

‘Freud, Hegel and the mind, and philosophy as retrieval’ (Draft version only; please refer to published version for references).

Preamble.

Freud’s debt to German Idealism is acknowledged, but it is largely discounted, both against his founding self-conception of psychoanalysis as an empirical discipline and through psychoanalysis’ wartime transplantation to the English-speaking world. The rejection of idealism by analytic philosophy combined with the resurgence of empiricism to occlude idealist traits within psychoanalysis. Insofar as Hegel’s thought is considered an influence, it is from themes around the nature of the subject, notably the Master-Slave dialectic and the concept of recognition. The Hegelian input to psychoanalytic psychology usually cited is the early Jena ‘Phenomenology of Spirit’; the Phenomenology of Spirit and the Psychology of the ‘Encyclopaedia’ are rarely considered. It is the contention of this chapter that the Hegelian conception of the mind’s activity set out in his Psychology lies behind a seminal philosophical reading of Freud’s psychoanalysis by Richard Wollheim.

Where Hegel’s philosophy of mind is explicitly drawn upon by philosophical commentators on psychoanalysis his developmental account of mind is usually read as a causal account of mind’s development and adduced in support of Freud’s claims of psychoanalytic discoveries in this field, in virtue of perceived similarities and resonances between Freud’s thought and Hegel’s. However this mis-interprets Hegel’s philosophy of mind (including, where it is considered at all, his own Psychology) as a psychology of individual development. It consequently provides no support to Freud’s theory.

The chapter takes two, complementary, philosophical approaches. First, there will be an argumentative critique of the prevailing endorsement within philosophy of psychoanalysis of the Freudian ‘Developmental Theory’ as I shall call it, according to which the developing mind follows a maturational trajectory from a starting point in the thought of the infant. I shall argue that this view, while incoherent, is nonetheless held in place by implicit Hegelian structural commitments. Second, the constructive critical task is the retrieval from psychoanalytic thought of governing ideas from German Idealism. The work of retrieval offers a parallel with the work of understanding carried out by psychoanalysis: a radical re-structuring that psychoanalysis needs to understand itself correctly.

## INTRODUCTION

The intersection of psychoanalysis with German Idealism and Romanticism is a formidable field of scholarship across the arts, humanities and social sciences. This chapter has a modest aim and deploys a modest strategy, which I shall call retrieval, to provide a critique of one small part of this field through the window on it provided by the work of Richard Wollheim.<sup>i</sup> Wollheim (1923-2003) had direct experience of psychoanalysis as an ‘analysand’, as well as intellectual interests which, contrary to the prevailing analytic philosophical climate, included British Idealism.<sup>ii</sup> I shall argue that Wollheim’s philosophical explanation of the unconscious as a form of imagining can be re-presented as a Hegelian account; put another way, Wollheim’s analytic reconstruction of the psychoanalytic unconscious amounts to a retrieval of its Hegelian form. I do not at any stage argue that Freud drew directly upon Hegel, or that Hegel himself ‘anticipated’ Freud.

I shall first critique, and reject, a psychoanalytic view of the mind, to which Wollheim himself subscribed, along with other Anglophone philosophers sympathetic to psychoanalysis. I discuss this view under the title of the psychoanalytic Developmental Theory.<sup>iii</sup> It originates with Freud himself, and is still dogmatically treated as a reference point notwithstanding later developments within psychoanalysis which draw little if any theoretical support from it. According to it the mind develops its subjecthood (the Freudian 'ego') and emotional maturity along a trajectory from an origin that is infantile, primitive and archaic. These terms will be interrogated in what follows, but ultimately Freud's equation of them is stipulative. On this view adult mental pathology is the re-emergence of, (or the lapsing, as what Freud calls 'regression', into) early infantile stages of this developmental trajectory. Later psychoanalysts have rejected the regressive explanation of pathology, but remain committed to the Freudian equation of infantile, primitive and archaic.<sup>iv</sup>

I argue that while the Developmental Theory is untenable it remains fixed in the psychoanalytic corpus by its claim to empirical status. This unwarranted claim evades challenge because it allows an unreflective allegiance to an ideology inherited from German Idealism (meaning by this, an 'ideology in the descriptive sense'.<sup>v</sup> Abandoning the Developmental Theory allows idealism's real contribution to psychoanalysis to be explored.

## SECTION 1 The Developmental Theory: Two Theses of Mental Development.

Freud was ambitious to present psychoanalysis as conforming to the methods of modern science in which he was trained. As Kermode has argued, his intellectual moves in this direction were understandable within the form of explanation canonical for the period. Despite later critique of his scientific claims by philosophers, Freud's developmental theorising remains resistant to dismissal from the psychoanalytic corpus.<sup>vi</sup> Explanatory appeals to the primitive, archaic, regressive and infantile nature of mentality abound in psychoanalysis and references to these concepts also permeate the theoretical vocabulary and presuppositions of philosophers in the analytic tradition interested in psychoanalysis.<sup>vii</sup>

The following passage is representative: Jonathan Lear (*Mind and its Place in Nature* pp3,6) tells us that Freud's great discovery was of 'an archaic level of mental functioning...so alien as to be unrecognisable' to the subject. This unrecognisability comes about because of a bodily presentation of thoughts; taking Freud's example from 'On Negation' Lear asks, how something physical like vomiting could count as 'thinking' anything (p7). The answer is that vomiting (for instance) is a 'primitive mental activity' which is inchoate and 'pre-interpreted' and as such is situated at the beginning of a developmental trajectory: 'It is as though the archaic 'thinking' is an early stage of a developmental process en route toward expression in terms of concepts and judgements' (p7).<sup>viii</sup>

The Developmental Theory's endurance can be explained, I suggest, by its function. However precarious its credentials as an empirical thesis (as we shall shortly see them to be), it provides a façade of scientificity fronting a second (decidedly un-empirical) thesis owed to German Idealism. This latter, which I shall for convenience call the Hegelian thesis, is tacit; first, in being occluded by the scientific self-presentation of psychoanalysis and second as a tacit expression of the ideology of German Idealism; in consequence of which it is, practically speaking, ineradicable from psychoanalysis. The Developmental Theory itself is thus an amalgam of two distinct theses keeping each other in place despite the inadequacies of each.

