

The Social Trance: Psychological Obstacles to Progress in History

JOE BERGHOLD

The phenomenon of hypnosis as a general model for authoritarian social conditions offers a promising approach to address some questions that are basic to psychohistory.

I mean questions like the following:

Why is it that our society is to a large extent unable to realize its potentials for creativity, self-determination, and satisfaction of needs?

Why is it that the possibilities of social solidarity, generosity, dialogue, and co-operation remain largely submerged and that social relations throughout history have been more marked by domination, manipulation, hierarchy, destructiveness, and exploitation? (All of which means the sacrifice of lives and life interests for goals believed to be of higher value than the pursuit of happiness.)

Why is human historical progress—which appears to be reachable fairly easily in terms of the given material and mental resources—only realized to a very limited degree, at the tragic expense of so many lives?

What is the nature of these obstacles to human progress?

Are there practicable ways of overcoming them?

The answers to such questions will have to be found in both the material and psychological spheres of human history. That is, they have their origin in both the conditions of economic survival—and in conflicts and hostilities deriving from these—and in the psychological conditions

of deeply-rooted irrational fears that prevent conscious awareness of our real motivations and needs and that compel us to destructive ways of acting out emotional conflicts.

From the necessarily unconscious character of these psychological conditions follows the logical conclusion that their importance generally tends to be denied or underestimated; for instance, through the displacement or projection of our unconscious motivations onto demons, gods, idols, leaders, enemies, etc.—and also particularly onto allegedly objective (economic) conditions of history.

Starting with such questions and considerations, the phenomenon of hypnosis appears as a singularly significant object for the investigation of those psychological conditions that impede historical progress (and in our epoch even threaten our survival as a species). As opposed to other typical forms of domination—which depend on different combinations of physical coercion *and* some degree of acceptance by its victims—hypnosis can depend on the psychological conditions of acceptance *alone*, that is, on an internalization of submission *alone*. Hypnosis may therefore be the essence, the deeper texture of the psychological component of all forms of domination.

In this context, it is revealing how often one can find scattered remarks and observations—once one watches out for them—that characterize the psychological dimension of domination in society as hypnotic (or at least as similar to hypnosis), be it in psychological, historical, political, sociological, or literary works of very different orientations (as I will illustrate later in this article). Which strongly suggests that a consistent understanding of hypnosis should point the way to some answers to the above-mentioned questions.

THE TRADITIONAL IMAGE OF HYPNOSIS

The familiar phenomenon of hypnosis appears as a form of uncanny domination through mysterious means of influence. In the prevalent traditional fantasy, which is also reflected in a long series of literary or cinematographic works—in such figures as George duMaurier's Svengali, Thomas Mann's Cipolla, Fritz Lang's Dr. Mabuse, Janowitz and Meyer's Dr. Caligari, among others—a certain type of an all-powerful magician can exert total control over the will, behavior, and consciousness of his subjects, can cast a spell on them, and can make them lose all of their free will, self-responsibility and critical abilities.

It seems useful to analyze this powerful popular fantasy as a distorted—but nevertheless quite meaningful—reflection of psychological reality.

Incidentally, the harsh rejection of the popular image by most modern

hypnotherapists often inadvertently supports rather than refutes its partial legitimacy. The manner in which so many expert hypnotists claim the traditional popular view to be mistaken in fact re-enacts the classical authoritarian hypnotic situation, where one side claims the status of being in possession of all the wisdom that the other side is supposed to accept fully and uncritically; for instance, when these experts describe popular opinions as complete nonsense or as the product of sheer ignorance and of long outdated legends and superstitions, which should be simply “eradicated” or “bent” to accept the higher wisdom of the experts (who at the same time have to admit, however, that they don’t have a satisfying theory of hypnosis).¹

A major motive for the experts’ rejection of the popular image seems to derive from the gradually increasing influence of ideals of personal autonomy, partnership, and equality of human rights, especially in the course of this century (even if more on the level of official, consciously held values than in reality). If the old masters of hypnotism could socially afford to claim uncritical submission from their subjects, modern hypnotists, on the other hand, are confronted with a considerable “image problem” due to “the continuing prevalence of Nineteenth Century Svengali-like stereotypes.”² The old Marquis Amand *de Puységur* could claim that there could be no healing without the complete suppression of independent will of the patient by the therapist;³ Auguste Liébeault and Hippolyte Bernheim of the famous *School of Nancy* could state that people with “docile brains,” “subjects used to passive obedience”—for instance former soldiers—are more apt to receive hypnotic suggestions;⁴ and even the early Freud—before giving up the use of hypnosis in therapy—could regret that it is impossible to achieve a state of “complete hypnosis,” in which “the ideal of mental treatment,” namely that “the idiosyncrasies of patients would [be] eliminated,” would be realized.⁵ By contrast, when a very prominent French psychiatrist in the 20th century, Henri Ey, is ready to justify the “transfer of the patient into a state of slavery in relation to the master hypnotist,” if only this allegedly serves therapeutic ends,⁶ he predictably provokes harsh criticism against himself, from even a rather conservative colleague like Henri Baruk, who accuses him of an attitude of “psychological imperialism.”⁷

If the experts’ rejection of the popular image of hypnosis has a strong component of denial, the popular imagination in part is motivated by defensive motivations, too. Such *absolute* hypnotic power, as the imagination has it, is obviously impossible—not just because the practice of hypnosis typically shows how a seemingly automaton-like obedience of a subject can suddenly disappear in front of a particular suggestion or command, but more fundamentally because, in and of itself, it is absurd to think that there could be any person or power in the world that would have magically limitless possibilities in any respect or direction.⁸

This delusional aspect of absolute power in the popular fantasy logically leads us to interpret it as the expression of unconscious wishes, that is, wishes that such all-powerfulness *should* exist—so that via (unconscious) identification, it can be fantasized as one's own. As Paul Schilder and Otto Kauders wrote, the hypnotized person “projects his desire onto the hypnotist and subsequently, by identification, attains magic powers which he would not otherwise be permitted to ascribe to himself.”⁹ Incidentally, such wishes also seem to be the underlying motivation of many delusional fantasies in the political sphere—fantasies of all-powerful leaders; invincible regimes, armies, and nations; perfectly organized manipulation and propaganda machines/political apparatuses; or the possibility of total world domination by one power or another.

The compelling irrational power of such wishes, and its foundations in childhood experiences, appear as a major focus of investigation in the hope of unveiling the ever-so-evasive character of hypnosis. As I will try to show, I believe these foundations can be partly understood as a *traumatic obstruction of the childhood development towards mature and consistent “boundaries between the ego and the outside world.”*

SOCIAL TRANCE

For an understanding of hypnosis as a psychological reality reaching far beyond its *explicit* forms and applications, it is useful to consider those scattered observations and reflections by many different authors that point to a general social reality of hypnotic trance as unconscious submission to authoritarian rules and figures. A few illustrative examples should convey a good sense of this.

