A PSYCHODYNAMICS OF VALUE:

DEVELOPMENTAL, MULTICULTURAL, AND PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC IMPLICATIONS

by

ANGELA E.F. NEUHAUSLER

B.A., SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, 1986

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of Counselling Psychology)

We accept this thesis as conforming

to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

September, 1992

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ABSTRACT

This thesis presents a developmental and psychodynamic model
of value that attempts to identify generic elements which are
viewed as essentially transcultural. The central concept is that
the self has the innate tendency to assign a value to its
interaction with objects relative to their need-fulfilling
function. That is, the self is first aware of the value of an
object to itself; and secondarily becomes aware of the object in
and of itself. This model rests on the assumption that the need
for self-cohesion is fundamental and that the cathection of value
can largely be seen as a function of meeting this need;
particularly in early developmental stages. However, the value
attached to objects may vary and this model distinguishes three
generic forms of such value relativization: a) Developmental; b)
Situational; and, c) Systemic-Institutionalized. This study
discusses in detail how such relativization of value at all
stages of development results in the experience of ambivalent
tensions that can potentially threaten the sense of self-
cohesion. It is suggested that this condition motivates the
development of intrapsychic structure in three fundamental
directions: a) The differentiation of ego functions; b) The
development of superego structure; and, c) Defensive splitting of
self and objects. The latter will tend to be emphasized where
the self feels overwhelmed at the task of integrating a new and
more complex awareness of the relativized objects of value. This
model is presented within a developmental framework which

includes: a) The Preoedipal Stage; b) The Oedipal Stage; c) The Adolescent Stage; and, d) The Adult Stage. Finally, this study specifically considers the cross-cultural context as particularly relevant because it is in this context, this thesis maintains, that the psychodynamics of value are often most graphically observed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

ORIGINS OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on universal valuing processes that may
shed some light on the potential compromise formations that the
self engages in when struggling with choices between competing
values and standards. Interest in this area arises out of
personal experiences that involved cultural dislocations where I
experienced intense relativization of previously held values and
standards. The experience that was especially dramatic for me and
my family was our translocation from the Catholic-Hispanic
culture of Mexico to Canada's westcoast in the late sixties. The
change not only affected each one of us on an individual level,
but also the entire family system shifted from being fairly
functional to being somewhat dysfunctional.

For my father, probably one of the most painful aspects of
the translocation was the loss of his high profile professional
role. In Mexico, he had been a successful businessman and a well
known musician who taught at a local University. With the move
to Canada my father lost the validation from his music fans, in
addition to being unable to resume teaching because he lacked the
professional qualifications. For my father then, the move
resulted in his experiencing intense relativization of previously
valued behaviours and self-representations that could no longer

be enacted and validated in his new cultural context.

For me, the move suddenly changed me from a carefree teenager to having to function as the adult in the family that gave emotional support and nurturance to both my parents. This role reversal initially prevented me from focusing on my own feelings. It was only after a few months, when my parent's emotional state improved, that I started to get in touch with my own feelings of isolation, sadness and confusion.

When I started high school, I began to experience much confusion and anxiety around deciding what was appropriate social behaviour in my new cultural niche. I experienced great ambivalence that revolved around vacillation between two sets of moral codes and standards, one that was instilled in me from the Mexican culture, the other from my new peer group. Suddenly, the values that I had held as absolutes were being challenged by the competing values of my new cultural context. For me, it was a long and painful process before I was able to comfortably integrate the Hispanic-Catholic values with the new Canadian values and regain a sense of self-cohesion out of the feelings of fragmentation and dissolution that I initially experienced with the cultural translocation, and the subsequent relativization of my values and standards.

Interest in the topic of values and their social-psychological dynamics also stems from my clinical encounters in working with families who were experiencing severe parent-teen conflict. In such families a great deal of conflict revolved

around the teenager's rejection of parental values and standards
in favour of another set, usually associated with a peer group.
The rejection of family tradition can of course be a
manifestation of the separation-individuation process that
usually intensifies upon entering adolescence, where adopting
different values from the parents serves the youth as a vehicle
for expression of differentness. Tyson (1990) makes reference to
the phenomenon of the teenager's family becoming a battleground
of values and standards. She suggests that when the teenager
experiences uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, anxiety, rage
and shame because parental values seem irreconcilable with newly
adopted ones, the self may mobilize defense mechanisms such as
denial of introjected parental values and regression, where the
self externalizes through projection, previously internalized
superego functions. By these processes, the teenager changes an
uncomfortable internal superego conflict into an external one,
which is now experienced as self-righteous defiance towards the
targets of his/or her projections, usually an authority figure
such as parents and teachers. Tyson views this as a normal
developmental step that should serve as a signal to the parents
to begin delegating more of their parental authority to the child
in order for the child to practice becoming more responsible.
Unfortunately, a significant number of parents that I worked with
take their child's rejection of their values and standards as a
personal rejection and react by becoming more punitive and
controlling with their children. Therapeutic interventions with

these families involved education on the developmental needs of teenagers related to such separation-individuation processes. However, I also found it useful to increase awareness in each member of the role that values play, as things in themselves, in the psychic economy of individuals and their families, as well as related social systems.

From my clinical experience, the 'generation gap' was especially intense in 'cross-cultural families' where the teenager would reject 'wholesale' the traditional values of his or her ethnic background in favour of mainstream values. The significance of this phenomena is supported by Atkinson (1989) who in his developmental model of identity for minorities, discusses a stage where the individual rejects his ethnic identity in preference for an identity based on mainstream ideals; a stage which Atkinson referred to as the "Conformity Stage". Considering this issue in terms of the dynamics between conflicting value systems was another thread that led me to pursuing this study.

I also observed that crosscultural teenagers that felt strong familial loyalty but also valued the mainstream culture, would experience a great deal of ambivalence in relation to what they perceived as conflicting sets of values and standards. Some of these youths dealt with the ambivalence by "acting out" both sets of values and standards, but in different social contexts. To help explain this kind of inconsistent behaviour in relation to values and standards, I was led to consider Wurmser's (1978)

description of a defense mechanism he referred to as "superego

splitting" which he defines as:

> "A functional inner disparity, within the superego
> structure, that leads to rapid vacillations between
> acknowledgement and acceptance of some standards and the
> abrupt (conscious and unconscious) denial and disregard of
> the same standards of behaviour at different times in
> different circumstances. (Wurmser, 1978)."

From my clinical observations, family systems that held

their values and standards in an absolutist fashion and which

also differed greatly from mainstream values, frequently had

members that exhibited the kind of superego splitting described

by Wurmser. This was especially true for teenagers, but I also

observed similar superego splitting in some of the parents,

especially where one spouse had acculturated to a greater extent

then the other spouse, to the mainstream values. These cross-

cultural parents, like their children, seemed to feel 'caught'

between the two cultures.

I also observed that such family systems may also develop

subgroup disjunction in relation to values and standards that

reflected a dichotomy between the family tradition versus the

"outside culture". This usually involves collusion among various

members of the family, giving rise to subgrouping within the

family system where each group follows a different set of values

and standards. For example, in the traditional patriarchal

family systems that I have encountered clinically, I frequently

observed the presence of secret alliances between the mother and

her children who would covertly defy the father's values and standards in his absence. Frequently in such systems the mother assumes the role of mediator and placator, where she is in effect trying to harmonize two sets of conflicting views of good and bad, right and wrong. I also observed in some of these patriarchal families, that a teenager's separation-individuation process which manifested as rebellion against the father's authority, could serve the mother as a vehicle of empowerment in her own process of separation-individuation from the patriarchy, where she begins to demand a different power distribution within the family system. This demand is then justified by referring to the competing views of 'right and wrong' which have become apparent due to the relativization of traditional value systems in the cross-cultural context.

Questions that arose from the above observations included the following: a) What is the relationship between drives and needs, and the self's valuing processes? b) How does development affect the valuing processes? c) What mechanisms, processes, and dynamics are involved in value relativization? d) How does the self deal with ambivalence towards competing values? e) How does the self react to the loss of a valued object?.

Searching for answers to such questions began to lay the foundations for the development of a psychodynamic model of value.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This thesis will attempt to formulate a comprehensive and integrated psychodynamic model of value, where the focus is on universal mechanisms involved in the self's valuing processes. This will be done within the theoretical framework of contemporary psychoanalytic, object relations, and, self psychologies. Contemporary psychoanalytic theory was chosen because it offers one of the most rich and detailed set of developmental theories available, which focuses on intrapsychic phenomena. This model, like the psychoanalytic orientation, will have the basic assumption that the self is by nature a conflicted entity that is continually being motivated by opposing drives and needs. Therefore, the self is perceived as continually trying to find a compromise to the opposing inner tendencies which usually involves the mobilization of defenses and/or development of intrapsychic structure.

Special attention will be given to the development of the superego, which is conceptualized by modern psychoanalytic theory as a psychic system with relatively stable functions that sets up and maintains ideals, values and prohibitions (Milrod, 1990). In particular, this study will look at 'intrasystemic superego conflicts' that can arise from simultaneous attraction to competing values that seem irreconcilable to the self; which then can result in the implementation of defense mechanisms such as superego splitting. It will also focus on the positive aspects of intrasystemic conflicts due to value relativization, such as differentiation of ego functions and superego structure building,

that occurs with an integration of conflicting values.

The proposed psychodynamic model of value will also attempt to integrate into its framework, concepts derived from self psychology. The reason for choosing this particular orientation is because I share their perspective that the ongoing subjective states of the experiencing self are in themselves, very powerful motivators in individual functioning (Moore and Fine, 1990). In particular, this thesis will rely on Kohut's notion that one of the most basic needs of the experiencing self is the maintenance of a sense of "self-cohesion" or psychic continuity, and the avoidance of disintegrative-fragmentation feelings related to the loss of self-cohesion.