The first, empirical, thesis is itself based on two separate claims. One is that the mind of the individual passes in development from infancy to adulthood, from 'infantile' states of mind that are

characterised as 'archaic' and 'primitive' to mental states that are geared to cognition of the outer world and respond to reality. The other claim (now often rejected within psychoanalysis) is that adult pathology arises as a disorder of development because it displays the characteristics of the earlier developmental 'infantile' stages described above. The ill adult's mental states have these characteristics because they are re-occurrences of a type of mental state the disposition for which is laid down in infancy, the mode of production of mental states which Freud calls 'regression'. The pathological is thus designated by Freud as regressive, and equated with the infantile type recurring in the mind of the adult.<sup>ix</sup> I return below to the further equations asserted by Freud between the infantile, the bodily or corporeal, the archaic, and the primitive.

First, however, we should dismantle the empirical thesis. The sources of data for its claims about children's development and adult pathology are observations made in clinical work. The play and behaviour of young children and infants provide the basis on which thoughts are attributed to them. In work with adult patients it is their own reports of dreams and descriptions of symptoms which provide the data for ascribing mental states which are deemed pathological. The problem here is not the one faced by a genuinely empirical theory, that since its observations are theory-laden, ascription of mental states based on those observations alone does not support the theory. The Developmental Theory could in principle turn to developmental psychology, where attachment theory with its psychoanalytically oriented constructs does offer a source of semi-independent evidence for psychoanalytic claims about mental development. But the theory cannot, for structural reasons, propose an independent way to confirm the posited trajectory from primitive infantile mind to adult mentality, with its supposed potential for regression. This is because its own individuation criteria for attributing thoughts to infants and young children derive from a theory of the mental that is erected on the premise of adult mental regression to infantile states; states of mind are attributed to children on the basis of their behaviour being psychoanalytically interpreted as having the 'infantile' characteristics supposedly discerned in adult pathology.<sup>x</sup> This invites Popper's charge that psychoanalytic theory is self-confirming; observation confirms the claim of a developmental trajectory, because it presupposes it.<sup>xi</sup> The empirical question of what young children's mental states are like cannot be answered independently of how the Developmental Theory says they are; the claim of a developmental trajectory joining infantile and adult states invokes two sets of data points which are not conceptually independent of each other, since the states of mind attributed to infants and young children are already conceptualised as the precursors of adult psychopathology, and adult pathological states are conceptualised as regressive and infantile.

From the above we would be justified in dismissing the Developmental Theory as we find it in Freud. His equation of the pathological and the regressive, and the regressive and the infantile creates an empirical pseudo-thesis, one that is self-confirming and so, unfalsifiable. However, Freud's pursuit of intellectual legitimacy implicates other equally un-confirmable characterisations of the starting point of the mind's development, according to which the infantile mind is archaic, primitive and, 'corporeal'. The last of these is Freud, 'biologist of the mind', making a scientific contribution to the Romantic conception of the mind by endowing it with a biological basis, neatly (and ambiguously) labelled the 'bodily ego'.<sup>xii</sup> Ontogenically early mind supposedly arises out of a matrix of bodily urges which appear in the mind as instincts. To think these the mind employs, says Freud, the 'oldest language of all', a vocabulary of bodily terms in which bodily urges represent themselves in corporeal terms. (Freud references for Negation and instinct) In the same equivocatory vein, Freud's own 'myth of the primitive' about the early mind augments recapitulationism with an 'embryology of the mind'.<sup>xiii</sup> The undifferentiatedness of early embryonic development supplies a biological gloss to primitivity as ontogenetic earliness in the individual, and Haeckelian doctrine equates this with phylogenetic earliness in the developmental history of mankind. Finally, the generally accepted

equation of the primitive and the archaic in Romantic thought allows Freud all of the following: the infantile is the corporeal, the corporeal is the primitive, the primitive is the archaic, and so, the infantile is the archaic. All these equivalences were part of the currency of Romantic thought which provides the out-dated, if contextually intelligible, basis of Freud's claims about mental archaicism. But their deft compression by Freud into one thesis about mind and its origins should not disguise the fact that they all rest on equivocations between the terms involved. While unremarkable in their intellectual context these claims cannot now be defended.<sup>xiv</sup>

Nevertheless, evading much-needed critique, the Developmental Theory continues to slide between these different equivalences and to supply psychoanalytic vocabulary with a nexus of epithets around the concepts of the archaic and the primitive. What continues to hold this web of psychoanalytic lore in place and allows it to masquerade as a 'theory' is the prior idea that the mind develops along a pre-determined trajectory whose point of origin is un-developed or, un-differentiated with respect to the projected end-point. When psychoanalysis contributes its own explanation of pathology as regressive back down the trajectory to the origins of mind in infancy it exploits an identity borrowed, *vide infra*, from Hegelian thought, between the mind of the infant and the mind in its infancy. From this identity it follows that they have the same properties. The mind in its infancy is infantile, while the infant's mind at the outset of its (individual) developmental path is undifferentiated, primitive, and 'archaic'.<sup>xv</sup>

In retrieving the Hegelian thesis from the appropriation by psychoanalysis just outlined, I shall be arguing for retaining the concept of the archaic under a different interpretation. In particular I shall suggest that, understood in Hegelian terms, the archaic has another connotation than that overtly bestowed on it by Freud; one which, correctly formulated, provides psychoanalysis with a conceptual resource.

