recognition of the penis as an organ of impregnation and the female's discovery of the vagina, occurring in puberty. He then renamed the third stage the phallic phase. (VI)

This phase normally occurs between the ages of three and six. The oedipus complex consists of a sexual cathexis for the parent

of the same sexe. The development of boys and girls differs. In the boy the sensitivity of the penis leads to masturbation. Usually sexual fantasies concerning the mother enter the masturbation activity. Simultaneously the boy feels rivalry and hostility to the father. The boy's discovery of the girl's lack of a penis at this time usually is interpreted by him to mean that she has lost this precious organ. The guilt for his sexual fantasies to the mother and death wishes toward the father continue to stir up in him castration anxiety. As a consequence, he usually renounces masturbation and thus eventually enters the latency period. In the girl, the discovery that the boy has a penis and she has not, leads her to envy the boy and to blame her mother for this lack. As a consequence, she renounces the mother as her primary love object and turns to the father. The clitoris is her main zone of masturbatory activities; the vagina is undiscovered. The girl fantasizes getting a penis or a baby from her father and has hostile feelings of rivalry about her mother (Electra complex). As a general rule, she slowly gives up her oedipal strivings and enters latency owing to her fear of losing the love of her parents. (VII)

What does the phallic period in girls development mean?

First, the clitoris at that time is the part of the genital apparatus that is richest in sensations and that attracts and discharges all sexual excitation, the vagina is not discovered yet. Second, it means that the girl (like the boy) divides people into "phallic" and "castrated" and as Fenichel showed the knowledge that there are creatures

with penis is typically reacted to not only by an attitude " I, too, would like to have that " but also by the idea " I once did have it but I lost it ?" This starts her penis envy..(III)

Herney sketches the boy's ideas and the girl's ideas about the feminine development as following:

THE BOY'S IDEAS	OUR IDEAS OF FEMININE DEVELOPMENT
Naive assumption that girls as well as boys possess a penis	For both sexes it is only the male genital which plays any part
Realization of the absence of the penis	Bad discovery of the absence of the penis
Idea that the girl is a castrated, mutilated boy	Belief of the girl that she once possessed a penis and lost it by castration
Belief that the girl has suffered punishment that also threatens him	Castration is conceived of as the infliction of punishment
The girl is regarded as inferior	The girl regards herself as inferior. Penis envy
The boy is unable to imagine how the girl can ever get over this loss or envy	The girl never gets over the sense of deficiency and inferiority and has constantly to master afresh her desire to be a man
The boy dreads her envy	The girl desires throughout life to avenge herself on the man for possessing something which she lacks (VII)

PENIS ENVY

According to Freud the most upsetting occurrence in the development of the little girl is the discovery that other human beings have a penis while she has none. Freud indicated that "the discovery of her castration is the turning point in the life of the girl." (V)

She reacts to this discovery with a wish to have a penis too, with the hope that it will still grow, and with an envy of those more fortunate beings who possess one. In the normal development, penis envy does not continue as such, after recognizing her "deficiency" as an unalterable fact, the girl transfers the wish for a penis to a wish for a child. "The hoped-for possession of a child is meant as a compensation for a bodily defect."

The penis envy is a narcissistic phenomenon, the girl's feelings are offended because her body is less completely equipped than the boy's. In the same time, penis envy has a root in object relations. The mother is the first sexual object for the girl as well as for the boy. The girl wishes to have a penis not only for sake of narcissistic pride, but also because of libidinal desire for the mother which, in so far as they are genital in nature, have a masculine character. Freud gives two reasons for the girl's changing her affection from mother to father: first the hostility toward the mother, who is held responsible for the lack of a penis; and second, a wish to obtain this desired organ from the father. After that her desire of having a penis changes to having a boy child from her father.

(IV)

Freud considers the wish for a male child to be woman's strongest wish, because the wish for a child is heir to the wish for a penis, the

the son represents a sort of wish-fulfillment in the sense of penis possession. He asserted that "the only thing that brings a mother undiluted satisfaction is her relation to a son. The mother, then, transfers to her son all the ambitions which she has had to suppress in herself and she hopes to get from him the satisfaction of all that has remained to her of her masculinity complex.(VIII)

Mikheimar has another interpretation of this phenomenon based on Freud's concept of bisexuality and Jung's concept of anima and animus. He points out that every person has both the anima and animus, but the girl, due to the social pressure repressed her masculine archetype "animus", and the boy repressed his feminine archetype "anima". When the mother gets a son, he will give her satisfaction because he will be the perfect model of her animus which was repressed; she projects her deep unconscious masculinity upon him. The father feels the same with his daughter because she is the perfect model of his anima which was repressed and he projects his deep unconscious femininity upon her.(XII)