This model will also be based on object-relations theories because I agree with their assumption that the self instinctually seeks social relatedness and that development takes place within the relational realm, where intrapsychic structures result from the internalization of early relationships with significant others (Luepnitz, 1988, St. Clair, 1986). Also accepted is the view that the self attaches an affective tone to its interaction with objects, and that self-representations covary with object-representations, based on the quality of this affective tone.

A relevant construct for the proposed model will be Sandler's (1989) notion that the self has the innate tendency to attach value, that is, to "value-cathect" objects relative to their need-fulfilling functions for the self. This study will explore the relationship between the value-cathexis of objects

and self-cohesion. It will also look at mechanisms and processes that the self might engage in when self-cohesion is threatened with the loss of valued objects, or, by the relativization of values that were previously regarded as absolutes. Parens (1989) suggests from research on young children that "conflicts of ambivalence" in relation to valued objects are nodal points in the development of ego functions and superego structuring, but, may also lead to the defense mechanism of splitting.

The proposed psychodynamic model of value will attempt to integrate the above theoretical orientations within a developmental framework that begins with prototypical valuing experiences at the preoedipal stage, then moves on to other examples of value conflicts experienced in the oedipal, adolescent and adult stages of development.

This study will specifically examine the possible effects of a crosscultural context on development, where relativization of value is intensified because of the inevitable exposure to contrasting values. I believe that crosscultural examples of value conflicts serve as a 'magnifying glass' that may provide insights into universal mechanisms and processes involved in the self's valuing processes, which may not be as readily observable in the mainstream population.

This thesis will also deal with the psychodynamics of value in group systems, such as the familial context and the cultural context at large, and the recursive relationships between the individual and the collective. Specifically, it will draw

parallels between collective double standards and individual superego splitting, and the relational dynamics within groups that sustain such value contradictions in a culture. Hall (1977) refers to this process as "extension transferences", where cultural development results in the establishment of institutionalized standards that persistently conflict along gender, age, socioeconomic, and ethnic lines.

This paper will also address modern man's challenge of increased value relativization due to the fast-paced changes within our world communities. According to Gergen (1991), contemporary man finds himself in the predicament of being saturated with so many competing values, that it has made the task of value assimilation and integration increasingly more difficult. For many, the way out from this confusion is defensive overidentification with perceived absolute values that allow for little tolerance towards differentness.

Modern man faces the incredible challenge of narrowing the conflicting differences among the various world communities so that collectively we may have a better chance to overcome challenges such as world pollution and nuclear disaster that threaten the survival of our entire ecosystem. And, with a deeper understanding of our 'value conflicts', we might be able to focus more on our commonalities and increase understanding and tolerance for many forms of cultural variation.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The experience of value relativization and value conflicts is an inescapable process that we will all encounter numerous times in our lifespan, especially in our increasingly changing world. Therefore, increased understanding of the psychological and social dynamics related to valuing processes can be significant in helping us formulate preventative-educational programs that give us skills for dealing with the consequences of competing value systems on different levels of human experience. Also, since the proposed model is within a developmental framework, it may have significance in the formulation of stage appropriate childrearing practices that can facilitate resolution of instances of developmental relativization of value. This may then help move the child forward towards developing self-capacities that enable her or him to adapt more effectively to subsequent situations involving competing and conflicting values.

Since this model emphasizes transcultural valuing processes, it may also have significance in helping us understand value differences and conflicts between ethnic groups. It can potentially help us see beyond the values themselves, and instead focus us on common psychodynamics that are related to all values. And, by recognizing the commonalities in our psychodynamic experience related to value, rather than just arguing about the correctness of specific values themselves, we may move a step closer to peaceful crosscultural encounters that are an enriching experience for all parties.

Another potential field for application of this model is in

the clinical setting where it may serve as a source of useful
constructs for the formulation of hypotheses that help explain
maladaptive behaviour which is intrinsically related to valuing
processes. As clinicians, the model points to a set of questions
that we can ask our clients related to their struggles with
values in the different dimensions of their lives. This process
can potentially sharpen our perception of intrasystemic superego
conflicts and splits at the individual level, and value
disjunctions in family systems or therapeutic groups. Such
awareness might help us design therapeutic interventions that at
the individual level, aid in the differentiation of ego functions
and superego structure building that will facilitate adaptive
value integration, and at the collective level will help increase
group cohesion.

A particularly relevant area of application for a model
dealing with the psychodynamics of value would be in counselling
individuals to come to terms with a catastrophic life event. In
such instances established operating values are often abruptly
relativized in terms of their continued priority given a drastic
change of personal circumstances. For example, an individual
that suddenly becomes blind, will most likely experience losses
at many different levels of functioning which may include career,
hobbies or simple activities like driving. These losses will most
likely result in the individual experiencing dramatic
relativization of previously held values because the new
circumstances may negate fulfilment of drives, needs and wishes

through the organization of values that existed prior to the catastrophic injury. For such an individual, the counselling process that is informed about the psychodynamics related to the functioning of value in the psychic economy as a dimension of concern separate from the content of values, may be able to better facilitate the transition from one organization of functional values to another.

In the chapter that follows an extensive literature review will be discussed that presents relevant theories related to the development and functioning of values and standards in self experience. This literature review will be followed in chapter three by the proposed psychodynamic model of value which will be presented within a developmental framework. The last chapter will expand on the significance of this study, areas of application, and future directions for research and refinement of the theory.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

OVERVIEW

This literature review will focus on three main areas which for the purposes of this thesis have relevance to understanding the development of and conflicts between values and standards; on and between different levels of psycho-social experience. These three areas are: a) Psychoanalytic and related object relations theory; b) Theories of familial functioning; and, c) Cross-cultural psychology. The review and subsequent integration of relevant aspects of these three theoretical domains will lay down the foundation for a proposed model of the dynamics of conflicted self-experience in relation to values, with emphasis on the cross-cultural setting.

One basic assumption of this model is that there exist universal transcultural processes in the development and adjustment of the self to change involving values, and that these are usefully understood, for the purposes of this study, in terms of the above mentioned theories.

For example, psychoanalytic and object relations theory will be drawn on to provide several basic mechanisms and processes, such as "value-cathexis", "separation-individuation", and "super-ego splits" among others, which will be used to understand the generation, experience, and course of conflicts between values and standards. These mechanisms and processes identified in the

psychoanalytic and object relations literature, will also be used to understand some of the relationships between the intrapsychic, familial, and cultural levels of conflicted functioning involving values.

Similarly, several theories of familial functioning will be discussed in order to describe the lived interface between intrapsychic and cultural levels of conflict between values and standards. These will include theories of familial functioning which focus on 'inter-generational' dynamics, 'loyalty' dynamics, and 'values' conflict.

Finally, a selected review of concepts and processes in the area of cross-cultural psychology will be used to highlight the nature of conflict between differentially constructed world views. Contemporary thinking on the theory of 'Constructivism' itself, will be briefly mentioned in terms of how it applies to cross-cultural conflict; specifically, the inherent tension between abstract cultural symbols and values, and lived self-experience.

PSYCHOANALYTIC AND OBJECT RELATIONS THEORIES

This section will review the recognized intrapsychic structures acknowledged by both classical and contemporary psychoanalytic theory. As well, the developmental course of these structures as seen from the contemporary psychoanalytic perspective will be reviewed. This will be done with particular

emphasis on the development and functioning of the superego as the intrapsychic locus of values and standards. In addition, special attention will be given to the literature dealing with the adolescent stage of development because it is regarded as a period particularly sensitive to conflict between values and standards.

Intrapsychic Structures

From the classical psychoanalytic perspective, Freud's structural theory of the psyche conceives of three intrapsychic agencies: a) the id. b) the ego, and, c) the superego (Pine, 1990). In addition to these, neo-psychoanalytic object relations theory has added detailed consideration of d) the ego ideal, and e) the self (Settlage, 1990). The following is a description of contemporary psychoanalytic understanding of these five functional intrapsychic structures, with comment as to their significance for this study.

The Id

This term designates the physiologic level of the psyche that gives rise to the instinctual needs and action tendencies within the person. These instinctual tendencies function as motive forces within the individual, which 'drive' behaviour; with or without our conscious acknowledgement. In psychoanalytic theory,

the function of behaviour is 'drive reduction', through the

attainment of instinctual goals. Some of the physiologic based

instinctual goals recognized by contemporary psychoanalytic

theory include; feeding, attachment, sensual gratification,

cognitive gratification, aggression, and procreation. The drives

of the Id are symbolically represented in the psyche as wishes

and fantasies with feelings of pressured impulse towards

fulfilment. The phenomenological content of this symbolic level

of drive representation is highly influenced by cultural context

(Freud, 1913; Jung, 1939; Emde, 1988; Pine, 1990).

Therefore, for our purposes here, the concept of the Id

points to generic human needs which may be transcultural, even

though the relative meaning and differential emphasis of these

basic needs by specific cultures may be different. Consequently,

this implies a basic intervention strategy which will be drawn

out in more detail in chapter three. Namely, the identification

of generic needs which may in fact be common to parties caught up

in conflicts related to values and standards; but which at the

level of everyday communication are understood and spoken of in

idiosyncratic ways highlighting differences rather than the

commonalities.

The Ego and the Experiencing Self

The ego in essence is seen as controlling motility,

perception, cognition, self-regulating capacities (eg. self-

esteem , anxiety levels), mobilization of defenses, and

mediation between wishes, moral standards and the demands of the

external world (Sandler,1985).

Of particular importance to this study, is the ego defense

of splitting by which the experiencing self separates sets of

experiences from the main body of experience. Kohut (1971)

recognizes two different kinds of splitting, the "horizontal

split" which involves keeping out of consciousness unacceptable

ideas and feelings through the defense mechanism of repression

and, the "vertical split" by which the person maintains

awareness of contradictory feelings and ideas but not

simultaneously.