## Section 2. The place of Hegel.

The Hegelian thesis, as I am calling it, is the more visible part of a ramified idealist ideology within psychoanalysis, an infrastructure of ideas and conceptual commitments that runs throughout. The Hegelian thesis itself loosely assembles a set of claims about the mental deriving from certain central tenets of idealism. One is the idea that, as the philosopher W.Hart puts it, that 'the mind is an artefact of its understanding of itself'. The idealist conception of mind as self-making was incorporated into psychoanalytic theory as part of the constellation of ideas with which German Idealism articulated the aspirations and convictions of Romanticism. Noting this historical influence, my aim is to diagnose the conceptual error of a mis-appropriation of idealist thought into the Developmental Theory. What I am calling the Hegelian thesis in psychoanalysis is not therefore to be attributed directly, or solely, to Hegel. Nevertheless, to elucidate it my focus will be solely on Hegel, specifically on the conception of development to be discerned in his *Psychology*. For Hegel, the mind comes into being as it develops in a dialectical progression through which its concept comes to be realised.<sup>xvi</sup>

Hegel in fact means different things by 'development'; between some of them he simply asserts identity, in a way that echoes Schelling's Philosophy of Identity.<sup>xvii</sup> For Hegel, then, developmental progress is at one and the same time that of the mind of the individual subject and that of the impersonal Mind, or Spirit. Individual psychological development follows the same trajectory that Mind as Spirit follows to self-consciousness and reason in realising its concept. Both are ontological progressions, comings-into-being towards the end of a complete self-realisation of their concept. Both, notoriously, follow, mirror or instantiate the onward progress of absolute mind, God's own

coming to self-consciousness through the parallel journey of mankind. If it had occurred to him Freud might have thought that the identity Hegel assumes between the development of individual mind and absolute mind would provide a ready-made legitimating premise to psychoanalytic Developmental Theory's empirical theory of infant mental development. Not within Hegel's *Psychology*, however. Hegel himself opposed empirical psychology as being based on the 'untruth' of the appearances of mind always on the move through the stages thrown up as the dialectical progression proceeds. Hegel, to return to a contrast drawn earlier, is concerned with the infancy of the mind but not with the mind of the (empirical) infant.

How then should we understand Hegel on the realisation of the dialectical progression in mental development, both in the concrete individual, and in the general case of Mind as Spirit? In particular, how should Hegel's insistence that the mind is self-sufficient for its own coming-into-being? In the *Psychology* all resources for the activity of mind-making, for change and ascent, are to be found within the mind. This is, after all, an implausible claim given the stark facts of human physical and emotional dependence. Hegel will regard these facts as appearances in the mind, but it must be firmly borne in mind that, transplanted outside of idealism, the idea of self-sufficiency of mind cannot be maintained in any straightforward way.

I shall explain this self-sufficiency claim in Aristotelian terms. The mind at the beginning of its trajectory of development is not what it will come to be. However, the Aristotelian doctrine of final causes says that the end or *telos* is contained in the beginning, as formal cause - for Hegel, the concept. The coming into being of the mind in development realises the mind's concept into what it will become. The dialectical progression through the appearances of mind *en route* to self-consciousness in the *Phenomenology*, and to intelligent mind in the *Psychology*, is the analytical unrolling or mapping-out of the formal cause which controls it.<sup>xviii</sup> This is one way to gloss Hegel's terminology of the 'germ'. The 'germ' is the condition of possibility of the end, into which is compressed all that is needed for, and makes possible, the eventual end: the metaphor of the germ condenses formal and final, as well as material and efficient, causes.

The *Psychology*, though it follows the *Phenomenology*, is not additional or adjunctive to it. It describes the same onward movement towards self-consciousness but as the development of intelligence and reason, the termini of subjective mind. Progress is seen from a perspective on mind's activity, not on what appears to the mind. The *Psychology* works out a catalogue of the mind's activity-types: the faculties brought into play and thereby into existence, in obedience to the requirement that the mind contains within itself what will ground and make possible the next step in the dialectical movement.<sup>xix</sup> I shall leave aside Hegel's own conception of the imagination in the *Psychology* as it is unlikely that psychoanalysis owes anything directly to it. In his treatment of the imagination Hegel attempts to broker a connection between association on the one hand, and Kant's distinction between the productive and reproductive imagination on the other. These are then shoehorned into the progression of Intelligence, through the faculties, leading towards cognition as the goal of Theoretical Mind. What I shall retain from the *Psychology* and will revert to is the dialectical control of the self-realisation of the mind. At every developmental stage the dialectical movement shifts the mind onwards, controlling and containing its progress towards a more integrating and over-arching conception of itself and its capacities. In this way the mind is always working to make itself according to its concept.

### Section 3

Wish-fulfilling thought.

Freud's insight that wish-fulfilling thought is fundamental to the mind may be integrated into philosophy of mind as a form of imagining. I introduced Wollheim's philosophical explanation of unconscious thought as imagining by saying that it has a fundamentally Hegelian structure. To show this however will require a critical re-evaluation of his argument to deal with a circularity in his explanation of the role of imagination.