A particularly intriguing description is given by Ronald Laing in a short chapter of his book *The Politics of the Family*, where he presents the idea that in many, if not most, families every generation hypnotizes the next from early infancy to carry out unconscious instructions and to take subliminally attributed roles for a lifetime: “When attributions have the function of instructions or injunctions, this function may be denied, giving rise to one type of *mystification*, akin to, or identical with, hypnotic suggestion. Hypnosis may be an experimental model of a naturally occurring phenomenon in many families. In the family situation, however, the hypnotists (the parents) are already hypnotized (by their parents) and are carrying out their instructions, by bringing their children up to bring their children up...in such a way, which includes not realizing that one is carrying out instructions: since one instruction is not to think that one is thus instructed. This state is easily induced under hypnosis.”¹⁰

No wonder, then, that Laing asks, “How much of what we ordinarily

feel, is what we have all been hypnotized to feel? How much of who we are, is what we have been hypnotized to be?"¹¹ and concludes, "I consider many adults (including myself) are or have been, more or less, in a hypnotic trance, induced in early infancy: we remain in this state until—when we dead awaken, as Ibsen makes one of his characters say—we shall find that we have never lived," having acted "parts in a play that we have never read and never seen, whose plot we don't know, whose existence we can glimpse, but whose beginning and end are beyond our present imagination and conception."¹²

The French philosopher Marie-Jean Guyau and the psychologist Alfred Binet, as well as the sociologist Émile Durkheim, long before Laing's perception of a permanent state of trance induced in childhood, came to the opinion that what they called the "natural" mental state of childhood was very similar to hypnosis, because children are largely unable to resist any intrusion of will upon them. Durkheim viewed this manipulability as so pervasive that in order to prevent children from developing into mere "carbon copies" of their particular family or educator, he could hardly think of any other option than "to ensure that children are not trained exclusively under the influence of a single milieu or, still worse, by a single and unique person," as in such case a child "must necessarily become a slavish copy of the one model placed constantly before him."¹³ Morton Schatzman, who analyzed the methods of the historically very influential German pedagogue Moritz Schreber, sees a trance-like state in childhood not so much as a "natural" condition, but rather as the traumatic effect of authoritarian—that is, basically terroristic—influences used by parents and educators. The "wonderful relationship," according to Schreber, "where the child is nearly always ruled merely by parental eye movements, [with only] a glance, a word, [or] a single threatening gesture," and in which the educator would thus become "master of the child forever," is, as Schatzman observes, "like the relation between a hypnotist and a subject in his power: a child who experiences a glance, a word, a gesture of the parent as a command resembles a person in trance."¹⁴

In a somewhat similar perspective, the East German writer Christa Wolf describes hypnosis in a chapter of her self-reflective book about childhood and adolescence in the Nazi era—as a general, vague, confusing, but inescapable coercion to conformity, under the powerful irrational premise that "one shouldn't feel above doing what everybody else does. Nobody has ever died of it yet."¹⁵ Thus, for instance, it is indicated in various details how "hypnosis was practiced at Nelly's confirmation,"¹⁶ as the girl was induced to submit to this ritual against her conviction and in the blatant absence of any sensible argument in its favor. Such a view of conformism as basically hypnotic is also expressed in comparable ways by Doris Lessing in various passages of her

Bildungsroman *The Four-Gated City*.¹⁷ At one point, the protagonist of the novel has a revealing memory of herself “as a tiny child, looking at grown-up people,” before the time she would, like everybody else, get trapped, “poisoned and hypnotized” into forgetting and into unconscious, frightened conformity. She had watched “and judged these [grown-up] giants as cowards and liars, engaged—incredibly—in meaningless activities and rituals of dressing and undressing and eating and talking, and their fear of each other, their wariness, was so great that two of them could not meet without going stiffly on guard and stretching their mouths and making movements which said: I won’t hurt you if you won’t hurt me; look, I’m so nice and kind, don’t hurt me. Martha had seen all this, understood it, had even said to herself in an anguish of fear that she would be swallowed up: Don’t let yourself be sucked in, remember, remember, *remember*—but she had not remembered, she had been sucked in, she had become a liar and a coward like the rest.”¹⁸

Especially in his classical study on authority and the family, Erich Fromm describes the psychological attitudes that underlie obedience and hierarchy in society as a quasi-hypnotic reduction of the functions of the ego: “the relationship of the doctor to the patient, of the officer to the soldier, of the clever salesperson to the client, of the famous personality to the average person of the masses are familiar examples. The socially most important case of relationships between persons similar to hypnosis is the relation to authority in general. Like the hypnotist, the authority impresses those subject to it as so mighty and powerful that, on the one hand, it is hopeless to use their own ego against it, and that, on the other hand, this is superfluous, because the authority takes over the task of the protection and the preservation of the individual, for the realization of which the ego has developed.”¹⁹ In this sense, Fromm also sees the prevailing forms of political and commercial propaganda as based on “hypnoid methods [that] are a serious danger to mental and psychological health, specifically to clear and critical thinking and emotional independence. ... This assault on reason and the sense of reality pursues the individual everywhere and daily at any time: during many hours of watching television, or when driving on a highway, or in the political propaganda of candidates, and so on. The particular effect of these suggestive methods is that they create an atmosphere of being half-awake, of believing and not believing, of losing one’s sense of reality.”²⁰ Interestingly enough, hypnotherapeutic authors often agree with the characterization of many types of political and commercial propaganda as hypnotic or hypnoid, though obviously in somewhat less critical terms than Fromm.²¹

Freud’s classical analysis of group formation (via the goal-inhibition of libidinal drives and the replacement of the own ego-ideal/super-ego by an introjected leader or by guiding values) claims a psychodynamic

identity of hypnosis with every kind of group formations—which implies that the hypnotic relation may be called “a group formation with two members. Hypnosis is not a good object for comparison with a group formation, because it is truer to say that it is identical with it.”²²

Authors like Fromm or Theodor Adorno have criticized Freud’s analysis of group formation as too generalized; the characterization of “socialized hypnosis” should, according to this criticism, be limited to “only” those types of group formation whose goals are objectively irrational to their members (that is, directed, to varying degrees, against their real interests).²³ Which actually might not be very much of a limitation, given the course of history up to now.

Lloyd deMause locates the hypnotic character of “charismatic” leaders, largely in keeping with Freud’s understanding of group formations; among other things, he finds it in their consistent, subliminal use of common trance-inducing techniques in their speeches, in particular by “embedding a string of emotion-laden words which have a hidden message of their own within a seemingly bland and often boring main narrative” through which they are able to “[implant] post-hypnotic suggestions into their audiences.”²⁴ Jerrold Atlas, who has also investigated the hypnotic influence of charismatic leaders, focuses particularly on shared childhood experiences of punishment that make historic groups susceptible to follow political leaders who “seize control of their nations and masterfully manipulate the masses.”²⁵

For a recent, topical example of this trance-induction by leaders through scattered emotion-laden words with a separate hidden meaning, deMause analyzes George Bush’s address to the U.N. General Assembly on October 1, 1990, aimed at gaining international support for his militarist policy in the Gulf crisis.²⁶ Under the surface of general declarations in favor of a world order of democracy and peaceful partnership of nations, a closer look at those words in his speech that have a strong emotional impact suggests a different picture: there is a particularly strong presence of the word “war” and of words that graphically express its horror. Based on his broader ongoing analysis of shared unconscious fantasies in American political life, deMause interprets “war ... children ... suffer ... joy ... reborn ... peaceful” as the most significant words for conveying Bush’s subliminal message of intended war, in which the suffering (sacrifice) of children is fantasized as leading to the joyful experience of being reborn into a peaceful state of mind—obviously an appeal to inclinations “that are split off and denied because they are so repugnant to our moral sense.”²⁷