The ego is also considered, in classical psychoanalytic

theory, as the seat of consciousness and self experience although

many functions are performed by processes out of awareness. Thus,

two levels of description are implied in the definition of the

ego; an experiential level, which leads to representations of

self and objects, and, a non-experiential level, which functions

as a silent processor, synthesizer, and regulator of self

experience (St. Clair, 1986). This distinction between the ego as

totally synonymous with experienced self-identity, and the ego as

a set of processing functions was established most rigorously by

Hartmann (1939) with his acknowledgement of 'wired-in' ego

processes such as perception and memory. In contemporary

psychoanalytic thinking this dichotomy has developed into viewing

'ego psychology' as related to but distinguishable from 'self

psychology', where the former deals with ego functions, such as reality testing; and the latter, deals with the experiencing subject and the quality of self-experience in the here and now (Pine, 1991). These two levels of description may be seen as combined in Erikson's term "ego identity" (1959), where ego processes combined with the quality of experience in culturally labelled roles are brought together.

Contemporary self psychology perceives the experiencing self not as a constituent of the ego, as classical psychoanalytic theory does, but as a "superordinate structure", whose ongoing subjective states are, in themselves, powerful motivators in individual functioning (Moore and Fine, 1990). Wolf defines the experiencing self as a:

"Self-propelling, self-directed, and self-sustaining unit, which provides a central purpose to the personality and gives a sense of meaning to the person's life...activities that shape the individual's life are all experienced as continuous in space and time and give the person a sense of selfhood as an independent centre of initiative and independent centre of impressions. (Wolf, 1988)."

According to Kohut (1987), one of the most fundamental needs of the self is to maintain integrated functioning which carries with it, a felt sense of "self-cohesion" and continuity across space and time, as opposed to a sense of fragmented functioning which can be experienced from mild disconcertedness to dread of disintegration. When feelings of fragmentation and/or dissolution reach unbearable levels, the self resorts to the implementation of defense mechanisms in an attempt to re-establish a sense of self-cohesion.

A central concern of this study will be the self's subjective experience of conflicts between values and standards which can potentially threaten its sense of self-cohesion, as defined above by self psychology. Therefore, interest in this study is focused on the self-experience within any culturally located ego identity. One of the central tenets of this thesis is that conflicted self-experience related to values and standards in different social and cultural contexts, with subsequent threats to self-cohesion, is a powerful and basic motivator of patterns of functioning, which this study will attempt to describe in chapter three.

The Superego and the Ego Ideal

The superego is conceptualized by modern psychoanalytic theory as a psychic system with relatively stable functions that sets up and maintains ideals, values and prohibitions (Milrod, 1990). Freud's psychology distinguished two different constituents within the superego: a) introjected directives, admonitions and prohibitions; and b) a collection of ideals and wished for goals which he named the "ego ideal".

In contemporary psychoanalytic and object-relations theories, the ego ideal is now considered as a separate intrapsychic structure distinguishable from the superego because ideals and wished for goals have been recognized as significant motivators of behaviour in and of themselves. However, for the

needs of this study the ego ideal will be discussed together with
the superego, while recognizing that it is a distinguishable
element of the superego structure.

Although the superego is a hypothetical structure its
derivatives are readily observable in the form that is
metaphorically described as the "inner voice of conscience", the
judge within us, that can make us feel guilty and fearful when we
transgress our internalized moral guidelines. Similarly, when
the self concept is perceived as being drastically different from
ideal self-images associated with the ego ideal it leads to
feelings of inadequacy and shame with a resulting loss in self-
esteem, and, related fears of being rejected and abandoned by
others. Conversely, self-judgements congruent with internalized
ideal standards may lead to inner superego approval with the
accompanying feelings of pride, self-respect, and elevation of
self-esteem (Milrod, 1990).

In Freud's tripartite theory of the psyche continual
conflict is seen to take place between the three agencies which
are perceived as separate centres of initiative. Thus, classical
psychoanalysis would speak of the ego being at odds with the id
or the superego, as if three separate entities were competing for
expression. However, present psychoanalytic and object-relations
psychology has shifted the experience of conflicts and initiative
to within the experiencing self (Sandler, 1985).

The construct of the superego is especially relevant to this
study because it represents the intrapsychic locus where values

and idealized images of the individual's familial and cultural contexts become organized and embedded. Most importantly, it is recognized by both Tyson (1990) and Wurmser (1978) for example, that the superego is rarely devoid of intrasystemic conflict within its own structure, since most individuals will have at some point in their development, internalized conflicting values and standards. As will be discussed further in chapter three, when such 'intrasystemic superego conflict' reaches unbearable levels for the experiencing self, that self may mobilize defense mechanisms such as superego splitting to regain a sense of self-cohesion.

Developmental Object-relations Model of the Self

Development of the self as understood by object-relations theorists takes place within the context of relationships with significant others (Luepnitz, 1988; Pine, 1990; St.Clair 1986). One of the primary motivating factors assigned to the self is the need for attachment. This need is perceived as being prewired in the neonate and not dependent on association with drive reduction through libidinal or aggressive gratification as postulated by classical theory (Pine, 1990). Thus, the neonate is conceptualized as an active self, that instinctually seeks social relatedness as an irreducible dimension of its existence.

Kernberg (St.Clair, 1986) postulates that the formation of intrapsychic structures (enduring psychological patterns) results

from the internalization of early relationships with significant others. He used the concept of "internalized object relation" to signify the mental representation that the self makes of its relationships. Kernberg distinguishes three constituents of the internalized object relation: an image of the object (significant other), an image of the self in relation to the object, and a 'feeling' or affect disposition linking the two images. He suggests that these early internalized object relations become integrated and gradually consolidate into the evolving structures of the id, ego and superego. Implicit in this theory is the view that the experiencing self defines itself in relation to others. This view is also held by Erickson (1959) who sees identity formation as taking place within the context of relationships.

The neonate, according to developmental object-relations, is perceived as being 'constructivist' in that the internal representations that it makes of objects (persons), self and events may be distorted, reshaped, and divided by the perceiver's unconscious operations. These internal images, bound by affect, have a determinant influence upon current and future behaviour and put their stamp on how new experiences are internalized (Pine, 1990).

Many object-relations theorists believe that the neonate is initially incapable of distinguishing self from non-self (Luepnitz, 1988; St. Clair, 1986). Thus, it is hypothesized that the earliest representations of the self are fused with

representations of significant others who are experienced as extensions of the self (Mahler, 1972; Kohut, 1977). For example, if a mother is perceived as loving and nurturing by the infant who lacks the cognitive understanding that the mother is a separate centre of initiative, it will introject the mother's representation as a self-image of being nurturing and loving itself. Conversely, if the young child perceives the mother as aggressive it will interpret it as an aspect of itself with a resulting aggressive self-image. Kohut (1977) used the term "selfobject" to refer to persons or objects that provide a "psychological function" for a self, such as soothing or recognition; but which are not experienced as separate from the self. Persons providing such functions for a self are experienced as extensions of the self, or again, selfobjects.

Kohut (1985) also makes mention of "cultural selfobjects", that is, cultural symbols, values, institutions, idolized people, that perform the psychological function of regulating self-cohesion and self-continuity. Since the self is psychologically fused to these cultural self-objects, a *perceived threat to them is experienced as a direct attack on the self*, leading to the expression of narcissistic rage and aggression. In current affairs, one only has to switch on the television to see exemplified, this kind of rage between various ethnic groups which is still so prevalent and destructive. The concept of "cultural selfobjects" will be expanded upon in chapter three, and related to conflicted self-experience with values and

and standards in the crosscultural context.

According to Kohut, differentiation of the self from selfobjects is seen as resulting from tolerable non-traumatic frustration levels where the selfobject falls short of, or delays gratification of the self's needs. This process of "optimal frustration" leads the self to perceive the selfobjects as separate and paves the way to the emergence of a "cohesive self" that takes over the functions previously performed by the selfobjects. For example, a young child who is hungry and whose mother fails to feed it right away, might discover a way to soothe itself by sucking its own finger. Thus, the child has learned to take over the function of self-soothing. Conversely, if a mother overindulges the child continuously, not allowing it to feel frustration, that child will form a self-concept of omnipotence, in which the mother is perceived as an extension of the self where the process of self-differentiation will be hindered. This may carry into adulthood where the person will have fluid boundaries that become enmeshed with significant others making it difficult for that self to distinguish its own thoughts and feelings from others.

Kohut (1977) conceptualizes the emerging self of the neonate as being "bipolar". One pole is the "grandiose exhibitionistic self" that is characterized by its self-centred perspective and from which emanate basic strivings for recognition and power. The other pole is the "ideal parental imago" which is formed by the need of the young child to perceive the selfobject (primary

caretaker), which at this early phase of development is experienced as an extension of the self, as also being all powerful and perfect, maintaining the original feelings of perfection and omnipotence. If the development of the self proceeds normally, the grandiose pole of the self becomes tamed in its exhibitionism and grandiosity and becomes merged into a cohesive personality that has healthy ambitions that strive towards realistic goals. However, the need to be accepted and recognized remains a basic need of the self. Conversely, as the maturing self begins to recognize the ideal selfobject as a separate centre of initiative, aspects of the ideal parent imago become part of the superego structure providing ideals and standards that give direction to the ambitions and goals. If the young child fails to receive proper care, the grandiose self and the ideal parent imago pole can remain isolated from the rest of the growing intrapsychic structure and remain unaltered, or, arrested in its development; and therefore, still be striving for the expression of archaic needs.

Kohut postulated that for the healthy development of the self, the young child needs caretakers that empathically respond to the child's needs to instill in it a sense of efficacy and power. Also, the young child needs early selfobjects to respond to the mirroring needs of the grandiose self pole. Simply put, the child needs to experience admiration and wonderment from its parents. The young child whose grandiosity is not mirrored by the caregiver will lack vitality in pursuing goals. Such a child

might exhibit this by being unmotivated in exploring the world around it, resorting instead to combating the feelings of deadness by compulsive behaviours such as headbanging and masturbation. These behaviours are commonly observed with children in institutions, such as orphanages, where there is impersonal and minimal contact with a caregiver (Spitz, 1945). That same child as an adult might also indulge in compulsive activities, as a way of regulating the self combating feelings of 'falling apart' due to a failure to form a cohesive sense of self. This person may also be "mirror hungry", constantly seeking attention from others to counteract their low sense of self-esteem. They may have a strong need to find "alteregos", selfobjects that are perceived as having similar characteristics. They need such selfobjects to confirm their own reality and continuity of self existence.