In 'Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning' Freud contrasts two types of thought: reality-oriented thought that represents the way the world is, and 'pleasure-oriented' thought that represents the way the subject would like the world, or some part of it, to be. The first is cognitive, the second is wishful; Freud says that 'the pleasure-ego can do nothing but wish'.<sup>xx</sup> Reality principle governed thought is oriented to the world: its representational activities are rational and action-producing. Pleasure principle governed thought is oriented to instinctual satisfaction; instinctually produced wishes self-misrepresent themselves as realised through a mechanism which Freud hypothesised as the 'hallucination' of their content and which gives the subject a temporary respite from instinctual demand. Mental life is under constitutive tension between these two modes of thought, in respect of their form and of the ends they serve. To reduce this tension, wish-fulfilling thought is indirectly presented to consciousness; dreams, symptoms, slips and actions all betray unconscious wishes through some disguised representation of their fulfilment.

Wish-fulfilling thought is however directly observable in the representational activity of the imagination in daydreaming. Wish-fulfilling imagining represents in the mind what is wished for in such a way or under such a guise that it is felt as real. It also has real consequences in the mind; daydreaming is accompanied with appropriate feelings, of pleasure, satisfaction, or reduction of anxiety. Furthermore, while Freud himself uses both 'Phantasie' and 'Einbildung' as general terms for imagination (as translated by Strachey) indifferently as to whether the imagining is conscious or unconscious, he held that unconscious thought, thought under the Pleasure principle, is intrinsically wish-fulfilling. Psychoanalytic unconscious thought *is* unconscious imagining, imagining which is kept unavailable to consciousness.<sup>xxi</sup> But, further, psychoanalysis insists on unconscious thought's radically different character as omnipotently wish-fulfilling; what is imagined is taken to be real (this is the force of 'hallucinatory'). The question then arises of how unconscious thought can be wish-fulfilling without the subject succumbing to delusion and becoming incapable of satisfying her real wants and needs. Freud's answer is simply that the Reality principle supervenes over the Pleasure principle in a 'momentous step'. However, if wish-fulfilling thought is to contribute to the ordinary working of the mind rather than disrupt it, mental regulation must have a dual capability. There must be a mechanism, some capability of the mind, which both allows unconscious imagining to run freely without disabling the possibility of action and can also integrate imagining into conscious reality-oriented thought.

Wollheim addresses this in his explanation of the psychoanalytic unconscious. In ordinary usage, imagining is the mental activity of entertaining thoughts of, and representing as real what is, or may be, contrary to fact. (OED reference here). In daydreaming, content and phenomenology together betoken the occurrence of temporary satisfaction of wishes.<sup>xxii</sup> Wishfully imagining a danger successfully circumvented yields a temporary gain of relief from anxiety; in such daydreaming, wish-fulfilling thought is fully circumscribed by considerations of reality. Conscious imagining is a mental activity carried out in a regulated way which permits the subject to suspend considerations of truth within the duration and scope of the imagining and to represent as real what is contrary-to-fact. Nevertheless such imaginings do not lead to action. They remain truth-sensitive in tracking contradiction between what is wishfully held to be true and what is, outside of the scope of the imagining, held to be false.

Everyday imagining of this sort is therefore a mental activity that is regulated; it is carried out under a concept of the imagination. A subject must possess the concept (whether explicit or implicit) in order to be able to imagine in this way, without acting on her imaginings, just as she must possess the concept of belief in order to have beliefs, thoughts on which to act (Wollheim references Davidson here). However, the effectiveness of a regulating concept of this sort may become attenuated or even unavailable to the subject; it may be intentionally abrogated (as when the concept of 'playing at being' is relinquished) or it may be un-intentionally suspended, when unavailable to the subject in sleep or from emotions such as anxiety, when fears become real. When regulation of conscious imagining fails, the concept of imagination lapses in ways that are temporary, arbitrary and contingent.

However, contingency cannot explain the role that psychoanalysis allots to unconscious imagining as constitutively part of the mind's activity. Systematicity is required; it is secured by a recalibration of all mental activity in which the concept of the imagination is rendered inoperative, and sensitivity to contradiction is lost. This recalibration is effected by what Wollheim terms the 'archaic theory of the mind', or (as Freud's patient the Ratman called it) the belief in 'the omnipotence of thoughts'.<sup>xxiii</sup> The archaic theory of the mind is a theory in the sense that, when it dominates in the mind, the mind systematically conforms its activity to a conception of itself as omnipotent in bringing about what it thinks.

This is not however an all-or-nothing change: the 'theory' is one whose penetrance of mental life is global but varies in intensity along a continuum.<sup>xxiv</sup> In ordinary psychology the influence of the archaic theory is minimal, manifesting as over-optimism or unrealistic enthusiasm. Under increasing degrees of its influence mental life may be tinged, skewed, or colonised by its mode of construing thought as efficacious in realising its content. The degrees of wish-fulfilling thought are thus explained within psychoanalysis as wishful imagining under different degrees of control by, or penetrance of the mind by this omnipotence-asserting mode of thought, against the counterbalance of reality.

But why is this mode of functioning 'archaic'? Wollheim tells us that " 'the [archaic] 'theory' intermediately proposes for the mental – that is to say, both for the mind and for its phenomena – a conceptualisation in corporeal terms. The infant or primitive man – *or, we must add, regressive man* – is led by the theory he embraces to think of his thoughts as some part of his body or, again, of his thinking as a particular piece of bodily functioning, and this conceptualisation provides us with an explanation of such a person's belief in the omnipotence of thoughts. For, as he comes to attach, *in accordance with developmental norms*, an exaggerated efficacy to this part of the body or that particular piece of bodily functioning, so he will correspondingly overvalue the psychic phenomena he has equated with them." (WF p57: my italics) Wollheim here explains Freud's hypothesis of the belief in the omnipotence of thought in terms of the regression to an infantile, primitive, mode of thought where the 'developmental norm' is a corporeal vocabulary for the mental. In conformity with the Freudian equivalences given earlier, Wollheim explains the archaic theory as archaic because it imposes a regression on the mind to an infantile or a primitive mode of functioning, in line with the Developmental Theory.