DeMause’s general explanations of the psychodynamics that occur when nations are being drawn towards war can in fact be viewed as an important elaboration of Freud’s concept of the identity of hypnosis and

group formation. Threatened traditional defense mechanisms and unconscious guilt feelings because of an advancement of freedoms and satisfactions play a major role in this context: "As nations build up overloads of personal anxieties about too much change, they literally sink into a trance and hand over to charismatic (that is, hypnotic) leaders all their guilt and expect these leaders to *do something about things!* Wars 'do something about' guilt by providing an external sacrifice."²⁸ "In a group-trance, action becomes irresistible in order to carry out delusional motives. ... Because the enemy ... serves as the repository of projections ... the impulse to action implies the need to wipe out the carriers of these projected feelings."²⁹ "As nations sink into regressive war trances, enemies proliferate in direct proportion to the growing unconscious anxieties of the majority which had been brought up to feel guilty about its wishes."³⁰

Long before deMause, Leo Tolstoy—in one of his major appeals against war and militarism—declared that "to awaken from the hypnosis of patriotism" is the only means to overcome the social system of hierarchy, violence, and exploitation, which regularly discharges itself in wars. "You must understand," Tolstoy urged the people, "that the evil from which you suffer you are causing yourselves, in that you submit to those suggestions by means of which you are deceived by the emperors, kings, members of parliaments, rulers, military men, capitalists, clergy, authors, artists—by all those who need this deception of patriotism in order to be able to live by your labours."³¹ "The masses are so hypnotized," he wrote in a comment on assassinations of heads of states, "that, though they see what is continually going on around them, they do not understand what it means"—as, in particular, they don't understand the meaning of military parades, maneuvers and drills as being aimed at "stupefying ... men in order to convert them into instruments for murdering."³² Arguing thus that kings are far worse murderers than anarchists who murder them, Tolstoy above all called for people to disobey their kings' orders to go to war and murder. "If men do not yet act in this manner, it is only because Governments, to maintain themselves, diligently exercise a hypnotic influence upon the people. Therefore we can help to prevent people killing Kings and each other, not by murder—murders only strengthen this hypnotic state—but by arousing men from the delusion in which they are held."³³ Perhaps inspired by Tolstoy, Leon Trotsky once chose the expression of breaking through "the habit of submission, the hypnosis of class domination," to characterize the essential step in any real political change.³⁴

George Orwell's world of 1984, in which war has become a continuous institution, is certainly full of hypnotic features, which are sometimes also explicitly portayed as such—as, for instance, when the mental processes of "doublethink," with its elaborate denials and simultaneously

held contradictory beliefs, are described by their necessary condition “consciously to induce unconsciousness, and then, once again, to become unconscious of the act of hypnosis you had just performed”³⁵; or when the sexual repression by the totalitarian regime is shown to render women frigid—their bodies “frozen forever by the hypnotic power of the Party.”³⁶

To round off this selection with two examples of another global view on hypnosis, one might consider some intriguing observations made by George Kennan in his speech “A Proposal for International Disarmament” at the occasion of being awarded the Albert Einstein Peace Prize in 1981: the psychological quality of the race for nuclear arms build-up, he remarked, is like a generalized hypnosis, when in spite of all warning voices and the widespread recognition of their well-foundedness, “we have gone on piling weapon upon weapon, missile upon missile ... helplessly, almost involuntarily: like the victims of some sort of hypnotism, like men in a dream ... [reaching] levels of redundancy of such grotesque dimensions as to defy rational understanding.”³⁷ To which the French expert of international law, Olivier Russbach, adds the comment that already the practice of nuclear threat as such, by which states commit acts that their own laws declare as dangerously criminal if pursued by their citizens, has the effect of a hypnosis of global scope—through its blatant arrogance of power as well as through the helplessness towards a danger beyond imagination it involves.³⁸

It is characteristic that most observations of such social hypnosis use the word “hypnosis” as if it were clearly defined and understood, that is, without any attempt to define or explain it. It often appears like a sudden emergence of a subliminal knowledge that afterwards resubmerges again.

This actually seems to correspond to a very paradoxical quality of the term hypnosis. On the one hand, it has an intense emotional significant—with its uncanny, scary, as well as fascinating aspects—which suggests that unconsciously we know quite well what it means. On the other hand, it has a very blurred intellectual or theoretical meaning; there is no generally agreed-upon definition of hypnosis, and there are only scattered elements of theory, nothing like an overall consistent explanation. This indicates that there are commonly shared, strong resistances in our culture against a conscious understanding of hypnosis and of what it stands for. “Let us recall,” Freud wrote, “that hypnosis has something positively uncanny about it; but the characteristic of uncanniness suggests something old and familiar that has undergone repression.”³⁹

EXPLICIT HYPNOSIS AS COMPARED TO SOCIAL HYPNOSIS

Whatever the real unconscious foundations and characteristics of

hypnosis should be, the phenomenon of social hypnosis outlined (or sensed) by so many different authors appears to be a much more serious and far-reaching phenomenon than hypnosis in the usually *explicit* sense (that is, in its applications as psychotherapy, experimental and training methods, show performances, and the like).

Explicit hypnosis is:

(1) obviously to a *lesser degree* unconscious, and thus to a *relatively* lesser degree fixated in a repressed psychological state (“power is most powerful where it operates invisibly, unrecognized, unconsciously”⁴⁰);

(2) more theatrical—as Freud noted, “some knowledge may be retained that what is happening is only a game, an untrue reproduction of another situation of far more importance to life.”⁴¹ This indicates a somewhat greater leeway for handling psychological conflicts—what one is able to perform theatrically is relatively more flexible and more open to awareness and change (although the theatrical character certainly *also* includes the defensive aspect of covering up the seriousness of a situation);

(3) less far-reaching as far as hypnotic obedience is concerned. For a significant example, the hypnotic order to kill is, probably always, “only” carried out in a *fictional* way under explicit hypnosis (as is shown by many classical experiments with “murders” upon hypnotic command that were carried out with play-guns), whereas it becomes bloody reality under the effects of a patriotic war-trance;

(4) and, perhaps most importantly, to some extent explicit hypnosis has a character of a *temporary* state (although the phenomenon of unconscious obedience to post-hypnotic orders, for instance, *also* indicates that the psychological frame of explicit hypnosis is not just temporary, but continues to be effective afterwards—that is, is embedded in a continuous condition). Any *temporary* regression, at any rate, includes a quality of “*regression in the service of the ego*,” the concept of which has been developed by Margaret Brenman and Merton Gill.⁴² It decreases the pressure of regressive urges—through its relative satisfaction—and thus makes some energies available to cope with reality. This, by the way, might well account for the evidence of some therapeutic effects of hypnosis (which, however, on the whole are very unreliable).