For the purposes of this study then, these developmental object relations theories of the self suggest that the cohesion of self experience is variable and effected by developmental circumstances. The focus of this study looks specifically at the development and variability of self cohesion in relation to values and standards.

Development of the Superego and Ego Ideal

Sandler (1989) believes that the self is innately "prewired" to attach an affective value to its object representations, and

that this emotional charge gives all objects their significance to the ego. He also views the differential valuing of relational experiences as being intrinsically linked to feelings of "safety and well-being". Thus, according to his terminology, the object becomes positively value-cathected when the self in relation to the object experiences increased levels of well being. As will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three, these "value-signs" that the self attaches to its relational experiences are intimately linked to the development of the superego structure.

Tyson's (1990) model of superego development postulates that its formation starts within the first year of life. Research suggests that children as young as nine months have already developed the capacity to understand prohibitions and commands. Early superego introjects are dichotomous in nature where the primary caretaker is internalized both in the form of 'forbidding-punishing images' and as 'pleasure-giving images'. She notes that introjects may differ considerably from the actual external objects, since the child may exaggerate and distort the prohibiting and threatening aspects of the parents.

Compliance to the early introjects is mainly motivated by the love for the parents and the fear of punishment and abandonment by them if the self does not adhere to their standards. If the child experiences a basically loving and responsive caretaker it will facilitate the child's acceptance of parental authority. However, if the reciprocity between the child and caretaker is severely disrupted, the toddler might have difficulty accepting

the parent's limits resulting in impairment of superego development.

The young child, before the age of five, still lacks a coherent, stable internal moral agency. At this early age, the child will only feel remorse if it is caught in the act of transgression. Freud postulated that the child has to identify with the parents first, before the superego can function as an internal control that is also active in the absence of the authority (Sandler & Freud, 1985). Identification is defined as a process whereby the self internalizes various traits and attitudes from a selfobject into the core personality (Moore and Fine, 1990). Freud thought that this process of identification takes place during the oedipal period of development around the age of five. During that time the incestuous wishes towards the opposite-sex parent intensify. This creates conflicting feelings of both love and hatred for the same-sex parent. High levels of anxiety are also present because the child fears repercussions for its incestuous fantasies. The ambivalent feelings and anxiety act as powerful motivators for further identification with the feared same-sexed parent. This process results in the integration of the early introjects into a more consolidated superego structure. The child's superego can now repress incestuous wishes from expression and feel again love for both parents. This marks the beginning of the latency period where children potentially begin to feel remorse when they betray their moral standards even in the absence of an external authority

(Tyson, 1990).

Ideally speaking, for the child to successfully resolve the oedipal conflict the parent should empathically adapt to the child's superego developmental needs rather then set arbitrary rules. If the standards set by the parents are too high, and the child experiences constant failure, it will result in the child developing a poor self-image. Also, the child's fear of rejection by its parents might lead it to introject the perfectionistic standards of the parents and become overly compliant and obsessive. As an adult, such a child might become an overachiever but *feel* inadequate because the achievements will always fall short in the face of the internalized perfectionistic standards. Conversely, if the parents are inconsistent in their disciplining, and set limits or rules that they themselves do not follow, the child will have difficulty identifying with such parents, and thus, the establishment of inner controls will be hindered. In the worst case scenario, the child might as an adult, have a psychopathic personality that seems to feel no remorse for crimes. The need for appropriate parenting increases at critical points in the development of the self. This is especially true when the self enters puberty (Tyson, 1990). The onset of puberty initiates a new developmental phase for the self which, according to Erikson (1959), has the task of reevaluating earlier identifications towards forming an identity of its own, which should be consolidated by early adulthood.

Bowen's theory (Gurman and Kniskern, 1991) also postulates

that the healthy teen has the natural tendency towards
differentiation from the parents, striving towards self-
definition and self-regulation. Specific to superego
development, the teenager has the task of becoming increasingly
his own authority, and responsible for himself and his actions.
Therefore, gradual detachment from parental authority and ideal
standards is necessary for further superego development. A
parallel process of separation by the parents should take place,
where they must now gradually give up authority over their child
and allow differentiation to unfold (Tyson, 1990).

Relinquishing parents as ideal selfobjects and figures of
authority may lead the adolescent to experience intense feelings
of grief (Tyson, 1990; Sandler, 1985). To cope with the loss, the
teen usually transfers attachment needs to peers who function as
alteregos to help him regulate his self-esteem by mirroring his
grandiosity. The self also looks at this time for new ideal
selfobjects who can function as auxiliary superegos such as
sports heroes, movie stars, and group leaders (Sandler, 1985).

This process of differentiation from the parents can also
create painful feelings of guilt on the part of the teenager,
since it involves rejection of some aspects of the parents. This
is especially true of the youth who experiences the parents as
being disapproving and resistant in accepting his emerging
differentness. To explain these painful feelings of guilt, Nagy
(1987) proposes that human beings experience a deep "filial
loyalty" towards their ancestors that motivates the self to

become like its predecessors. Thus, Nagy suggests a powerful
ethically felt dimension that propels us towards becoming like
our parents; that can potentially, stunt the opposing impulse
towards differentiation from them. Silverman (1982) has also
suggested that adherence to tradition through support of
transgenerational values and beliefs is a *basic intrapsychic
means of experiencing psychological oneness or self-cohesiveness.*

Of central importance to this study in relation to
understanding the development of the superego and its functioning
in regard to maintaining self-cohesion, is Hartmann's (1939)
seminal concept of "change of function". Hartmann introduced
this term as the means of explaining the development of
"secondary autonomous functions" of the ego. That is, ego
functions that were originally born of conflict, then come to
have independent function of their own. For example, Beres
(1971) describes a situation where a person may initially use
the defense of intellectualization to cope with conflicts over
sexuality, which later serves as the basis for a scholarly
attitude, which has functional effectiveness independent of
managing sexual conflicts.

The point is, the function of the original defense has
undergone a change, acquiring effect for the person independent
of its first function. This study can be seen as examining the
change of function that cathexis of value undergoes, where it
will be claimed that originally it often functions to maintain
self-cohesion, and then with time and experience can undergo a

change of function. This occurs where for example, cathexis of positive aspects of other and self early in development in order to maintain self-cohesion, undergo a change of function over developmental time, and become objects of value or systems of value in and of themselves. These objects of value or systems of value then become focused on more or less exclusively in terms of content, as opposed to any psychological function they might still perform at some level for the person.

This leads to the suggestion that the superego is in effect an ego function that becomes secondarily autonomous over developmental time through Hartmann's process of change of function. The point of this study is to suggest that we are often blinded by this change of function, to the fact that values throughout development, continue to function at a some level as a primary means of maintaining self-cohesion. That is, through the change of function we loose sight of the primary function of cathexis of value in the psychic economy, which is the maintenance of self-cohesion, and instead focus on the content of value systems. This study will suggest that focusing on the primary psychological function of values as well as the content of values, can potentially provide a basis for resolution of conflict involving values on many levels in human life.

According to Tyson (1987) reorganization of the superego structure during adolescence, where the task is to integrate the parental values with the newly adopted ones, usually starts with a regressive move on the part of the self

which deals with the conflicting superego introjects by disavowing the previously internalized values and standards of the parents, and, through the process of projective identification, deposits those unwanted aspects of itself on to another person. The recipients of the teenager's disavowed superego content are usually the parents, teachers and other prominent authority figures. By this process, the youth changes a painful internal conflict, that creates feelings of shame, guilt and anxiety, into an external one, where he finds himself now in constant battle with authority figures, especially the parents, but, feels righteous in his defiance.

Another way that the teenager may deal with intrasystemic superego conflicts, is for the youth to "act out" different sets of values and standards alternatively depending on the social context. That is, the youth follows parental values and standards within the family context and switches to a different set of values and standards when in the presence of the peer group. Wurmser (1978) makes reference to this phenomenon and defines it as a "superego split" which he describes as:

> "A functional inner disparity, within the superego structure, that leads to rapid vacillations between acknowledgement and acceptance of some standards and the abrupt (conscious and unconscious) denial and disregard of the same standards of behaviour at different times in different circumstances".

Some individuals may carry on their "chameleon like behaviour" into adulthood, continually shifting and taking on the characteristics of the particular group that they find themselves with in the present moment. Erikson (1959) refers to such a

"other-directed" individual as "identity diffused".

Horowitz (1987) in his theory also describes the self's capacity to shift into distinct recurring states of being. Shifting from one state to another is accompanied by a change in self-representation, representation of the other, and patterns of processing information and affects. Shifts are triggered by cognitive and affective dissonances experienced by the self which mobilize the defenses for dissociation into a new state. Horowitz conceptualizes the process of dissociation on a continuum, the extreme of which would be a multiple personality disorder. Federn (1952) put forward a similar concept of the self's capacity to shift into different "ego states". Through his clinical work he found evidence that ego states of earlier developmental periods remain throughout life as potentially recurrent.

The concept of superego splits becomes especially relevant in this study. Since I believe that crosscultural teenagers are especially prone to these splits, examples will given from this population to demonstrate the functioning on superego splitting. In chapter three, finer distinctions will be made on the kinds of superego splits that may manifest themselves with this particular population and possible intrapsychic, familial and sociocultural antecedents to them.

If development follows along optimal lines the young adult will have integrated to some extent, intrasystemic superego conflicts, and in the process have developed an individualized,

flexible and stable superego structure that functions
compassionately in its guidance and judging of the self. This of
course, is an ideal picture since many adults end up with a
superego structure that contains conflicting ego ideals and
morals. Additionally, the self through the process of regression
can at any point in the lifespan reactivate early parental
introjects, moral directives and ideals.