However, we cannot accept this explanation of the unconscious mind as imagining under the archaic theory once we notice the antinomy produced by its reliance on the Developmental Theory. Unequivocally implied here is a return to, or a resurgence of, a developmentally earlier form of thought. The antinomy arises because (once again) the nature of that developmentally earlier form of thought is explained, and only explained, in terms of a developmentally later one. The explanation presupposes a concept of imagination as wish-fulfilling thought regulated with reference to norms

that belong to a later stage on the cognitive trajectory implicit in the Developmental Theory than those governing infantile wish-fulfilling thought. The explanation of unconscious, wish-fulfilling thought is given as imagining under the archaic theory of the mind in which imaginings are taken as real experiences. 'Adherence to developmental norms' of the infantile mind obliges considerations of reality, with the norms of truth and falsity, to drop out. The imagination released from the constraint of regulation is thus re-configured, as primitive, corporeal, infantile and 'regressive'. To avoid circularity in the explanation we are owed an account of what this infantile form of the imagination is, which is independent of the form of thought that it will develop into and from which it has retreated.

#### Section 4

##### Hegelian Freud retrieved?

Uncritically retained, the Developmental Theory thus produces an antinomy which undermines Wollheim's analysis. It also occludes a more interesting contribution made by the Hegelian thesis. We shall see this thesis supply a different explication of archaicism, conforming not to a specious scientism but to a more fundamental psychoanalytic commitment about the nature of the mind. I develop this by retrieving the idealism lying below the surface of Wollheim's thought about psychoanalysis, and deriving from his early work on Bradley. The defining doctrine of the British idealists was the self-realising nature of the mind, the creation of the subject by itself: 'the self (or ego or subject) of the (rational) agent is a self which is always in the making...being continuously realised in every course of action and every activity of the (rational) agent' (Milne p.29). In Bradley this doctrine is overtly psychological, as when subjective consciousness of an object results from a conflict between the apprehension of the object as both satisfying and frustrating, resolved as the ego's perception of its relation to the object. Bradley remarks: 'We can feel the problem that pressed hard upon the struggling mind and understand how the result (subjective consciousness) has partly solved it'. This individualistic gloss on the dialectic of mind's self-making highlights a Hegelian strand in Freud's 'Formulations on Two Principles of Mental Functioning'. Describing how wish-fulfilling thought with its immediate but spurious satisfaction provokes the mind to cope with frustration by producing the Reality principle Freud says, '*the psychical apparatus had to decide to form a conception of the real circumstances in the external world and to exert itself to alter them. A new principle of mental functioning was thus introduced; what was presented in the mind was no longer that which was agreeable but what was real....This setting-up of the reality-principle proved a momentous step.*' (my italics).<sup>xxv</sup>

These observations remind us that psychology, whether empirical or theoretical, depends in its account of the way the mind works on the way mind is conceptualised. I have suggested that in psychoanalysis the conceptualisation is Hegelian; it is then within this that we should seek a meaning for the notion of archaicism. A 'return to Hegel' also allows us to assert a notion of development that is fully Hegelian. I propose that we view the developmental progression from Freud's 'hallucinatory' wish-fulfilment to conceptually regulated fantasising, and the supervention of the 'archaic theory', as development towards freedom as Hegel sees it. The argument is inaugurated by a suggestion from Susanne Hermann-Sinai, that hallucinatory wish-fulfilling thought is a limitation of the subject in Hegelian terms, in being im-mediate.<sup>xxvi</sup> Introducing the Reality principle, Freud footnotes: 'It will rightly be objected that an organisation which was a slave to the pleasure principle and neglected the reality of the external world could not maintain itself alive for the shortest time, so that it could not have come into existence at all.' In Freud's biological perspective, hallucination is



a state in which freedom is restricted, ultimately by the threat to life itself. The developmental move to the Reality principle is then an increase in freedom in making life possible (a plausible gloss on Freud's description of the move as a 'momentous step').

Daydreaming is imagining under the Reality principle, mediated by the regulating concept of the imagination. Conducting imagining under a concept is a dialectical advance in that it situates the thinking subject as one among others, and so is a move towards objectivity. At the same time, it is an advance towards freedom in being a mediated form of thought, in place of the immediacy of a hallucinatory state. However, while Freud's hypothesised transition to regulated imagining under the Reality-principle might, as suggested, be construed as an increase in freedom, it does not yet conform to the dialectical structure of development since it is not conceptually contained in what goes before it. It is not motivated dialectically by the limitation of the subject's wish-fulfilling imagining. Nothing internal to the concept of immediate wish-fulfilment requires or impels a dialectical advance through its negation to regulation by reality; on Freud's account it is the absence of satisfaction by the external world that does this. Equally, conceptually regulated imagining contains nothing dialectically oppositional to connect it back to hallucinatory imagination as its own negation. Mediatedness by conceptual thought would not yield by negation to the immediacy of hallucination; rather it would lead to the un-regulation of thought. So far, the two forms of imagining appear as Humean independent existences unconnected by the dialectical opposition of mutual negation.