According to Moore, the time of discovery of the sex differences (penis envy) is acute and often quite openly expressed. The mechanism of displacement is apparent, however, almost from the start, and the unconscious derivatives sometimes interpreted quite literally as a desire for the male organ acquired multiple and overdetermined meanings. The symbolic significance of the penis as baby as breast are common. Moore suggests that penis envy may represent a wish for a personal object that is gratifying - a satisfactory substitute for the deprivation of a mutual

ly pleasurable mother-child interaction - that would have resulted in a feeling of self-esteem, a worthwhile valuation of her whole feminine self, including the genitals.. These symbolize the whole person and constitute an area of deficiency if the mother-child relationship has not been satisfactory, regardless of whether the child is male or female. Dissatisfaction with her own self, and with her genitals specifically, may be conveyed in an affecto-motor way by the mother to her little girl, who introjects this object representation as a part of her own self-image. (XIV)

In her paper, Thompson stressed the fact that " actual envy of the penis as such is not as important in the psychology of women as their envy of the position of the male in our society. This position of privilege and alleged superiority is symbolized by the possession of a penis. The owner of this badge of power has special opportunities while those without have more limited possibilities. I questioned whether the penis in its own right as a sexual organ was necessarily an object of envy at all." (XVIII)

Horney observed that the little girls' wish to have a penis or the hope that it will still grow is not any more significant than their equally frequent wish to have a breast; moreover the wish for a penis may be accompanied by a kind of behavior which in our culture is regarded as feminine. She also pointed out that some girls before puberty, not only may wish to be a boy, but through their tomboyish behavior may indicate that they really mean it. Again, however, the question is whether we are justified in taking these tendencies at their face value; when they are analysed we may find good reasons for

The apparently masculine wishes: opposition, despair, at not being attractive as a girl, and the like. As a matter of fact, since girls have been brought up with greater freedom this kind of behavior has become rare.

Finally, she pointed out that adult women may express a wish to be a man. This is true only for neurotic women. (VII)* Sherfey has asserted that it is the female sex which is primal, and not the male. This has been established by biologists for many years. One can no longer speak of a bisexual phase of embryonic development. While genetic sex is established at fertilization, the early embryo is female; the effect of the sex genes is not felt until the fifth or sixth week of fetal life. During this period all embryos are morphologically female. However, if the genetic sex is male, primordial germ cells stimulate the production of a testicular inductor substance which stimulate fetal androgens, suppressing the growth of the ovaries. In this way androgens induce male growth pattern. If the genetic sex is female, germ cells stimulate the production of follicles and estrogen. However, if estrogens are not produced (by artificial removal of gonads before the seventh week), a normal female anatomy will develop. Therefore, no ovarian inductor is required, and female differentiation necessary for masculinization, while female development is autonomous. After twelve weeks sex reversals are impossible, since the masculine nature of the reproductive tract is fully established. Thus, it is more correct to say that the penis is an exaggerated clitoris and that the scrotum is derived from the labia. The original libido, if one wishes to assume such a concept, is clearly feminine not masculine.(XVI)

In addition, the extensive research of Masters and Johnson has illuminated many hitherto clouded and confused areas of female anatomy. The sequence and significance of the female orgasm has been clarified. Both the Kinsey Report and the investigations of Masters and Johnson definitely affirm that, from a biological point of view, clitoral and vaginal orgasms are not separate entities. It is firmly established that the clitoral glans and the lower third of the vagina are the active participants in the female orgasm and are not separate sexual entities. The tendency to reduce clitoral eroticism to a level of psychopathology or immaturity because of its supposed masculine origin is a travesty of the facts and misleading psychological deduction. While the lower third of the vagina is an erotogenic zone with some sensitivity, it does not produce orgasmic contractions and, therefore, there is no such thing as an orgasm of the vagina.

The stimulation of the clitoral glans is what initiates the orgasm which then spreads to the outer third of the vagina. It is a total body response with marked variations in intensity and timing. Physiologically it is a physical release from vasocongestive and myotonic increments developed in response to sexual stimuli. (XVI)

According to Smirgel, reality is not only founded in the difference between the sexes, but also in the absolute correlative, the difference between the generations. The reality is not that the mother has been castrated but that she possesses a vagina that the child is utterly unable to (ful)fill. The reality is that the father possesses a penis that the little boy does not have (the big widdler that Little Hans envied), and genital faculties the child does not possess. When the child is forced

to heed the difference between the sexes and their complementarity, he simultaneously comes to realize the difference between the generations. This causes a narcissistic wound that the theory of sexual phallic monism tries to erase: if in the oedipal phase the child was devoid of any wishes to penetrate his mother, of any knowledge of his mother's vagina, he would have no reason to envy his father whose capabilities would then be not much different from his own; if his mother were willing, and his father did not object, he too could engage in those vague and imprecise "contacts". The oedipal boy preserves in this way a measure of his narcissism. In fact this corresponds to the perverted temptation to rederive pregenital wishes and satisfactions (within the little boy's reach) equivalent to, or even to value them more highly than genital wishes and satisfactions (which are only within the father's reach). A very clear expression of this temptation is to be found in the analysis of Little Hans, when he states his wish to beat horses and finally, as he confesses, to beat his mother: for a little boy, it is, in fact, easier to do this than to attempt to have genital coitus with an adult woman.