This distinction and comparison between the explicit and a “hidden” social hypnosis allows one to strike a highly paradoxical hypothesis: embedded in the general context of a deeper and more oppressive social trance, the explicit trance may have the character (or aspects) of a *relative emergence* from it. What manifestly looks like a “sinking into” a loss of autonomy, may really have features of a relative—if only timid and very limited—“coming-out” from deeper alienation. (This may account for the observation that severely pathological personalities are usually not hypnotically susceptible,⁴³ as well as, again, for the

occasional, however unstable, effects of hypnosis in psychotherapy.)

The distinction between explicit and hidden trance may also gain more substance in the light of an analogous distinction made by Robert Fliess between the hypnosis of the adult and the hypnosis of the child,⁴⁴ particularly if one incorporates the assumption that the latter induces a permanent hypnotic condition. As Fliess explains, hypnosis in childhood is the inadvertent traumatic effect of sexual and/or aggressive abuse by a parent (or educating adult): "*It is the overstimulation inflicted by him on his victim in the course of the exploitation that sooner or later makes the latter hypnotic.*"⁴⁵ As the child lacks the "critical institution" of the superego, "whose demands he could oppose to the hypnotist's, he has ... no alternative but to yield."⁴⁶ By contrast, in the adult's hypnosis the hypnotist's influence on the subject is, in Fliess' terms, "restricted by the power of the superego over the ego; he can only work within the confines set by this power."⁴⁷

If the (explicit) hypnosis of the adult thus has a considerably smaller impact, it is on the other hand founded upon a person's childhood hypnosis (which implies that the latter is still a—hidden—psychological reality in adult life). It appears to enable the adult "*to re-experience the hypnosis inflicted upon him in childhood,*" while at the same time "*evading both memory and repetition of the experience;*"⁴⁸ it is motivated by "an urge for re-enactment" of the repressed childhood hypnosis, as well as by the overwhelming fear of "the arousal accompanying that urge"⁴⁹ that a *conscious* recollection would bring about. From this one can conclude that adult (explicit) hypnosis has the double character, on the one hand, of a (very limited, largely unsuccessful) working-through of the childhood hypnosis, and, on the other hand, of a defensive evasion (dissociation) from it that is essential to its continuing effect.

Perhaps part of Fliess' disagreement with Freud's identification of group formation with hypnosis can be resolved if, as Fliess himself indicates,⁵⁰ one refers this identification to the hypnosis of the child—which obviously implies that this is then to be understood as a more or less permanent trance induced through common childhood experiences of social groups.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF BOUNDARIES BETWEEN THE EGO AND THE OUTSIDE WORLD

In order to investigate the psychological foundations of (explicit as well as social) hypnosis, I now want to pursue the above-mentioned approach of analyzing the unconscious wishes of omnipotence underlying the popular fantasy, while tracing a link between these and the hypnogenic childhood traumatism indicated by Fliess, among others.

As Sándor Ferenczi first showed in his pioneering study entitled

“Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality,” the feeling of omnipotence is really a characteristic feature of the earliest stages of every individual’s life, starting in the womb.⁵¹ It is determined by complete helplessness and at the same time by the experience of being provided automatically, without any effort of one’s own, with whatever one needs: “For what is omnipotence? The feeling that one has all that one wants, and that one has nothing left to wish for. The foetus, however, could maintain this of itself, for it always has what is necessary for the satisfaction of its instincts, and so has nothing to wish for; it is without wants.”⁵² The development of a child towards a mature sense of reality proceeds through numerous successive stages of partial relinquishments of this original feeling, until finally (or ideally) “the feeling of omnipotence gives way to the full appreciation of the force of circumstances. ... The previous omnipotence ... dissolves into mere ‘conditions.’”⁵³ Before reaching this point, the later stages of this development are characterized by a seemingly complete renunciation of the illusion of omnipotence for the own person—while still upholding it for one’s idealized parental figures, with whom one identifies, and thereby is still able, indirectly, to save the illusion even for oneself. The eventual achievement of a consistent sense of reality is therefore based upon “the complete psychological detachment from the parents.”⁵⁴ An essential condition for this development to succeed is the reliable presence of adults that offer enough care, affection, patience, dialogue, and respect for a child’s autonomy so that the gradual acceptance of reality (as being fundamentally separate from one’s wishes) can be “negotiated” in a viable, gentle-enough manner. It is only with the slow overcoming of the real biological and psychological helplessness that illusions of omnipotence can gradually be given up.

This development towards a mature sense of reality—as well as the closely related developments towards mature object relations and mature sexuality—can be understood and summarized in a meaningful way as a *progress from non-existing through blurred to consistent ego-boundaries*, that is, boundaries between the ego and the outside world. As Lawrence Kubie and Sydney Margolin (who based their theory of hypnosis on a concept of development of ego-boundaries) wrote: “In this process, parental figures are at first the only avenue of communication with the world and are therefore an integral part of the infant Ego because of the lack of clearly defined Ego boundaries.”⁵⁵

I perceive the psychological progression from non-existing towards clearly defined ego-boundaries through the following perspectives:

(1) The original *feelings of omnipotence* are characterized by the total absence of ego-boundaries (and at the same time, of course, of any ego), inasmuch as they imply the complete non-recognition of an outside world with its own laws that differ from—and oppose obstacles to—

one's inner world of wishes and needs: whereas the gradual emergence of the *sense of reality* is characterized by the increasingly clear recognition of the fundamental "dividing line" between wishes and outside reality (or, in other words, by the gradual overcoming of magical thinking, which is based on the confusion between wishes and outside reality).

(2) The original state of *primary narcissism* is characterized by the "subjective non-existence" of outside objects (persons) and thus, again, by the feeling of identity—oneness—of oneself and the world. In the state of *secondary narcissism* developing out of it, the blurred ego-boundaries express themselves in the fact that the existence of other persons (parents, etc.) is gradually recognized, but only in a relationship in which they are experienced as "extensions of oneself" ("The child wants to get something from the object without returning anything. The object is as yet no personality, but an instrument for providing satisfaction"⁵⁶); whereas in the development towards *mature object relations* the clearer ego-boundaries manifest themselves in the increasing recognition of other persons as having their own needs and an existence in their own right.

(3) In the same sense, the development towards a *mature genital sexuality* can also be understood in terms of this recognition, as it goes along with mature love of another person—which implies that "consideration of the object goes so far that one's own satisfaction is impossible without satisfying the object, too."⁵⁷ In addition, the consistency and secure sense of ego-boundaries is also a precondition for allowing them to dissolve temporarily, for the time of genital arousal and ecstasy.⁵⁸

As is the case with psychological ("forward") development, *regression*—a movement in the opposite direction, as it were—can likewise be understood in terms of ego-boundary conditions, that is, as a (temporary or permanent) relative dissolution or loss of these boundaries.