What does impel the onward dialectical development of mind here? We must look again at what might connect these two radically different forms of thought occurring under Freud's different and opposed Two Principles of mental functioning. For onward dialectical progression to be possible they must to be connected together as two forms of imagining, and as two different forms of thought, they can only be thought of as imagining under the concept of imagining; in Hegelian terms, already thought as two sides of a unitary concept (Herrmann-Sinai). Conceptual progression in the dialectic requires a conception of the imagination that makes regulated imagining a rational advance on hallucinatory imagining. To make this advance from hallucination to reality-oriented imagining, the mind 'had to decide' or (Bradley) to 'struggle', to produce by its own *Aufhebung* a concept of imagining under which both forms, immediate wish-fulfilment and mediated regulated imagining are seen for what they are by mind's intelligence.<sup>xxvii</sup>

Here we have the onward development of the activity of mind realising its concept as imagination and grasped as such by its intelligence.<sup>xxviii</sup> For Hegel in the *Psychology* this is part of the dialectical progression towards the full self-realisation of the mind's concept of itself. Every onward movement of the dialectical progression is internally motivated by what is already there, in the concepts that the mind thinks into being. This is so both for the individual concepts of mind's activities such as imagination, and for the concept the mind has of itself. This concept, embracing the mind in all its activities, is aptly designated 'the mind's image of itself', itself the phrase Wollheim uses as an alternative name for the archaic theory of the mind.<sup>xxix</sup>

This gloss on 'archaic' retrieves the Hegelian undercurrent in Wollheim's explanation of the psychoanalytic unconscious. The change which comes over ordinary regulated imagining under the sway of the archaic theory, in which (it will be recalled) the mind sees itself as omnipotently bringing about what is wished, is no longer to be seen as 'regressive' and unrealistic. When in the *Psychology* Mind is bringing itself into being through its activity it is doing so according to its concept as self-making; the omnipotence of its thinking is part of its concept. Wish-fulfilling thought, both unmediated and hallucinatory, and mediated as in daydreaming, are then determinate forms of omnipotent thinking; or, put another way, omnipotence in an unrealistic, hallucinatory mode of

thought is one of the ‘determinations’ of the determinable concept of imagining that realises itself in the onward dialectical development of self-determination by Mind.<sup>xxx</sup>

Further, omnipotence in self-creation can also become part of objective mind’s development. Mediation by a concept of creativity would regulate imagining towards creating the objectively new, by speculating, hypothesising, conjecturing, or wondering –‘what if?’ imagining.<sup>xxxi</sup> Such development would be towards freedom through the increase in mediation by objective, shared rules and societal constraints guiding imagining. This re-interprets Freud’s enunciation of psychoanalysis’ goal as the freedom of self-knowledge, ‘Where id was, ego shall be’. As interpreted under the Developmental Theory, the goal of psychoanalysis is cure when self-understanding liberates the patient from the shackles of instinctual life and from imprisonment within neurosis. Freedom, the coming into being of the ego, is indeed brought about by its self-understanding, by the subject’s seeing omnipotent thoughts for what they are. But what are seen are the instinct-driven wishes that press for satisfaction, and the psychological defences that, attempting to deliver this satisfaction obliquely and avoid renunciation of instinctual gratification, generate neurotic symptoms and mental un-freedom from within the mind itself. Freud, to borrow a familiar (if over-simple) distinction, envisages freedom as freedom ‘from’. Re-interpreted, the freedom that psychoanalysis brings is more nearly freedom ‘to’: the freedom to think and to create. The self-knowledge that makes this possible is the increase in mediatedness achieved through dialectical progression. And of course, the freedom to think and create are the achievements which, not accidentally, are the aims of clinical psychoanalysis.

We might now abandon the idea of archaicism for that of omnipotence. However, the term ‘archaic’ makes a further contribution, not contained in the idea of the mind’s self-image as omnipotent. The idea of an ‘archaic mind’ antedates Freud, who first uses it in ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’.<sup>xxxii</sup> One of its meanings is (OED) ‘belonging to an earlier period’, a usage corresponding to German Romanticism’s preoccupation with ancient Greece. The classicist Armand D’Angour argues that the Archaic period should be seen, not as precursor to the changes ushered in by the Classical period which followed, but as ‘container’ of its origins and principles. It was a period harbouring the conditions for the development of literacy and music, and much else new, in the Classical period.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

‘Archaic’ comes from the Greek *ἀρχή* whose cognate terms carry meanings of antiquity, genesis and first principles.<sup>xxxiv</sup> The idea that the archaic is a container and holds within it both the origins and beginnings of what unfolds from it and what controls and guides that unfolding, recalls the Hegelian metaphor of the ‘germ’, and suggests how we might locate a concept of the archaic within a Hegelian philosophical psychology.<sup>xxxv</sup> The mind’s archaic theory of itself is its ‘first principle’ or ruling concept that extends back to a beginning that legitimates it and at the same time impels its onward development. This is more than an image of itself as omnipotently self-making. It is the concept of itself *in potentia*, containing its own first principle informing what it will become in its development towards freedom.<sup>xxxvi</sup> If we take the psychoanalytic unconscious to be a form of thinking under the archaic theory so understood, then unconscious mind is itself achieved in the course of mind’s development towards mediated self-knowledge. Unconscious mind, so understood, is thinking mediated by the mind’s concept of itself as archaic: ‘Id becomes ego’ when the mind thinks its own archaicism as its principle of self-making towards freedom, both from and of its own omnipotence.

Concluding remarks

Mine is not a work of scholarship, of Hegel or of Freud. In attempting to bring psychoanalysis into more intelligible connection with Hegelian thought I do not presume to do so with what Hegel himself wrote in the *Psychology* and my account rapidly parts company with the Hegelian progression of the faculties of Theoretical Mind. Neither is my identification of idealist themes in psychoanalysis based on Freud scholarship; I undertake neither the demonstration of intellectual influence on psychoanalysis' origins nor the historical reconstruction of its intellectual preoccupations.<sup>xxxvii</sup> I have called my approach retrieval, borrowing Wollheim's term in 'Criticism as Retrieval'. By it he meant the critic's reconstruction of the creative activity of the artist on lines reminiscent of psychoanalytic interpretation. My retrieval here can be thought of as something like interpretation, when I read Wollheim against himself to uncover what his idealist sensibility points to in the Freudian thesis of archaic mind.