As can be seen, passage into adulthood is a tumultuous
process for most teenagers, where conflicting impulses of the
self propel it towards differentiation from parents on the one
hand, and identification with them on the other hand. The social
context, especially the family system, is inextricably linked to
the lines of development that the process of individuation can
take. In the next section, a closer look will be given to the
family system as a whole, and the kinds of regressive
interlocking defenses that may be put into place by the
individual family members when they experience a threat to the
cohesiveness of the family unit as a whole.

THE FAMILIAL CONTEXT

Present object-relations theory as applied to family therapy
holds the view that to understand the dynamics of a family
system, at least three generations of that family have to be
taken into account (Nagy, 1991, Luepnitz, 1988). This is due to
the fact that families frequently tend to exhibit similar

problems to those of the previous generation. Freud (as cited by Luepnitz, 1988) observed that as adults we tend to unconsciously reproduce with our own children, the relationships we had with our parents; and, that with our spouses we tend to recreate the relationship our parents had with each other. Freud's term, "repetition compulsion" is applicable here. One reason we tend to repeat dysfunctional patterns is because they are familiar to us and we assume them to be universal. Additionally, the unconscious, which is irrational, believes that by recreating earlier traumas it eventually will lead to mastery of such painful experiences (Luepnitz, 1988). Thus the child who grows up comforting a depressed mother as an adult might gravitate towards marrying a similar woman because it feels familiar to him, and second, out of the hope that this time he will be successful in rescuing a loved one out of a depression.

Transgenerational repetition can also be the result of identification with the parent and as mentioned earlier, filial loyalty plays an important role in this process. Additionally, identification with a parent is more likely to occur if the young child perceives a parent to be powerfully aggressive or threatening in some way. Freud referred to this process as identification with the aggressor which is precipitated by the high levels of anxiety one experiences around such a person (Sandler & Freud; 1985). The classic example would be the son who had a father that was physically abusive with his mother and himself, and as an adult, repeats the cycle of violence with his

own wife and children. His wife might have come from an abusive home herself, where she was a victim which prompted her to unconsciously choose an abusive partner in an effort to master her own childhood trauma. Thus, the interlocking needs of the couple end up recreating scenarios in their own family system which replicate those they experienced in their family of origin.

Object-relations therapy believes that the less awareness one has of one's own past and roots, the more likely one is to repeat the dysfunctional patterns and as a result, pass them on to the next generation. Therefore, one of the primary goals of therapy is to increase awareness of any unconscious behaviour patterns.

According to Luepnitz (1988) generational transmission of dysfunctional patterns occurs through processes involving collusive projective identifications by one or several members of the family. In this process, the family may make one single member the sole carrier of their disavowed affects such as anger or anxiety. Conversely, the singled out member might also collude with the family system by taking on that role, and becoming the symptomatic member of the family; or the scapegoat.

For example, a wife might be very angry at her distant husband but be unable to express this directly because she was taught in her family of origin that anger is an unacceptable emotion. This woman might then have a teenage daughter, that in the past was used by her as a confidant to whom she expressed her unhappiness with her marriage, and that lately, has been

rebellious towards the father. The daughter's anger towards the father then, could become the "hook" for the mother's projective identification, where the daughter feels consciously and unconsciously delegated to express the mother's repressed anger to the father, because of her loyalties to the mother. That is, the mother may be unconsciously setting up circumstances that lead to angry confrontations between her daughter and her husband. The teen, through non-verbal cues of the mother, is aware of the mother's vicarious satisfaction in the daughter's overt expression of anger towards the father, and thus, collusively and largely unconsciously is taking on the role of enacting the mother's projective identification of covert anger that she is unable to express to her husband. Additionally, other members of the family might collude in this arrangement and use the same daughter for projective identifications involving their own anger and frustrations.

The above family is also an example of what Nagy (1991) refers to as a "transactional role reversal" where the teenage daughter is being "parentified" by the mother into the adult role of being her confidant and comforter. Nagy would also say that the above teenager has been put in the very difficult predicament of a "split filial loyalty", where the youth's loyalty towards the mother is at the cost of her loyalty towards her father. As a result, this daughter might become more and more symptomatic and oppositional towards all members of the family. She may do this unconsciously in the hope that by taking on the posture of

opposition, she will align the parents back together by focusing them on her, instead of their poor relationship. Thus, the teen attempts to resolve her split filial loyalty through what Nagy terms "loyal opposition", while appearing on the surface to be "disloyal". Furthermore, the same teen might overtly reject her family of origin and cease contact with them, yet as an adult might indirectly remain loyal to her father by becoming like him, aloof and distant in her own intimate relationships. This phenomenon is referred to by Nagy as "invisible filial loyalty" which, according to him is a chief factor in the transgenerational repetition of family and marital dysfunction.

Underneath all of this, the experienced ambivalence between loyal adherence to the different transmitted values in different relationships painfully threatens the cohesion of the intrapsychic self, which must ultimately resort to defensive operations such as superego splitting, in order to reduce such tension. For the purposes of this study these familial processes are centrally important because it is the view of this thesis that the mechanism of superego splitting, and the related psychodynamics of value in fact, develop and function with their persistent and individualized content originally and primarily within the family system. Because of this central role of the familial context in the development and maintenance of superego splitting, examples demonstrating the dynamics of this mechanism will largely involve family systems.

The above described conceptual constructs for the

understanding of family dynamics become especially useful in

explaining the observations of family configurations that I have

encountered in working with crosscultural families. The outside

stresses encountered by these families can be enormous:

discrimination, economic hardship, and exposure to alien values,

all of which can change a previously functional family into a

dysfunctional one. In the next section, a selected review

of crosscultural developmental models will be discussed, as well

as factors that may facilitate or hinder cultural adaptation.

THE CROSSCULTURAL CONTEXT

The "Cultural Unconscious"

Hall (1976) in his book Beyond Culture points out to us that

the development of the self is deeply affected by its cultural

context. He perceives the individual from birth being programmed

by its culture, resulting in the establishment of a psychic

system that he refers to as the "cultural unconscious". This

internal structuring has profound effects on the way individuals

within a culture will organize and give meaning to their

experience. Hall reminds us that:

> "Culture always determines where to draw the line
> separating one thing from another. These lines are
> arbitrary, but once learned and internalized, they are
> treated as real."

These culturally ingrained "patterns of contexting" take

place largely at unconscious levels, especially if society at

large is consistently congruent in most ways with the programmed

patterns. Thus, the self is for the most part unaware that a

culturally based system of controls is in place, that organizes

its experience and therefore, assumes erroneously its culturally

bound experience to be universal rather than relative to social

time and place. As a result, when the person encounters the

culturally different he or she will tend to judge

ethnocentrically, denying the possibility of a different cultural

pattern or experience. For example, in some cultures direct eye

contact with a figure of authority is considered a disrespectful

act, while a counsellor from a western culture might diagnose

such a behaviour as reflecting insecurity, lack of maturity and

self-esteem.

As societies evolve into more complex systems, the "cultural

unconscious" is externalized in the form of institutions such as

governments, judicial and educational systems, art forms and

cultural rituals that because of their concretization in these

external forms increasingly binds societies to the meanings in

the "cultural unconscious" which the "extensions" represent.

Hall perceives these external cultural systems or, "extensions"

of human values and ideas, as developing emergent properties once

they have been externalized, which can then evolve into something

other than what they were initially intended for. For example,

Albert Einstein did not intend to formulate theories that would

result in the building of a nuclear arms industry generating

highly toxic wastes that can potentially destroy much of the

ecosystem. This demonstrates that the effects of extensions can never fully be predicted, and that the systems when once in place can take on a momentum of their own, sometimes making it very difficult to stop or reverse a destructive extension of man.

These emergent effects of extensions leads to consideration of another phenomenon that Hall refers to as "extension transference" whereby a culture confuses the extension with the process being extended. These extensions are reductionistic in nature and always give us an incomplete picture of the process from which they arise. As will be discussed in chapter three, many values that are held as absolutes, are often "extension transferences" of need-fulfilling processes. Consider for example the establishment of gender roles, which at a particular time and place might have been adaptive for survival but that with the passage of time, have become confused as innate differences between the sexes.

According to Hall, the amount of cultural programming varies greatly across cultures and he places them on a continuum from "low context" to "high context" societies. The latter is characterized by considerable programming of its members that results in stable efficient and fast communication modes. Thus, the actual explicit transmitted part of the message is usually short, efficient, and fast, but only in interaction with a similarly programmed self. To an outside observer of that culture, the coded, explicit message might convey a very different meaning. For example, in the Chinese culture, which

Hall considers a high context society, when an individual says to someone else that they have a "bad heart, it is understood in that culture that the person is experiencing a great deal of emotional pain, while a psychiatrist in our western culture might consider this as a symptom of hypochondria. High context cultures frequently communicate through art forms to convey information and to unify the people, giving them a sense of belonging. High context communication also develops in family systems, where a great deal of culturally specific information is transmitted through indirect verbal and nonverbal cues. An example would be the mother-infant dyad that can become highly synchronized in meeting each other's needs with the use of efficient, short cues which may specific to childrearing practices of different cultures. The point is, family systems can develop highly idiosyncratic modes of communication that may be uncodable to an outsider.

At the other end of the continuum, a "low context" communication pattern would be one where most of the information is conveyed in the explicit message and where little programming is necessary by the receiver to discern the information. An example of a low context communication style would be a professor teaching an introductory psychology course where meanings and terms are explicitly spelled out; while in a graduate course, he might use a more high context pattern with a higher degree of embedded meanings. Cultures that Hall considers as low context are the German, Swiss, and Scandinavian.