The ability to *temporarily* regress appears to rely to a great extent on the relative clarity and security of ego-boundaries *in general*, so that the periodical dissolution of the borders between inside and outside is not experienced as too anxiety-provoking. This can be exemplified particularly with the above-mentioned case of mature genital intercourse and ecstasy, which involves a racial short-term dissolution of ego-boundaries, an intense regressive experience of merging with a partner, and somehow with the world as a whole: "mature sexual satisfaction brings an experience of undoing of individuation, of 'flowing together,' of 'oceanic feelings.'"⁵⁹ It is thus probably the most successful type of "regression in the service of the ego," of achieving a viable balance between the conflicting regressive and "progressive" needs of a person (that is, between the urges of the instincts to return to the rule of the pure pleasure principle, on the one hand, and the necessities and capacities of coping with reality, on the other hand.)

The less a person has been able to develop consistent ego-boundaries, the less he/she is able to achieve such a balance. To the extent that the regressive urges cannot be periodically quenched through temporary satisfaction, they exert a continuous, undermining pressure against an already insufficiently developed sense of reality, mature (reciprocal, post-narcissistic) object relations and mature genital sexuality. On the physiological level, this permanent regressive pressure can be particularly seen under the aspect that “genital sexuality differs from pre-genital tendencies in that it enables a physiological discharge in the sexual act, whereas a corresponding physiological possibility is lacking for the pre-genital tendencies. The level of tensions of genital sexuality is thus recurrently reduced, whereas the lack of a corresponding discharge that would extinguish the tension gives the oral and anal impulses a never-decreasing energy. Because of this, the pre-genital tendencies gain—from the mere quantitative point of view—a strength that makes their defense by the ego more difficult than the defense of the genital tendencies. This greater difficulty represents an inhibiting factor for the development of the ego.”⁶⁰

Consequently, such a condition (that is, of being “stuck” in a more or less permanent regressive maelstrom) corresponds to powerful urges to abdicate whatever limited consistency of ego-boundaries may have been reached. This, in terms of its above-mentioned three dimensions, signifies an addictive need for illusions of omnipotence, manifested by a proneness for magical thinking (in many different guises), along with narcissistically-restricted object relations and corresponding pre-genital erotic orientations.

This general regressive disposition appears to be largely identical with the permanent, unconscious condition of social trance, as well as with the psychological basis of popular fantasies of hypnosis and of hypnotic susceptibility. A consistent understanding of hypnosis would then seem to require the uncovering of the reasons and effects of the obstruction that prevents the developmental progress toward clear dividing lines between the ego and the outside world.

THE OBSTRUCTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS CONSISTENT EGO-BOUNDARIES THROUGH CHILDHOOD TRAUMA

Owing in particular to investigations by Ferenczi and Fliess, the hypnotic condition of an obstructed development of ego-boundaries can be understood as the result of overwhelming childhood experiences of sexual and aggressive attacks, especially (or maybe exclusively) on the part of parental figures—that is, of those persons that a child cannot feel psychologically separated from or opposed to, since it is vitally dependent on the feeling of being “one” (or merged) with them to feel secure

and to maintain some degree of the original feeling of omnipotence.

In his most important paper on sexual child abuse, Ferenczi gives a graphic and convincing description of the psychological implications of sexual attack, when enormous fear paralyzes the spontaneous impulse to resist: "These children feel physically and morally helpless, their personalities are not sufficiently consolidated in order to be able to protest, even if only in thought, for the overpowering force and authority of the adult makes them dumb and can rob them of their senses. *The same anxiety, however, if it reaches a certain maximum, compels them to subordinate themselves like automata to the will of the aggressor, to divine each one of his desires and to gratify these; completely oblivious of themselves they identify themselves with the aggressor.* Through the identification, or let us say, introjection of the aggressor, he disappears as part of the external reality, and becomes intra- instead of extra-psychic; the intra-psychic is then subjected, in a dream-like state as is the traumatic trance, to the primary process, i.e., according to the pleasure principle it can be modified or changed by the use of positive or negative hallucinations. In any case the attack as a rigid external reality ceases to exist and in the traumatic trance the child succeeds in maintaining the previous situation of tenderness.

"The most important change, produced in the mind of the child by the anxiety-fear-ridden identification with the adult partner, is *the introjection of the guilt feelings of the adult* ... When the child recovers from such an attack, he feels enormously confused, in fact, split—innocent and culpable at the same time—and his confidence in the testimony of his own senses is broken."⁶¹

This vivid elucidation of a child's loss of personal boundaries in traumatic trance clearly concurs with Fliess' concept of childhood hypnosis brought about by sexually or aggressively abusing adults, with its characteristic effect of "*hypnotic evasion*," of permanent dissociation and splitting-off of the unbearable experiences and feelings. A confirmation of this concept can also be seen in Josephine Hilgard's findings⁶²—also tested by Jerrold Atlas—according to which "the history of childhood punishment ... is a central element in later hypnotizability. ... the severity of punishment correlates directly with the degree of later hypnotizability ... punishment creates dissociation to escape from the harsh reality and illogicality of these actions."⁶³ Hilgard mentions, among other reasons that she considers for this "unexpected relationship" between childhood punishment and later hypnotizability: "Strict discipline, which requires a child to toe the mark set by an adult code of conduct, must appear to the child to be arbitrary, and he learns to conform in some cases *because an authority insists upon it.* This habitual conformity may have something to do with the ready conformity in the hypnotic situation, in which the subject does indeed place himself in the

hands of an authority figure who also asks of him things that are arbitrary.”⁶⁴

Given the pervasive, if often denied, evidence of child assault—which Ferenczi started to see towards the end of his life and which has since been shown for human history in general, among many others, by Lloyd deMause and Alice Miller—the traumatic obstruction of ego-boundaries outlined by Ferenczi appears to be an almost universal pattern of childhood experience in history up until now (although, of course, with considerable variations as to the degree of its severity). All the more so, if one takes into account the childhood condition of fundamental vulnerability to trauma, as, for instance, child therapists Denis Donovan and Deborah McIntyre point out: “By virtue of the fact that infants, toddlers and children are literally dependent upon the care and goodwill of their caregivers for their very survival, the family itself can constitute an inescapable temporophysical space. Consequently, even ‘mild’ abuse within the family can constitute psychologically inescapable trauma because there is no genuine real-world escape for the child. The child cannot pick up and go, trade or change families, or divorce his parents.”⁶⁵

Ferenczi’s description provides the basis for a rather coherent picture of what, as a result of abuse, is involved in a child’s “*anxiety-ridden identification and ... introjection of the menacing person or aggressor*”⁶⁶: In the first place, there is the panic denial of many of its own needs and feelings (which then have to be projected onto some “diabolical part” of the outside world), along with panic acceptance as one’s own of opposed, hostile demands from the outside—the panic character of this denial and acceptance implying that subsequently they cannot be critically reviewed, changed, or compared with other experiences or demands. Thus, the various needs, impulses, feelings, or experiences that originally tend to “grow together” to a coherent perception of the own person are kept dissociated, and it remains more or less impossible for a person affected by such traumatisms to distinguish between own and imposed demands, that is, to be clearly aware of *who he or she really is*. This submersion of identity therefore corresponds to a deep and lasting split of inner experience as much as it is a permanent blurring of boundaries between the inside and the outside, between oneself and parental figures.