Other narcissistic advantages are contained in the theory of sexual phallic monism: if the mother is without a vagina, the little boy, in terms of the inverted Oedipus complex, can satisfy the father just as much as the mother can. Many homosexuals entertain this fantasy; they believe that the anus, which they have genitalized, and the vagina are equivalent. The supposed lack of knowledge of the vagina offers the male child narcissistic benefits on both the negative and positive planes of the Oedipus complex.

The need for sexual phallic monism finds its origin in two different dimensions of the child's relationship to the mother: on the one hand, the archaic omnipotent mother and on the other, the oedipal mother; in both

instances the child experiences with pain the inadequacy linked to his helplessness. The wish to break away from the primal mother drives children of both sexes to project her power on to the father and his penis, and to more or less decahfect specifically maternal qualities and organs. (XVII)

We agree with Horney when she pointed out that the requirements of art, patriotism, morality in general and social ideas in particular, correctness in practical judgment and objectivity in theoretical knowledge the energy and the profundity of life all these are categories which belong as it were in their form and their claims to humanity in general, but in their actual historical configuration, they are masculine throughout. Supposing that we describe these things, viewed as absolute ideas, by the single word (objective), we then find that in the history of our race the equation objective-masculine is a valid one.

Furthermore Horney questioned about motherhood? And asserted that regarded from the standpoint of the social struggle, motherhood may be a handicap. It is certainly so at the present time. But from the biological point of view woman has in motherhood, or in the capacity for negligible physiological superiority. This is most clearly reflected in the unconscious of the male psych in the boy's intense envy of motherhood.

Horney contains in excellent discussion about the language itself, she points out that in the historic times that are known to us, the productivity has undoubtedly been incomparably greater in men than in women. As not the tremendous strength in men of the impulse to creative work in every field precisely due to their feeling of playing a relatively small part in the creation of living beings, which constantly impels them to an overcompensation in achievement?

If we are right in making this connection, we are confronted with the problem of why no corresponding impulse to

compensate herself for her penis envy is found in women. there are two possibilities : either the envy of the women is absolutely less than that of the man, or it is less successfully worked off in some other way. We could bring forward facts in support of either suggestion.

In favor of the greater intensity of the man's envy we might point out that an actual anatomical disadvantage on the side of the woman exists only from the point of view of the pregenital levels of organization. From that of the genital organization of adult women there is no disadvantage, for obviously the capacity of women for coitus is not less but simply other than that of men. On the other hand, the part of the man in reproduction is ultimately less than that of the women.

Further, we observe that men are evidently under a greater necessity to depreciate women than conversely. The realization that the dogma of the inferiority of women had its origin in an unconscious male tendency could only dawn upon us after a doubt had arisen whether in fact this view were justified in reality. But if there actually are in men tendencies to depreciate women behind this conviction of feminine inferiority, we must infer that this unconscious impulse to depreciation is a very powerful one. (IX)

Ms Head points out that Freud made a mistake when he assumed that Oedipus complex is universal phenomena. She indicates that we find that the role the father plays towards the child, the role of the mother, the role of the wife, are sufficiently stylized so that each individual father, be he young and strong or old and weak, or old and strong, each individual mother, whether her breasts flow generously with milk or can only give a few

meagre drops so that she must depend upon other women to supplement them stands against the stylized picture. Thus it is possible to describe in some detail, the form the Oedipus solution will take. One often hears in our society, "If his father had been a different sort of man, then his problems would have been quite different." But it would be even truer to comment also: "If he had been born into a society with a different form of fatherhood..." Where the style of fatherhood calls for great strength and self-contained dignity, a weak father threatens the development of the son so that, that son has a lesser chance than his neighbors.

Cultures differ very much in the extent to which children are permitted to play out and experiment with their their sexuality, and in how the onus of reserve is placed. In Samoa, the expected, expertly engaged in, and which still will not be sufficiently engrossing to threaten the social order. The Samoans condone light love-affairs, but repudiate acts of passionate choice, and have no real place for any one who would permanently continue, in spite of social experiences to the contrary, to prefer one woman or one man to a more socially acceptable mate. (X)

Smirgel had another interpretation, she said that "in my experience with women patients has shown me that penis envy is not on and in itself but rather the expression of a desire to triumph over the omnipotent primal mother through the possession of the organ the mother lacks, i.e. the penis. Penis envy seems to be as proportionally intense as the maternal imago is powerful." (XVII)

The sad thing as Moore related that although Freud strongly believed that drive development organized ego functioning, he was flexible enough to recognize that there might be pathology in one line of development without significantly affecting others, as in the case of homosexuality. It is particularly unfortunate that his ideas about the masculinity

of clitoral activity and the need for shift of the leading zone to the vagina because for many years the hallmark for mature feminine sexuality with psychopathological implications if it did not occur. (XIV)

We assert with Miller if women will only become sexually liberated their pent-up energies will be freed, their life force released from its bonds, and they will find creativity, health, and happiness. Women's strength and hope lie in their real sexuality, not as "sex objects" but as a free, uninhibited, natural, sexual beings. (XIII)

We have to confess with Maluk that although Freud was a product of his time, we can not on any account minimize the fact that it was his genius that galvanized the great revolution in the fields of psychology and human sexuality that we today call psychoanalysis, and its immeasurable benefits for mankind.

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