

propositions, I suggest reading the third chapter of *The Ego and the Id* as *the mise-en-abyme* of the intersection of the new tripartite psychic system and Freud's theory of sexuality.

First, it is notable that Freud distinguishes the 'more complete' Oedipus complex from the simpler one that is not the "commonest form but rather represents a simplification or schematization" (*EI* 19, 28). The key here is the aspect of bisexuality. A little boy is a male in his sexual longing for his mother, yet, at the same time, he behaves like a little girl toward his father. Regardless of his anatomical/biological maleness, Freud claims that the final outcome of this triangular family romance is determined by which of the two sexual dispositions is the stronger in the boy. Another important point is that even if the little boy has a stronger masculine disposition, the resulting emergence of the super-ego consists not just of his father-identification but also of his mother-identification as well, as Freud writes: "*The broad general outcome of the sexual phase dominated by the Oedipus complex may, therefore, be taken to be the forming of a precipitate in the ego, consisting of these two identifications [father- and mother-identifications] in some way united with each other*" (*EI* 30; italics Freud's). In fact, Freud's concept of the super-ego as the outcome of the 'complete' Oedipus complex is far subtler than what may be explained through the mechanism of identification. Even in the 'normal' Oedipus complex, which would make the boy's masculinity outweigh his femininity, his mother-identification does not entirely disappear, as Freud notes in the above-cited passage. The father represents not only a threatening obstacle but also a love-object, which the boy's object-libido continues to cathect. Consequently, repression takes place on both fronts; the boy's ego has to de-sexualize the object-cathexes for both parents.⁵⁾

Although the fear of castration plays a central role in repressing the Oedipus complex, there is another important factor: the “latency period,” during which Freud supposes the libidinal development of a human being is temporarily suspended (*EI* 31). If that is the case, the so called ‘revolutionary event’ of repressing the Oedipus complex may not be revolutionary at all, but biologically determined to happen. What is still striking, however, is that like other psychic energy, the libido engaged in the Oedipus complex cannot simply disappear; it has to be transformed into something else, in this case into the ‘narcissistic libido,’ which will be redirected into some other non-sexual aims. Now that the super-ego is the product of compromise between the conflicting forces of the ego and the id, it retains the sexual energy of the id. Yet, at the same time, it is subject to desexualization through the ego’s agency. Embedded in Freud’s notion of the super-ego or the ego ideal is its deeply contradictory nature:

The ego ideal is therefore the heir of the Oedipus complex, and thus it is also the expression of the most powerful impulses and most important libidinal vicissitudes of the id. By setting up this ego-ideal, the ego has mastered the Oedipus complex and at the same time placed itself in subjection to the id. Whereas the ego is essentially the representative of the external world, of reality, the super-ego stands in contrast to it as the representative of the internal world, of the id.

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- 5) We need to note that this new conceptualization of the Oedipus complex is confined to a male child, as Freud notes: “The Oedipus-complex in the girl is far simpler, less equivocal, than that of the little possessor of a penis; in my experience, it seldom goes beyond the wish to take the mother’s place, the feminine attitude towards the father.” (“Passing” 171)

Conflicts between the ego and the ideal will, as we are prepared to find, ultimately reflect the contrast between what is real and what is psychical, between the external world and the internal world. (*EI* 32)

Here again one may notice that Freud situates the id and the ego within the master/slave dynamics. While the id/horse has “superior strength,” the ego/rider dominates it only to be enslaved to its will; in a similar way, the emergence of the super-ego indicates that the ego has yielded to the demands of the id by giving away a part of it for the latter’s domination.

The stereotypical understanding of Freud suggests that the repression of the Oedipus complex means the triumph of the ego over the id. A close examination of the above-cited passage, however, rather points to the very opposite. That is, the moment of repressing Oedipus complex, the “first object-cathexes of the id,” is equal to the moment in which the ego begins to be occupied by the representative of the id, namely the super-ego (*EI* 49). Freud thus shifts the frontline of the psychical battleground from that between the ego and the id into the ego’s own realm, in which the ego has to fight against its internal opponent called the super-ego. More significantly, with the emergence of the super-ego, the id is no longer simply a sort of repository for libidinal impulses, but now tends to be equivalent to the internal world or the psychical reality as such in opposition to the external world. This drastic extension of the id is particularly suggestive in its resonance with Freud’s earlier statement that “we shall now look upon an individual as a psychical id” (*EI* 17).

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Thus far I have examined the ways in which the metonymic dispersion of the Freudian notion of sexuality intersects with the radical divestment of the subject, as is best exemplified in the peculiar master/slave dynamics of the ego and the id. While a certain definitive answer to the question of sexuality and the subject in Freud is surely beyond the scope of the present essay, I would like to draw on the last pages of "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" in lieu of a conclusion. Wrapping up the discussion of the castration complex which Freud rather unexpectedly foregrounds at the end of the essay, he explicitly upholds a purely psychological basis rather than a biological one, refuting the view that sexual difference is the "true cause and the motive of repression" ("Analysis" 270). One page later, however, Freud admits that the biological factor or the anatomical difference is the "rock-bottom" of the human psyche, noting: "We often feel that, when we have reached the wish for a penis and the masculine protest, we have penetrated all the psychological strata and reached 'bedrock' and that our task is accomplished. And this is probably correct, for in the psychical field the biological factor is really the rock-bottom" ("Analysis" 271). These seemingly contradictory remarks indeed bear on the peculiar paradox of Freudian psychoanalysis: if the final point of an analysis seems to indicate the discursive ceiling of psychoanalysis, the interminable process of analysis itself is inherently free from such a limit. Freud's theory of sexuality is similarly beset by the unbridgeable divide between the interminable process of analysis and the closed circuit of biological determination. Nevertheless, it may be the very

overlapping or the in-betweenness of Freud's theory that allows for a new ground of thinking beyond the simplifying binary of essentialist and constructionist views on sexuality.

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ABSTRACT

Eros and Psyche: Freud's Configuration of the Sexual Drive and the Body-Ego

Kwon, Young-Hee

In keeping with Jacques Lacan's emphasis on the implications of the sexual drive for the Freudian subject, this essay attempts to delineate the complicated contour of Freud's theory of sexuality, the drive, and the three agencies of psychic apparatus. In the first subsection, I argue that Freud's configuration of sexuality, in particular the concept of partial drives, devolves on metonymic dispersion. This movement culminates in the notion of Eros as a primal drive that merge the self-preservatory drive and the sexual drive. The following subsection delves into Freud's conceptualization of the drive, highlighting that it is underpinned by the primary polarity of the subject and the object, yet, at the same time, tends to radically disrupts the conceptual framework. In exemplifying this, I draw on the mechanism of sado-masochism and the primary narcissism. In the last subsection, my discussion is centered on *The Ego and the Id*, examining the intriguing convergence of the new structure of the mind and Freud's final conceptualization of two primal drives as Eros and the death drive. I seek to inquire into what important bearings Freud's notions of Eros

and Thanatos have on the three agencies of psychic apparatus, ending this essay not so much with a definitive answer as with a suggestion for further studies. The theoretical potential of Freud's notion of sexuality to move beyond the simplifying binary of essentialist and constructionist views on sexuality may be embedded in what Freud himself calls the interminable process of analysis.