Necessary results of such conditions are: pervasive—particularly unconscious—guilt feelings (the logical correlate of fearful denial of inner reality), a deep sense of helplessness and confusion, as well as the expense of enormous amounts of energy to keep one’s denied feelings and tendencies “at bay.” On these grounds, the unconscious motivation to abdicate autonomy that underlies hypnotic behavior appears more

understandable under several aspects: the regressive “gain” of illusions of omnipotence through the narcissistic-identifying relationship to a hypnotist appeases the inner helplessness (even if it conserves it on a deeper level); the loss of self-responsibility appeases guilt feelings and provides a certain relief from having to use excessive energy against disowned feelings and tendencies—since the submission of one’s behavior to a “superior will” has several “advantages” in this context: in its aspect of punishment, it appeases the (inevitable) tension between one’s genuine impulses and the introjected “higher” demands; in its aspect of obedience to imposed rules and outside commands, it can support (that is, relieve) the inner energy expense for defenses against the disowned impulses; and in its aspect of experiencing one’s own behavior as “ego-alien,” as being directed by “other motives than one’s own,” it permits a partial (disowned) realization of one’s own disowned tendencies (for example, aggressive and pre-genital ones)—as one is allegedly “only following orders” (of one kind or another).

Such hypnotic motivations to submit to a will considered superior to oneself can certainly be located in the powerful political appeal of the different authoritarian leaders, groups, nations, parties, ideas, values, gods, religions, and so on, in history. This type of appeal offers an idealized, magically powerful entity to merge with psychologically in order to find an illusory solution to the inner desperation of confused ego-boundaries, permanent guilt feelings, and a violently split mind.

Kubie and Margolin wrote that in the (explicit) hypnotic induction “the subject recapitulates in a few moments or hours the most important and complex psychological evolution of infancy,” by which parental figures—that initially are part of the infant ego—are subsequently “in part dissociated from the infant and in part even more deeply buried (‘incorporated’) in the unconscious levels of the personality” and from there delimit memories and contacts, dictate purposes and distribute inner rewards and punishments.⁶⁷ This type of “incorporation” of parental figures and demands (that is never available for conscious questioning) obviously corresponds to the obstruction of clear ego-boundaries through childhood trauma—which Kubie and Margolin failed to see, probably because this “burial in the unconscious levels of the personality” seemed so normal (that is, universal) to them. Their other observation, however, was that at least *to some degree* the parental figures eventually *are* separated (“dissociated”) from the developing ego of a child; this may indicate that the traumatic obstruction (usually?) does not completely prevent the progress towards relatively consistent boundaries between the ego and the outside world. In other words, that to different degrees, all of us are partially hypnotized, but that we are also, in part, integrated personalities with somewhat clarified ego-boundaries.

SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Without any claim to a comprehensive understanding (of course), I hope that my attempt to conceive of the hypnotic trance as a general social reality offers some features of a sensible psychological elucidation.

A general framework for a meaningful explanation of hypnosis—and thus also for some meaningful answers to the questions at the beginning of this article—is certainly provided by the probably universal history of child assault and its pervasive traumatic effects. Historic progress through the awakening from the social trance then has to be based on the general dawning of consciousness about the hidden reality of child abuse, on its increasing prevention, and ultimately (in deMause's terms) on the advancement of all psychoclasses into the helping mode of parent-child relations.⁶⁸

From an understanding of hypnogenic trauma as obstruction of the development towards consistent ego-boundaries, I would like to draw some more specific conclusions regarding the psychological qualities of historic progress and of its obstacles. If it is true that historically progressive policies appeal to our tendencies towards consistent boundaries between the ego and the outside world, that is, to our sense of individual integrity and identity; and if it is true that historically reactionary policies appeal to our tendencies to (permanently) blur or dissolve our ego-boundaries, that is, to the hypnotized part in ourselves; it would then appear that one can outline some essential traits that any activity aimed at progressive, emancipatory goals has to be based on—as well as some essential traits that, by definition, it *cannot* be based on.

In this view it *cannot* be based upon:

—in the first place, *any appeal to magical thinking* (that is, to unconscious or half-conscious wishes of omnipotence): any narcissistically-idealizing fantasies of own leaders, groups, movements, nations, doctrines, values, etc. as somehow “perfect,” “invincibly strong,” “completely in the right,” “the holder of the only light of truth in an otherwise dark world,” “possessing infallible formulas for solving problems (for example, at a stroke...),” and so on, or also as having any (perhaps “mystic”) wisdom essentially superior to one's own ability to perceive, judge or reason; likewise, any demonizing fantasies of omnipotence about opposed social forces, leaders, groups, doctrines, and so on (for instance, as somehow endowed with an unfaltering will and perfected abilities to do harm); in addition, any denial of sad and discouraging realities (in particular in connection with beliefs in any type of historical providence)—the observation by the Italian writer Ignazio Silone that every defeat “is always less discouraging than the most encouraging lie” reflects the deep perception in everybody that the magical thinking that manifests itself in “optimism” through denial in reality expresses

desperate helplessness;

—*any motivations that derive from guilt, or shame, as they conserve the permanent hypnotic state of denial of one's real needs and feelings, and thus paralyze the potentials of confronting the real issues of life (guilt—moral condemnation—is radically opposed to feelings of responsibility or sadness about one's own failures, as these are based on a genuine recognition of one's needs and inner reality);*

—*any motivations to abdicate one's responsibility for one's own life—decisions, value judgements, orientations, goals, commitments, aspired roles in society, etc.—to whatever "higher entity" outside of oneself.*

In contrast to this, major psychological features of historical progress should appear in clearer contours: primarily through *the renunciation to illusions of omnipotence* (which, by the way, does not imply the absence of *fantasies* of omnipotence, as these are part of the wishful imagery of any day or night dreaming, but the clear distinction between them and reality)—the renunciation to beliefs in the existence of any magical qualities of idealized (or demonized) leaders, groups, powers, social plans or solutions. This implies a shift from a fixation on the "strength" or "weakness," "goodness" or "badness" of leaders, groups, doctrines, etc., to an interest in understanding the roots of social issues and conflicting; from the fixation on guilt and blame to an understanding of the conflicting human needs that underlie social issues; from the fixation on "receiving sense" for the personal life from whatever "higher entities" outside of oneself to the recognition "that there is no power transcending [man] which can solve his problem for him. Man must accept the responsibility for himself and the fact that only by using his own powers can he give meaning to his life."⁶⁹ It is on the basis of a consistent sense of individual identity—which also includes the recognition of individual separateness and solitude—that true solidarity, mature love, social responsibility, and dialogue become possible. It is from the recognition of the separate individual existence that one can build bridges of reciprocal relations to others.

This article is based on my thesis (U. of Salzburg/Austria), three papers for a recent peace research project, and my presentation at the 1990 Annual Convention of the IPA. I wish to thank Laurie Cohen and Lloyd deMause for helpful editing suggestions.

Joe Berghold, PhD, is a psychologist and freelance translator.