In doing so I might be thought merely to have undone Freud's 'biologisation' of German Idealism, returning to origins long recognised by historians of psychoanalysis and rendering superfluous both Wollheim's explanation of the psychoanalytic unconscious, and my re-working of it. It might also be objected that I have raised a straw man in the shape of the Developmental Theory, itself strongly criticised within contemporary psychoanalysis.<sup>xxxviii</sup> But the persisting distortion of the psychoanalytic conception of the mind arising from construing the archaic mind as infantile and primitive leaves the more interesting post-Kleinian conception of the mind theoretically weak. What its clinicians do, and do well, deserves a better theory.

It may also be seen as an omission that I have not dealt directly either with what Hegel himself says about pathology of the mind (in what he says about madness in the *Anthropology*) or with what other writers have found in Hegel's writing that bears on this. In the *Psychology* in particular, the metaphor of the 'pit' or 'mine' of intelligence storing and supplying images to the imagination has been seen as the fore-runner of the psychoanalytic unconscious.<sup>xxxix</sup> Hegel's thought here (if it does support such claims) does not contribute to my argument. A fuller characterisation of the imagination is undoubtedly needed for my account, but it is not to be found in Hegel's *Psychology*.

More important is the question how we are to view minds that are still in the making if the mind only fully becomes itself at the completion of development. Unless it is supposed that each individual's mind achieves the entire trajectory prescribed for Mind, are we to see minds which do not progress fully as defective? This would be to re-introduce the Developmental Theory; to avoid this we must retain the idea of a timeless immanence of the concept of mind throughout the dialectical progression of mind's development. But this in turn introduces the quite general difficulty of what can be said, if anything, about the mind's states (including 'hallucinatory' wish-fulfilment) at any point dialectically prior to their being thought under their determining concept. More work is to be done on this philosophical problem of un-thought mind and philosophers and psychoanalysts alike struggle with it, but it is not to be solved by projecting the dialectical progression onto a temporal developmental sequence.

Psychoanalysis holds that unconscious phantasy is always present and observable in processes of mind-making. The Hegelian reading I propose does provide theoretical support for contemporary post-Kleinian psychoanalysis' claim that mind is always to be observed in the making, and that pathology is to be understood, not as regressive nor as a breakdown in functioning but as an activity of mind-making turned against itself. Psychoanalytic Kleinian thinkers of an empiricist persuasion might think that this theoretical support is bought at the expense of a Hegelian commitment which, as it stands is too abstruse to be of use. Perhaps, however, the ideas explored in this article will stimulate a return to further investigation of Hegel's own *Psychology*, and the ways in which the concept of the archaic mind that I propose here may be prefigured there.

Finally, on this understanding of archaic mind the following psychoanalytic proposition suggests itself. If mind is the product of its own making according to its concept of itself and if (as Hegel held for other concepts) the concept of the mind is itself positioned historically and culturally, then we can suppose that mind makes itself according to the image of its time and place. Since Freud, this image has become to varying degrees a psychoanalytical one; psychoanalysis reflects Western culture's image of the mind back to it in an image that itself is historically conditioned.<sup>x1</sup> What we might suppose to be unchanging is the condition of possibility of mind-making at all. All this would make unconscious mind as the activity of mind in its self-making, more nearly universal and more durable, than conscious, socially constructed mind.

---

<sup>i</sup> Wollheim wrote on Freud and, while dealing with Kleinian concepts, never subjected Kleinian theory to systematic philosophical investigation. He did not engage with issues of psychoanalytic technique nor consequently with the clinically-based theories being developed by the post-Kleinians, including his own analyst Leslie Sohn. His understanding of Kleinian ideas was therefore very likely enabled by his own analytic experience. Nevertheless, I suggest, his philosophical analysis of phantasy in terms of unconscious imagining shows an anticipation of, or supports the retrieval of, the decidedly Hegelian conception of 'mind in the making' of the post-Kleinian school.

<sup>ii</sup> Since the context in which psychoanalytic observation is conducted is almost entirely clinical, scholarly commentators come intellectually equipped as clinicians or as academics, but rarely as both.

<sup>iii</sup> 'Developmental Theory' is to be distinguished from more defensible psychoanalytic theses concerning the mind's development; attachment theory (reference)\*, and the theory of individual character formation (eg Harcourt).

<sup>iv</sup> Reference Caper

<sup>v</sup> Geuss ('The Idea of a Critical Theory' pp 4ff) contrasts this sense of 'ideology' with the 'pejorative' sense' more usually attached to the term. Here, I do imply that this idealism has an influence on their thought infrequently grasped by proponents of psychoanalysis.

<sup>vi</sup> Psychoanalysis was vigorously criticised by philosophers: Wittgenstein, Popper, Grunbaum and Cioffi among others (References). For recent re-evaluation see Lacewing (dates).

<sup>vii</sup> Lear, Cavell, Gardner, Hopkins (References)

<sup>viii</sup> Lear is cautious not to endorse the Developmental Theory but (in a Hegelian idiom) continues: 'insofar as there is a natural developmental thrust by which the mind moves from archaic to more sophisticated formulations, the mind must be striving to understand its own activities' (p8). Nevertheless, talk of infantile primitive mind persists unexamined in his and other philosophers' writing (Cavell, Hopkins, Gardner).

<sup>ix</sup> Reference

<sup>x</sup> The objection is independent Freud's explanation of pathology in terms of regression: the characterisation of infantile mentality is infused with, and based on, features from adult mental life that are already judged to be infantile in character, including 'zonal' developmental characteristics of orality, anality, genitality, and the hallucinatory wish-fulfilling character attributed equally to dreams, infants, and adult patients' neurotic symptoms.