For the purposes of this thesis the relevance of the high
and low contexting of different cultures involves the
differential structuring of culturally specific superegos and the
idea of relativization of values and standards at the cultural
level. We can view the concept of contexting in cultures as
referring to the patterning of semantic codes, in terms of the
layers of complexity of embedded meanings, values and standards
that maintain the cohesion of experience at both intrapsychic
structural and systemic-institutional levels. The superego in
other words, in both its intrapsychic form, and its externalized
form as institutions of social regulation, can be seen as the
main vehicle of the cultural unconscious. Thus the
relativization of values and standards in a crosscultural context
will significantly impact the superego intrapsychically and
collectively potentiating threats to both self and group
cohesion. The implication of high and low differences in
contexting implies the necessity of considering in depth, the
superego of any individual or group caught up in the
relativizations of a crosscultural situation. For, cultural
differences in value and meaning attached to transcultural tasks
such as childrearing, gender assignment, identity formation, and
identity achievement may have different degrees of elaboration in
either a high or low cultural context. This supports the need
for a developmental model of the psychodynamics of value in order
to move towards this depth of understanding of conflicts between
values and standards in a crosscultural setting. Examples of

such threats to both self and group cohesion engendered by value

relativization in crosscultural contexts will be discussed in

chapter three.

Individualism and Collectivism

Becker (1973) believes that man is driven by two basic

impulses: a) The Agape motive which refers to man's need to

transcend his existential isolation by identifying and merging

with something larger then himself such as kinship groups,

religious affiliation, country etc., thus giving him or her not

only a sense of vicarious power and safety through the group

identification, but also a feeling of belonging and self-

cohesion. And, b) The Eros motive which represents the impulse

in man for individuation, for developing uniqueness that is

recognized and praised by others, and the development of self-

powers. If man gives in too much to his Agape impulse, he may

fail to develop his self-capacities and talents and risk

exploitation by others, while if he follows the Eros impulse to

an extreme, he runs the risk of becoming narcissistic, self-

absorbed and isolated from his community.

The agape motive fits well with Kohut's (1985) notion of

"cultural selfobjects" which refers to cultural figures, symbols,

and myths that function to maintain the continuity of the self at

individual and group levels. As Kohut says, without these kinds

of cultural selfobjects supporting psychosocial continuity "There

is no group self.". With the help of this concept of cultural
selfobject joined with the notion of agape as a basic human
motive for union with something larger than the individual self,
in order to maintain the sense of cohesion and continuity of the
self, we are able to speculate about the disruption of these
functions and motives in a crosscultural situation. Clearly,
cultural selfobjects will be highly valued at a conscious level,
although their psychological function of maintaining self-
cohesion and continuity, this thesis claims, is largely
unconscious. Therefore, if a person or group finds itself in a
crosscultural setting that does not support, or in fact, openly
devalues the set of cultural selfobjects that has psycho-
historically functioned to provide psychosocial continuity, we
can predict severe threats to self-cohesion, and resulting
defensive reflexes such as superego splitting. This situation
certainly supports the need for a model of the psychodynamics of
value that takes into account these processes which can cause a
great deal of upheaval in crosscultural settings; and which this
thesis claims, have not been adequately acknowledged to date.

In terms of the Eros motive, the need to individuate and
become particularized in a masterful and unique yet admired way,
that acknowledges the certainty of value of an individual
existence, fits well with the recursive developmental task of
managing and integrating ambivalence, as established levels of
self-cohesion become relativized under the continual press of
this motive. This also supports the need for a developmental

view of the model of the psychodynamics of value, which will be presented in chapter three.

As Triandis (1990) points out, we should not consider individualism (Eros motive) and collectivism (Agape motive) as being mutually exclusive, but as being able to coexist in optimal balance within a society. Of course the relative emphasis placed on the expression of the Agape and Eros impulse varies greatly across cultures. Societies that place emphasis on the Agape impulse are considered collectivist cultures while ones that emphasize the Eros impulse are considered individualist.

Of interest to this study is the view of Triandis who describes different patterns of values as associated with collectivistic and individualist societies. Those associated with collectivist societies are: reciprocity, obligation, security, duty, tradition, compliance to socially prescribed roles, dependence, harmony, obedience and respect for hierarchical authority, and commitment to collective goals that take priority over individual ones. Individualistic societies on the other hand, are characterized by values such as self-actualization, differentiation, competitiveness, self-reliance, autonomy, equality in social relationships and individual goals take priority over collective goals.

Spence (1990) considers our North American culture as having embraced individualism to an extreme, creating a fragmented society of narcissistically self-absorbed individuals with narrow, self-centred goals, who feel alienated and lack a sense

of belonging to society at large apart from the immediate family.

Luepnitz (1988) also suggests that the isolation of our western nuclear family places a great burden on the mother who in a sense has taken the place of the community, especially with young children. This void in communal relating in our society has unfortunately created a fertile ground for the appearance of exploitive cultish religious, political, and even dysfunctional adolescent peer groups that take advantage of the universal need for cultural selfobjects that function to ensure self-cohesion and psychosocial continuity.

In general, intergenerational relations are much stronger with collectivists where the elderly and young actively interact with each other. In such societies the social unit is frequently the extended family, spanning three or four generations who might live together in the same household and cooperate financially. The power differential in such families is usually hierarchical where the authority resides with the eldest male. In some cultures such as India, the eldest female also has great power over the management of the household where the younger females and children have to obey her authority. In contrast, our western culture encourages children upon reaching adulthood to "fly the nest" and become financially independent of their parents. Also, our elderly for the most part have little say about participation in their children and grandchildren's lives.

Childrearing practices by collectivists from our vantage

point might seem intrusive. The level of interaction by caregivers and children is high compared to our standards, allowing for little privacy and discouraging independence. Children are taught to seek guidance from their elders and to be compliant with their advice. Cooperation, unquestioned obedience and duty by the children are rewarded while aggression and defiance are severely punished. In some cultures, this includes physical punishment, and reflects the belief that being a responsible parent can involve hitting the child, while abstaining from physical punishment would be considered child abuse; while of course, in our culture the reverse is true. Ironically, even though our western culture professes to value childrearing without physical punishment, physical abuse and neglect of our children has reached epidemic proportions.

These differences in patterns of family values and functioning occurring between individualist and collectivist cultures may need to be taken into account when dealing with the inevitable process of relativization of value that will occur if they are transplanted to a crosscultural context.

Triandis and others have also researched differences in self definition among collectivist and individualist cultures. Constructs such as "private, public and collective self" have been used for comparison. The "private self" refers to self-definitions based on personal attributes, internal states and behaviours; (eg.: "I am an unfaithful person" , "I am happy" etc.). The "public self" relates to how others perceive us (eg.:

"Others think I am generous, "People think I am happy"). The collective self consists of self-definitions that relate one to an ingroup: (eg.: "I am a Canadian", "I am a catholic", "I am a mother"). Evidence suggests that collectivists define themselves more frequently in terms of collective self-definitions then individualists do. For example, a study that compared samples from Illinois, Hawaii and China found that the Chinese who are considered highly collectivistic, scored the highest in collective self-definition, while the Hawaiians scored lower but significantly higher then their American counterparts who are considered most individualistic (Triandis, 1990).

Also, research by Triandis suggests that there are greater discrepancies in collectivists between the private and the public self then in individualistic societies. The difference is especially striking when Americans (individualists) are compared to Japanese (collectivists). Doi (1986) partially explains the great discrepancy between the private and public self in the Japanese by taking into account their great emphasis on harmony within social relationships. Thus, they are taught from an early age the art of public politeness where one does what is socially desirable even though privately one might feel or act quite differently.

Here, for the purposes of this study, we can observe cultural differences between individualistic and collectivist societies in the comfort and acceptability of using a private self as a means of dealing with conflicts between contextualized

values and standards, and the resulting intrapsychic tensions
culturally setup within the superego. In fact, in chapter three
the concept of a private self will be developed as a way of
defensively managing conflicts between values and standards and
the superego tensions they generate. Moreover, we can see that
having an awareness of culturally based differential comfort with
using a private self for dealing with superego conflicts is
useful to have, in order to avoid ethnocentric judgements that
can be experienced as blame around the use of this superego
defense, as a means of maintaining self-cohesion in situations of
conflict between values and standards. It should be kept in mind
however, that this point is meant to apply to the level of
clinical intervention while the larger issue of the possibility
of moving towards an integrated value system for the human race,
which transcends local contexts which, in fact, may have
institutionalized self-destructive value systems remains open.

According to Triandis (1990) morality in general is
perceived differently in collectivist and individualist
cultures. In the former they tend to consider their ingroup norms
as morally correct and absolute when compared to the rules of
other ingroups. However, in terms of a collectivist mind-set,
collectivists may tend to feel that morality only applies when
dealing with the ingroup, and find it acceptable to apply
different values and standards, sometimes quite extreme, to
outgroups. This is supported by the view that collectivists are
said to exhibit a greater degree of relativism in their moral

judging within the ingroup, depending on the context of the transgression and the social status of the individual. From our western perspective we might judge such cultures as having 'moral double standards' although our own culture exhibits many of its own moral inconsistencies, we just seem to be in many instances, in denial of their existence. For example, we like to believe that in our society, justice is equal for all, but the reality of the situation is that if one is a minority and poor, chances are greater that justice may be differentially applied.

Wurmser (1978) has described the phenomenon of such social double standards as largely unconscious "cultural splits". Another example of a "cultural split" in our society is that even though we value individualism to an extreme, in many instances we have expected women to sacrifice their personal goals, just as the collectivist mind-set might, for the interests of children and husbands. Triandis (1990), Luepnitz (1988) and others have made reference to the striking parallels between social expectations of gender roles and the different expectations of individualist and collectivist societies. In other words, they see a division along gender lines of the application of collectivist and individualist values. We might consider this in terms of a cultural split where the ambivalence generated by conflicts between values and standards as applied to gender roles, has been historically dealt with by institutionalizing expectations of sex roles. Consequently, when these roles are questioned, as is being done in our contemporary culture, threats

to the self-cohesion of both sexes can be predicted, due to the relativization and disruption of the established "cultural unconscious" in individual and externalized superego structures.