1. Cf., e.g., Leslie M. LeCron and Jean Bordeaux, *Hypnotism Today*. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1949, pp. 7 and 123; Jean-Paul Guyonnaud, *Endormir par*

- l'hypnose et éclairer par la sophrologie*. Paris: Maloine, 1976, p. 391; Guy Roland Rager, *Hypnose, sophrologie et médecine*. Paris: Fayard, 1973, p. 46; Perry London, *Behavior Control*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969, p. 72; Arthur Ellen and Dean Jennings, *Ich hypnotisierte Tausende*. Geneva: Keller, 1973, p. 20; Karl Schmitz, *Heilung durch Hypnose*. Munich: Lehnen, 1957, p. 36; Heinrich Wallnöfer, *Seele ohne Angst*. Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1968, p. 24; Ludwig Mayer, *Die Technik der Hypnose*. Munich: Lehmanns, 1976, p. 29.
2. Don Gibbons, "Hyperempiria, a new 'altered state of consciousness' induced by suggestion." *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 39(1974): p. 49.
 3. Cf. León Chertok, "Psychotherapie und Sexualität." *Psychoanalyse* 4(1983): p. 9.
 4. Cf. Dominique Barrucand, *Historie de l'hypnose en France*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1967, p. 106.
 5. Sigmund Freud, "Psychical (or Mental) Treatment." (1890) In: *Standard Edition*, vol. 7. London: Hogarth Press, 1953, p. 300. Freud's expression for "idiosyncrasies" in the German original ("Eigenart") could also be translated by "individuality" or "peculiarity." (cf. Freud, "Psychische Behandlung [Seelenbehandlung]." In: Freud, *Darstellungen der Psychoanalyse*. Frankfurt/M.: Fischer, 1969, p. 33).
 6. "Preface" to Léon Chertok, *L'hypnose. Les problèmes théoriques et pratiques. La technique*. Paris: Masson, 1961, p. 3. It appears quite consistent with the public embarrassment of such statements in our times that the English translation (by D. Graham) of Ey's expression "mise en état d'esclavage du patient relativement au Maître hypnotiseur" was toned down to "subjection of the patient to the hypnotist" (cf. Léon Chertok, *Hypnosis*. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1966, p. x).
 7. Cf. Henri Baruk, *L'hypnose et les méthodes dérivées*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972, pp. 79-83 and p. 87.
 8. One of the major arguments of hypnotherapeutic authors against the popular image—that the obedience of subjects in hypnosis has its limits—is certainly justified; but from this it is by no means convincing to infer, as is often suggested or implied, that there isn't any degree of authoritarian control involved in hypnosis. (Cf., e.g., LeCron and Bordeaux, *Hypnotism Today*, p. 143; London, *Behavior Control*, p. 74; Guyonnaud, *Endormir par l'hypnose...*, p. 20; Mayer, *Technik der Hypnose*, pp. 31-32; Wallnöfer, *Seele...*, pp. 26-27; Paul Chauchard, *Hypnose et suggestion*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1974, p. 18; Didier Michaux, "Au-delà de la représentation sociale de l'hypnose." In: Léon Chertok, editor, *Résurgence de l'hypnose*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1984, p. 127).
 9. Paul Schilder and Otto Kauders, *A Textbook of Hypnosis*. In: Paul Schilder, *The Nature of Hypnosis*. New York: International Universities Press, 1956, p. 94.
 10. Ronald D. Laing, *The Politics of the Family*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1971, pp. 78-79.
 11. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
 12. *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 87.
 13. Émile Durkheim, *Moral Education*. New York, London: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan, 1973, pp. 144-145; cf. also Durkheim, *Education and Society*. New York, London: The Free Press/Collier Macmillan, 1956, pp. 85-87.
 14. Morton Schatzman, *Soul Murder*. New York: Random House, 1973, p. 36.
 15. Christa Wolf, *A Model Childhood*. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1980, p. 254.
 16. *Ibid.*, p. 253.
 17. Cf. Doris Lessing, *The Four-Gated City*. New York: Knopf, 1969, pp. 29, 68, 94-97, 468-469, 480-481.
 18. *Ibid.*, pp. 468-469.

19. Erich Fromm, "Theoretische Entwürfe über Autorität und Familie. Sozialpsychologischer Teil." In: *Studien über Autorität und Familie. Forschungsberichte aus dem Institut für Sozialforschung*. Paris: Librairie Félix Alcan, 1936, pp. 107-108 (my translation).
20. Erich Fromm, *To Have or to Be*. New York: Harper & Row, 1976, p. 173.
21. Cf., e.g., Rager, *Hypnose...*, pp. 67-73; Paul C. Jagot, *Théories et procédés de l'hypnotisme*. Paris: Dangles, 1936, pp. 205-208.
22. Sigmund Freud, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*. (1921) In: *Standard Edition*, vol. 18. London: Hogarth Press, 1955, p. 115.
23. Cf. Theodor W. Adorno, "Freudian Theory and the Pattern of Fascist Propaganda." In: Géza Róheim, *Psychoanalysis and the Social Sciences*, Vol. 3(5). New York: International University Press, 1951, pp. 296-300.
24. Lloyd deMause, "Nuclear War as an Anti-Sexual Group-Fantasy." (unpublished manuscript) 1988, pp. 19-20.
25. Jerrold Atlas, "Understanding the Correlation Between Childhood Punishment and Adult Hypnotizability as It Impacts on the Command Power of Modern 'Charismatic' Political Leaders." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1990), p. 311.
26. Personal communication (cf. *The New York Times*, Oct. 2, 1990, p. A12).
27. Lloyd deMause, "It's Time to Sacrifice... Our Children." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 18(1990), p. 135.
28. Lloyd deMause, "The Real Target Wasn't Terrorism." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 13(1986), p. 425.
29. Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*. New York: Creative Roots, 1982, p. 192.
30. deMause, "The Real Target..." *ibid.* An uncanny confirmation of the idea of a war trance comes from the impressionistic observation by *The New Yorker* that since the beginning of the Gulf crisis, "the United States has been sleepwalking toward war. Though there are trappings of a debate ... —thus far they have seemed insubstantial when set against the reality of President Bush's military buildup. Since early August, the Administration has pushed inexorably forward, assembling a vast American Army in the Saudi Arabian desert and bringing it steadily closer to combat. Not until early November, when the President's decision to send two hundred thousand additional troops made war seem suddenly more real, did the American people and their representatives in Congress, like drugged patients struggling to shake off sleep, begin to raise objections." In response to these, "President Bush and his aides have been doing their utmost to put the patients back to sleep." (*The New Yorker*, Dec. 10, 1990, p. 43) The impression of being drugged and sleep-walking, while the administration "is pushing inexorably forward," is an indication for the leader(s) being delegated to act out disowned impulses of one's own.
31. Leo Tolstoy, "Patriotism and Government." In: *War—Patriotism—Peace*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1926, p. 95.
32. Leo Tolstoy, "Thou Shalt Not Kill." In: *Tolstoy's Writings on Civil Disobedience and Non-Violence*. New York: New American Library, 1967, pp. 156-157.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 161.
34. Leon Trotsky, *Whither France?* New York: Pioneer Publishers, 1936, p. 36.
35. George Orwell, *1984*. New York: New American Library, 1949, p. 33.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
37. George F. Kennan, *Nuclear Delusion*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1983, p. 176.
38. Cf. Olivier Russbach, "Objection! Votre Terreur..." *Le Monde diplomatique*, 7/1985, p. 11.