<sup>xi</sup> Popper (reference) objected that psychoanalysis was a 'pseudoscience' in being unfalsifiable since it was self-confirming: observations could always be interpreted to fit the theory.

<sup>xii</sup> The phrase is Sulloway's: Reference

<sup>xiii</sup> Freud worked on neuro-embryology.

<sup>xiv</sup> Even if 'regression' is removed from the equation, the argument against the Developmental Theory's empirical thesis stands: infantile states of mind are attributed content employing concepts (primitivity, archaicism) derived from observation of adult states judged to have these properties. Mental states are not primitive and archaic because they are the sorts of states infants are observed to have; they are attributed to infants as having primitive and archaic properties, of the sort observed in adults' mental states (and assumed to be present in infants).

<sup>xv</sup> Freud's reasoning, as re-constructed here, is unlikely to be following Leibniz's Law (which states the indiscernibility of identicals); it more probably reflects an enduring influence of Schelling's system of identity, which affirmed 'the indifference of nature and spirit, of subject and object'; these and other such contrasts being already united in the Absolute (ref Inwood in Oxford Companion to Philosophy).

<sup>xvi</sup> Reflecting the Aristotelian idea that its immanent form or formal cause unfolds into its *telos* or final cause.

<sup>xvii</sup> See note xv; Hegel may be borrowing from the doctrine even while rejecting it.

<sup>xviii</sup> The onward dialectic process might be seen as the mind's being efficacious towards itself (a non-mechanical sense of 'efficient cause').

<sup>xix</sup> In this movement, from Being, its Negation and, through the process of *Aufhebung*, the Sublation which over-arches of both these, the concept's self-realisation is taken forward. Thanks to Lucia Ziglioli here.

<sup>xx</sup> Analytic philosophers may object to Freud's references to 'principles' of mental functioning and to phrases such as 'the pleasure ego can do nothing but wish', as instances of the homunculus fallacy. This is to disregard the context of Freud's writing. German thought was infused with Idealist assumptions and German language with turns of phrase owed to Idealism, lost to view with the English transplantation and translation of psychoanalysis.

<sup>xxi</sup> The possibility of unconscious thought is now rarely objected to. For arguments in support of psychoanalysis own, further, claim that unconscious thoughts and thinking, can be kept unavailable to consciousness by mechanisms of psychical defence, see eg. Gardner, Laceywing.

<sup>xxii</sup> Wollheim puts this in the philosophical terminology as desire satisfied; however the term 'desire' is avoided here since for Hegel it not part of the active mind that is the topic of the Psychology (see Editors' Introduction); it is drive (Trieb) that does belong to active mind.

<sup>xxiii</sup> Wollheim 1979 pp 56-7; 1984 pp 90-91, 142 ff;

<sup>xxiv</sup> Wollheim argues this elsewhere: see 'The Mind and the Mind's image of itself'.

<sup>xxv</sup> Freud is perhaps targeting the idealist indifference to the realities of need and dependence (see Section 2).

<sup>xxvi</sup> Personal communication.

<sup>xxvii</sup> This is immanent in Wollheim's reference to Davidson on having beliefs being only possible for a creature with the concept of belief.

<sup>xxviii</sup> For Hegel it is intelligence as active self-consciousness that takes up ('comprehends') *Aufhebung's* resolution of dialectical opposition. Understanding, which belongs to consciousness only, cannot itself grasp dialectical movement (thanks to Lucia Ziglioli for this clarification).

<sup>xxix</sup> In 'The Mind and the Mind's Image of itself' Wollheim gives an account of how the mind works according to its own picture of itself as corporeal and so, omnipotent, which covers the same ground as his thesis of the archaic theory of the mind.

<sup>xxx</sup> The difficulty of saying anything about the nature of states that are prior dialectically, such as 'hallucinatory' wish-fulfilment, is a version of the philosophical problem of un-thought mind. Philosophers and psychoanalysts alike struggle with this, but it is not to be solved by projecting the dialectical progression onto a temporal developmental sequence.

<sup>xxxi</sup> A phrase used by the psychoanalyst Hanna Segal (reference)

<sup>xxxii</sup> Freud ( ) cites two authors using the term about the mind: Ch I.E in a citation of Havelock Ellis; VII.B Nietzsche (no references are given, however).

<sup>xxxiii</sup> The use of 'container' is an intentional reference to the psychoanalytic idea that the for the subject to progress from feeling to thinking her inchoate thoughts require containment by the mind of another who will render them back to her in thinkable form (D'Angour, A. unpublished paper 'The Archaic as a Container for Innovation' delivered July 2003).

<sup>xxxiv</sup> The Greek (Homeric) dictionary gives two meanings:  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  = very old and  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  = beginning or rule. These may possibly reflect two separate roots: D'Angour comments on the ancient 'pun' of  $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$  as beginning and as rule, though the two uses may be connected through the legitimation that origins give to rulers (Geuss).

<sup>xxxv</sup> D'Angour's 'containment', in being psychoanalytically inspired, is not innocent of Hegelian associations.

---

<sup>xxxvi</sup> This is an idea which ramified throughout 19C German Romantic thought: see ffytche \*\*\*pp\*\*

<sup>xxxvii</sup> For such work see Gardner's exploration of the roots of the psychoanalytic unconscious in post-Kantian idealism.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> See eg Caper

<sup>xxxix</sup> What I am calling psychoanalysis' idealist ideology generates perceived 'consiliences' with earlier Germanophone thinkers supposed to 'anticipate' psychoanalysis but, on the view of this chapter, contributing to producing it.

<sup>xl</sup> Daniel Pick shows that Freud theorised the superego at the time of the rise of Fascism.