When counselling the culturally different, it is important to take into account the degree of individualism/collectivism of the client's culture of origin for general reasons, as well as for dealing with conflicts between values and standards. Many times individuals from collectivist societies are misdiagnosed by westerners as being dependent, enmeshed and undifferentiated from their families. These issues also become relevant with parent-teen conflict in crosscultural families. Frequently I have encountered parents that have strong collectivist values while their teenagers who have assimilated the western culture more readily, have developed strong individualist tendencies creating severe conflict within the family. Additionally, some of the parents, even years after they have immigrated, are still dealing with the shock of cultural dislocation in the move from a collectivist society to an individualistic one. Finally, it seems clear that the dimension of individualism/collectivism in a crosscultural context is important to keep in mind as a means of evaluating the specific ways in which self-cohesion can be threatened and defended against through such mechanisms as superego splitting.

The next section will explore some of the multidimensional losses that immigrant clients might experience; and which setup the relativization of previously established value systems.

Cultural Dislocation Experience

The term "culture shock" has been extensively used in the
literature to describe the observed distresses that immigrants
experience when coming in contact with their new environment. As
Ishiyama (1992) points out, cultural dislocation is not only felt
in the intercultural realm but also in the intrapsychic context
of the individual, sometimes shaking the very foundations of his
identity. This supports this studies views on threats to self-
cohesion that can occur in crosscultural contexts with conflicts
between values and standards.

Ishiyama conceives the self in terms of five distinct but
interrelated levels: 1) The "physical self" which corresponds to
the individual's body, health, instincts, drives etc.; 2) The
"familial self" which refers to the self in relation to the
family and its membership and role within it ; 3) The
"sociocultural self" which includes social and gender roles and
religious, racial and ethnic affiliations ; 4) the "transcultural
self" which corresponds to the authentic and unique self
experienced in close interpersonal relationships; and 5) the
"transpersonal" self which refers to the self in relation to a
deeper inner consciousness, god or a supernatural power.

Potentially then, with a cultural dislocation the
individual not only experiences the loss of his or her homeland
and its cultural symbols, but also may experience other losses
such as leaving family members and valued friends behind, change

in social status, loss of a social role, and change in familial
role. These kind of losses coupled with being in a strange
culture with different customs and language can create in the
individual feelings of uprootedness, inadequacy, loneliness and
isolation. In the clinical setting, crosscultural clients will
frequently exhibit clinical depressions, psychosomatic disorders,
and identity crisis and confusion. From the point of view of
this study of the psychodynamics of value, these disruptions of
the self on different levels can be seen as the effects of the
relativization of value in a crosscultural context.

Ishiyama also notes that if the individual does not find
new sources of validation in the host culture, the self may
engage in compensatory neurotic behaviours which include drug and
alcohol abuse, delinquent behaviour, foreclosure to the new
culture and regressive fixation to traditional ways or
overassimilation of the host culture, and abusive behaviour
towards others in an attempt to gain self-validation. Cultural
dislocation can have a profound effect on a family system
facilitating the creation of dysfunctional patterns such as role
reversals, protective processes such as scapegoating,
enmeshment, and power differentials that are exploitative.

Again, these observations of Ishiyama on defensive reactions
can be seen as supporting this studies views on defensive
attempts at maintaining threatened self and group cohesion in a
crosscultural context; as will be discussed in the next chapter.

The next section will present some developmental models of

identity formation that have been proposed for individuals that
experience a crosscultural context. In the best case scenario,
crosscultural encounters offer an opportunity for integration of
worldviews and value systems, through activation of dialectical
consideration of their differences and similarities which
promotes the opportunity for personal growth and expansion that
potentially integrates both cultures at a more inclusive level.
However, this study maintains, the very process that promises so
much, that is, the relativization of contextual value, also,
because of threats to self-cohesion and resultant defensive
operations can deteriorate into worse case scenarios where
intolerance, bigotry, and violence can be the outcomes.

Cross-Cultural Models of Development

Early developmental models for minority groups had their roots
in the works of Black social scientists and educators. Cross
(1971) and Jackson (1975) both developed models that delineate
the process of identity formation for the young black person that
moves from an initially preferred 'White' frame of reference to a
positive Black frame of reference. Although these models are
specific to blacks, other writers have observed similar processes
with other minorities. Atkinson, Morten, and Sue (1989) have
integrated some of these models and come up with a five stage
developmental process of identity formation for minorities that
have to adjust to cultural oppression by a dominant group. The

following is a description of these stages.

A) Conformity Stage.

This stage is characterized by the minority individual being strongly identified with the dominant culture's values which are prized, while denying his own culture. The self-esteem of this person is usually low and accompanied with shame for the traditional customs of his ethnic group. He tries to divorce himself from his roots and to fit into the social circles of the mainstream culture.

B) Dissonance Stage.

At this stage, denial of one own's culture begins to break down. This process might be precipitated by the individual encountering racism on a personal level and encountering members of his own ethnic group that he admires who do not fit the stereotypes held by the mainstream culture. The individual begins to question the attitudes and beliefs of the dominant culture and starts seeing positive attributes in his ethnic group. Mixed feelings of shame and pride are felt towards one's roots.

C) Resistance and Immersion Stage.

During this stage, the pendulum swings towards global identification with one's own people and complete rejection towards the dominant culture. Here, the individual feels shame and guilt for having previously denied his cultural heritage. This is coupled with feelings of anger, mistrust and dislike towards the majority group, which now, is perceived as oppressive towards one's own minority group. Racial self-hatred is

transformed into racial pride.

D) Introspection Stage.

The individual begins to experience feelings of discontent and discomfort towards some aspects of his minority culture while at the same time that he begins to value again some qualities of the dominant group. He might start feeling restricted in the expression of his own individuality with the minority group that often demands submergence of individual autonomy and thought. The person experiences at this stage, much internal turmoil and struggle with self-definition, trying to integrate his conflicted cultural self.

E) Integrative Awareness Stage.

At this stage of the process, the individual will have developed a unique identity through selective identifications with both cultures. The person now experiences a strong sense of pride in his cultural heritage without unequivocal acceptance of all its standards and values. Also, such an individual will have an attitude of openness and appreciation for other cultures including the mainstream culture.

The authors of this five stage model warn us that the above sequence of identity development is not universal to every minority person. Some individuals might never leave the conformity stage while others might skip some stages or regress back to earlier ones. However, they point out that from their clinical experience, a great majority tend to follow this sequence.

The relevance of this model lies in seeing it as supporting this studies view of both the defensive reactions to threats to self-cohesion in a crosscultural setting, as well as the successful integration of conflicts between values and standards due to relativization, over time. The initial stages in the model can be seen as reflecting defensive superego splits, while the later stage can be seen as reflecting the subsequent integration of these splits.

Berry (1990), proposed four different outcomes to the process of acculturation and also identified individual and sociopolitical variables that may influence the path of acculturation chosen by a particular person. The proposed modes of acculturation are as follows:

A) Assimilation Path.

The individual who follows the path of assimilation does not want to retain his cultural identity and readily embraces the characteristics of the new culture. This individual would be similar to the one described by Atkinson et al at the Conformity Stage. Factors that may influence this outcome may be the degree of tolerance and acceptance by the mainstream culture to the particular minority group. For example, a teenager that has experienced racism in school might develop a sense of shame towards his cultural heritage and as a result reject it completely in favour of the mainstream culture, which he perceives as more prestigious and desirable.

B)Separation Path.

This person retains his cultural heritage and strongly rejects the values of the mainstream culture. This path of acculturation is facilitated if the minority culture has a well established ethnic community with support systems in the mainstream culture. For example, a Hindu immigrant in Vancouver from India may follow the separation path because he has a well established network available to him. This outcome is similar to the Resistance and Immersion stage of the previous model. This may be seen as a form of defensive cultural split in order to maintain self-cohesion along established lines in the person's cultural unconscious.

C) Marginalization Path.

This individual has little possibility of cultural maintenance, often because there are unavailable support systems for his culture in the new society. Also, because of possible discrimination and exclusion in the mainstream culture, this person avoids integration and becomes marginalized in his new environment. This path of acculturation is considered the most stressful where threats to self-cohesion are defensively managed through avoidant narrowing of one's life sphere excessively.

D) Integration Path.

This individual preserves some degree of cultural integrity at the same time that he participates and becomes an integral part of the mainstream social network. This outcome is similar to the Integrative Awareness stage of the previously mentioned model.

The authors point out that acculturation modes may vary

across domains of behaviour. Thus, an individual may seek assimilation in the workforce, integration in his social network, while following the separation mode in his religious beliefs.

What is important for the purposes of this study though, is that Barry's model also can be seen as reflecting management of both defensive operations and integration of conflicts between values and standards which threaten self-cohesion in a crosscultural setting; which this study proposes to look at from the perspective of a general model of the psychodynamics of value.

Chapter three will discuss some transcultural mechanisms and processes that may account for the different patterns described by the above authors; which this study views as 'phenotypical expressions' of a more generic psychodynamics of value. Also, universal processes of change will be suggested that account for development in the crosscultural context along potentially different lines, one of which is the model suggested by Atkinson Morten and Sue.

CONCLUSION

This literature review has attempted to give an overview of some transcultural processes in the development of the self that may have particular relevance to conflicts between values and standards with the goal of establishing the relevance of proposing a developmental model of the psychodynamics of value.

This led to consideration of familial and intergenerational

stresses in the process of crosscultural adaptation, because this study maintains that the crosscultural context acts like a 'magnifying glass' for observing psychodynamics related to conflicts between values and standards. Therefore, this review also looked at models of development specific to individuals who belong to cultural minorities. This review has also begun to described what are believed to be universal processes, such as the relativization of value, and defense mechanisms, such as superego splitting, that the self uses to cope with threats to its cohesion.