39. Freud, *Group Psychology...*, p. 125.
40. Michael L. Moeller, "Sich selbst überleben." *Kursbuch* 70/1982, p. 73 (my translation).
41. Freud, *Group Psychology...*, p. 116.
42. Cf., e.g., Margaret Brenman and Merton Gill, "The Metapsychology of Regression and Hypnosis." In: Jesse Gordon, editor, *Handbook of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis*. 1967, pp. 281-318.
43. Cf., e.g., Chertok, *Hypnosis*, pp. 49-50.
44. Cf. Robert Fliess, *Psychoanalytic Series*, Vol. 3: *Symbol, Dream, and Psychosis*. New York: International Universities Press, 1973, pp. 265-297.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 266 (emphasis in the original)
46. *Ibid.*, p. 293.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 268 (emphasis in the original)
49. *Ibid.*, p. 285.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 292.
51. Sándor Ferenczi, "Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality." In: Ferenczi, *First Contributions to Psycho-Analysis*. London: Hogarth Press, 1952, pp. 213-239.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 219. Ferenczi could not, of course, foresee the findings in recent decades that show that life in the womb, especially in its third trimester, is often far from being as paradise-like as was imagined before (cf. deMause, *Foundations...*, pp. 251-258). Nevertheless, his basic assumption can be maintained: that in everybody's life, there was once—even if only in the earlier stages of fetal life—a general feeling of one's own omnipotence; and that probably even in later stages, before and after birth, it was upheld whenever possible by splitting off the recurrent traumatic experiences of helplessness that occurred when this feeling broke down.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
54. *Ibid.*
55. Lawrence S. Kubie and Sydney Margolin, "The Process of Hypnotism and the Nature of the Hypnotic State." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 100(1944), p. 618.
56. Otto Fenichel, *The Psychoanalytic Theory of Neurosis*. New York: Norton, 1945, p. 41.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
58. Cf., e.g., Hans-Jürgen Döpp, "Minimal Erotic oder Die Erosion der Genitalität im Zeichen des Narzißmus." *Psychoanalyse* 4(1983), pp. 144-148.
59. Otto Fenichel, *The Collected Papers. Second Series*. New York: Norton, 1954, p. 260.
60. Fromm, "Theoretische Entwürfe..." p. 105 (my translation).
61. Sándor Ferenczi, "Confusion of Tongues Between the Adults and the Children." In: *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* 30(1949), p. 228 (emphasis in the original).
62. Cf. Josephine R. Hilgard, *Personality and Hypnosis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970, pp. 207-224.
63. Atlas, "Understanding the Correlation..." p. 312.
64. Hilgard, *Personality...*, p. 220 (emphasis in the original).
65. Denis M. Donovan and Deborah McIntyre, *Healing the Hurt Child*. New York: Norton, 1990, p. 63.
66. Ferenczi, "Confusion of Tongues..." *ibid.* (emphasis in the original).

67. Kubie and Margolin, "The Process of Hypnotism..." p. 618.
68. Cf. Lloyd deMause, "The History of Child Assault." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 18(1990), p. 22.
69. Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*. New York: Rinehart, 1947, pp. 44-45.



CONTENTS

THE JOURNAL OF PSYCHOHISTORY
Incorporating The Journal of Psychoanalytic Anthropology
A Publication of The Institute for Psychohistory
Volume 19, Number 2, Fall 1991

SPECIAL ISSUE: THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN

| | | |
|----------------------|-----|---|
| LLOYD DEMAUSE | 123 | The Universality of Incest |
| DENIS M. DONOVAN | 165 | Darkness Invisible |
| CHARLES W. SOCARIDES | 185 | Adult-Child Sexual Pairs: Psychoanalytic Findings |
| BRETT KAHR | 191 | The Sexual Molestation of Children: Historical Perspec- tives |
| NEIL WILSON | 215 | Some Psychoanalytic Com- mentary on the deMause and Kahr Papers |
| DAVID FINKELHOR | 218 | Commentary on "The Universality of Incest" |
| ANDREW VACHSS | 219 | Comment on "The Univer- sality of Incest" |

JOE BERGHOLD 221 The Social Trance:
Psychological Obstacles to
Progress in History

BOOK REVIEWS:

DAVID LOTTO 248 Psychology and the Preven-
tion of Nuclear War (White)

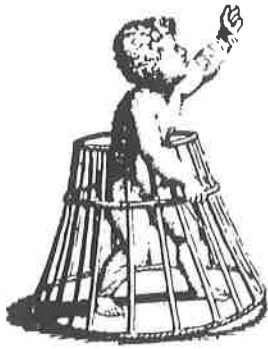
RUDOLPH BINION 249 Us and Them: The
Psychology of Ethnona-
tionalism (GAP)

ALBERTO FERGUSSON 250 El Nino Precolombino (Shin)

RICHARD MORROCK 251 Monkey On A Stick: Murder,
Madness and the Hare
Krishnas (Hubner and
Gruson)

JACKQUELINE PAULSON 252 Slaughter of the Innocents:
Child Abuse Through the
Ages and Today

Statement of ownership, management and circulation, required by 39 U.S.C. 3685. 1. Title of publication: The Journal of Psychohistory. A. Publication No. 992450. Date of filing: 9/24/91. 3. Frequency of issue: Quarterly. 3A. Number of issues published annually: 4. 3B. Annual subscription price: \$52/Individual; \$99/Institit. 4. Location of known office of publication: 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 5. Location of the headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 6. Names and complete addresses of publisher, editor and managing editor: Publisher: Association for Psychohistory, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397; Editor: Lloyd DeMause, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397; Managing Editor: Kenneth Alan Adams, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 7. Owner (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a partnership, or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each individual, must be given): If the publication is published by a nonprofit organization, its name and address must be stated: Association for Psychohistory, 2315 Broadway, New York, NY 10024-4397. 8. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages and other securities, None. None. 9. For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at special rates (section 423.12 DMM only) The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization and the exempt status for Federal Income Tax purposes: (1) has not changed during the preceding 12 months. 10. Extent and nature of circulation: A. Total number of copies printed (net press run): Average number copies each issue during preceding 12 months: 1581. Actual number of copies of single issue published nearest to filing date: 1750. B. Paid circulation: 1. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales: 0; 0. 2. Mail subscriptions: 1346; 1425. C. Total paid circulation: 1346; 1425. D. Free distribution by mail, carrier, or other means; Sample, complimentary, and other free copies: 175; 250. E. Total distribution (Sum of C and D): 1521; 1675. F. Copies not distributed: 1. Office use, left-over, unaccounted, spoiled after printing: 60; 75. 2. Returns from News Agents: None; None. G. Total (Sum of E & F 1 and 2 should equal net press run shown in A): 1581; 1750. II. I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete: Lloyd DeMause, Editor.



VOL. 19, NO. 2
FALL 1991

The Journal of Psychohistory

**SPECIAL ISSUE:
THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN**

THE UNIVERSALITY OF INCEST

DARKNESS INVISIBLE

ADULT-CHILD SEXUAL PAIRINGS

**HISTORICAL SEXUAL
MOLESTATION OF CHILDREN**

THE SOCIAL TRANCE