The hypothesis to be supported in this thesis is that this understanding of how self-cohesion is threatened and defended can be effectively applied to understanding and working with the developmental conflicts that arise between loyalties to familial traditions and individuation in development generally, and also in a crosscultural context specifically. To this point, emphasis was placed on the development and intrasystemic dissonance within the superego, because it is the seat of our cultural values and ideals; and therefore, the intrapsychic structure that may be most affected in conflicts between values and standards; developmentally and situationally.

Aspects of these reviewed elements will lay down the foundations for a proposed developmental model of the psychodynamics of value generally, and the functioning of the psychodynamics of value in a crosscultural context specifically; and suggest forms of intervention that emerge from this model.

CHAPTER THREE

A MODEL FOR THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF VALUE

This chapter will attempt to develop a model demonstrating the functioning of the psychodynamics of value across four developmental stages of life: 1) Preoedipal; 2) Oedipal; 3) Adolescence; and 4) Adulthood. In the preoedipal stage a basic dynamic related to value, self-cohesion, and development will be identified, which will be discussed in terms of its functioning in different forms throughout the four stages of life. The section on the oedipal stage will consider the psychodynamics of value as related to the formal consolidation of the superego-ego ideal structure as the inner agency of values and standards, that also represents cultural and gender definitions of value. This section will also deal with the beginnings of distinct superego splitting given the formal consolidation of the superego-ego ideal structure in the oedipal stage. The adolescent stage will deal with developmental pressures on the psychodynamics of value related to the re-emergence of the separation-individuation process, including the issue of group membership in adolescence. As well, the adolescent section will deal in more detail with the dynamics of value as related to horizontal and vertical superego splitting. The final section will consider the stage of adulthood where the model for the psychodynamics of value presented here will attempt to be applied to broader systemic-

institutional and cultural issues.

Throughout these four sections cross-cultural issues will be considered, because the cross-cultural context by its nature involves conflicts in values and standards, and so can graphically demonstrate the psychodynamics of value.

The Development of Values and Standards in the Self

This model assumes that the self's development of values and standards takes place in the relational realm. In the course of normal development, initially, the familial context becomes the matrix from which the self abstracts values and standards, where standards may be seen as gradations of particular or different values. However, since the familial context reflects to some extent the values and standards of its cultural context, the self, from the very beginning cannot escape the internalization and introjection of values and standards from its culture. Thus, where Freud (1933) writes of the child's superego that "...it becomes the vehicle of tradition and of all the time-resisting judgements of value which have propagated themselves in this manner from generation to generation."; he is suggesting that the transmission of cultural values and standards across generations, is preserved mostly through identification with the parents. The following is a discussion of related universal processes and mechanisms by which the self evolves intrapsychic structures that

incorporate values and standards and which greatly affect the
functioning and choices in behaviours of the self. These
processes and mechanisms for the development of the self in
relation to value will be drawn out and discussed concurrently in
terms of their significance to the psychodynamics of value at the
cultural level. This will set the stage for the discussion of the
psychodynamics of value as specifically related to the cultural
level in the final section below.

The Preoedipal Stage of Development

It is believed that the experiencing self from the first
moments of awareness is already "prewired" to process incoming
stimuli in a constructivist fashion (Stern, 1985). This leads to
the creation of mental representations of objects which do not
necessarily reflect their actual nature, for these early imagoes
may be distorted, split, or fused with other self and object
representations. According to object-relations theory this
initial stage of undifferentiated self and object representations
is related to the basic assumption that the self is programmed
innately to associate an affective tone to its interactions with
objects, and that self-representations covary with object-
representations, based on the quality of this affective tone
(Greenspan, 1989; Kernberg, 1976). As discussed earlier,
theorists such as Mahler and Kohut believe the neonate initially
lacks an emotional and cognitive awareness of its separateness

from other objects, and therefore, perceptions of them can be cognized by it as self-representations. Thus, images of the primary caretaker and the affective tone attached to them can be experienced as emotionally charged self-images in symbiotic fashion.

The claim, for our purposes here, is that in this preoedipal period we can deduce the roots of a psychology of value, and subsequently, a psychodynamics of value that once uncovered and cast in the terms of value, we can follow throughout development. Indeed, it is the claim of the thesis presented here that we can observe many individual and social phenomena more usefully for the purposes of understanding and intervention in terms of a psychodynamics of value.

For in the preoedipal period, the object-relational emphasis on the structuring effect of the quality of affective tone can be seen as amounting to the shaping effect of concrete 'good and bad' experiences. At this stage good and bad are essentially defined, or more correctly, experienced, in relation to need fulfilment. That is, the 'good' object satisfies, and the 'bad' object frustrates basic needs; while the 'good' self experiences satisfaction, and the 'bad' self experiences frustrated basic needs. In real terms it is a small, but significant step to conclude that these are *prototypical valuing experiences*.

Here, Sandler's concept of "value-cathexis" can be seen as a central mechanism in what is being considered as a psychology

of value. In this regard Sandler writes:

"By 'value'...we do not refer specifically to moral value,
but the term is used rather in the sense of feeling
qualities which may be positive or negative, relatively
simple or extremely complicated. It is these affective
values, sign-values, so to speak, which give all
representations their significance to the ego (Sandler,
1989)."

Freud (Moore and Fine,1990) first hypothesized the concept

of 'Bezetzung' (translated as 'cathexis'), which refers to the

self binding emotionally charged psychic energy to a mental

representation of an object, because it functions as a regulator

of some drive or need and thus, has some value to the self.

Freud used the metaphor of an amoeba whose plasma tentacles reach

towards particles of food to incorporate them as part of the

self. This metaphor also reminds us of Kohut's selfobjects, which

are objects that the self uses as auxiliary providers of psychic

functions that complement its own psychic apparatus.

Most significantly, for Kohut, the emotionally charged

attachment, the valuing of such selfobjects, is *fundamentally*

related to the self's experience of increased self-cohesion and

continuity in relation to that object. Here, "self-cohesion"

refers to the experienced sense of integrated functioning as

opposed to the sense of fragmented functioning. Wolf writes:

"The cohesive self describes the relatively coherent
structure of the normally and healthily functioning self.
The fragmented self describes the lessened coherency of the
self resulting from faulty selfobject responses or from
other regression producing conditions. Depending on the
degree of fragmentation, it can be experienced along a
continuum from mildly anxious disconcertedness to the panic
of total loss of self structure....Self psychology
recognizes as the most fundamental essence of human
psychology the individual's need (1) to organize his or her

> psychological experience into a cohesive configuration, the
> self, and (2) to establish self-sustaining relationships
> between this self and its surround that...maintain...the
> structural coherence...of the self. (Wolf, 1988)."

Sandler also views the differential valuing of relational

experiences as being intimately linked to feelings of "safety

and well-being" related to keeping arousal at an optimal level

which is seen as the emotional prerequisite for the development

of integrated functioning, and which is clearly an experience

similar to Kohut's sense self-cohesion. The point is, *we see*

that developmentally value becomes from the first related to

those objects which we associate with maintaining our self-

cohesion.

In other words for the neonate, the primary caretaker

becomes value-cathected, or, a cathected object of high value,

just because it functions to maintain self-cohesion and ward off

the existential anxiety of disintegration of the experiencing

self through the regulation of basic needs such as hunger,

thirst, validation, safety, soothing, tension reduction, and so

on. Developmentally, this is critical because it is generally

agreed that such an experiential state of self-cohesion is

necessary for the practicing and optimal maturation of ego

functions (Shapiro & Stern, 1989).

Sandler also recognizes that the value-cathexis of an object

can vary in intensity, depending on the situational context. He

writes:

> "I want to ... tie a further pair of loose ends together by
> adding the proposition that the value cathexis - and
> therefore the attractiveness - of an activity or an object

> is a variable quantity; it can even vary from one moment to
> the next....In every situation of anxiety, for instance,
> there is a reaching toward the object that can provide
> safety, and this applies as much to the introjects as to
> external objects (Sandler, 1989)."

That is, objects of high value related to the self's sense

of cohesion and continuance can be experienced as more or less

valuable depending on the bio-psycho-social circumstances.

Sandler gives the example of a toddler where the value-cathexis

for the mother increases greatly (Freud would say that the mother

becomes "hypercathexed") in the presence of a stranger, which is

deduced from observing the clinging behaviour of the child

towards the mother in such situations. Objects also can become

"decathected" in degree. For example a teenager that relies

less and less on the mother for a sense of cohesion and

constancy, instead turns to a peer group that now becomes value-

cathected because it is the developmentally new relational realm

that can provide a sense of self-cohesion and constancy to the

self.

This variability in value-cathexis is of critical importance

because it is the claim of this thesis, that it underlies all

change in values throughout development. That is, the

development of value requires this kind of variability in

emotional investment, for the neonate would be hostage to its

first attachments and never be able to move past any loss of any

kind, were there not such variability in value-cathexis. Indeed,

the emotional investments of the process of value-cathexis are

revealed in the pre-odepial period as inherently relative to

their need-fulfilling function; where perhaps the most basic psychological need is for the sense of self-cohesion related to an empathic, or, I-Thou context. In other words, originally, value is relative to need where the objects of value can change, while it is the needs of the human psyche which may be absolute and persist in basic ways (Ishiyama, 1989). At the cultural level as well, a culture would never be able to evolve without variability in value-cathexis.

What this suggests, is that there is throughout human development, on both individual and collective levels, a constant tension between experiential values which meet needs in the immediacy of present contexts, and abstract or symbolic values which have been carried over from the contexts in which they were originally need fulfilling, and which *may or may* not be need fulfilling in these later contexts. In short, there is a constant tension between dynamic and static value relative to the growth of both persons and cultures.

For example, the evolving self can not only value-cathect concrete objects such as an attachment figure or a family group, but also moves developmentally toward more abstract objects, which can include complex self and object-representations, as well as cultural beliefs, aesthetics, morals, and whole systems of values and standards; yet all of these may in fact remain relative to their ability to meet basic needs; with the need for the maintenance of self-cohesion being the central one focused on here. This issue of the objects of value being interchangable in

relation to the needs they meet is recognized in developmental psychology where it is generally agreed that adoption will be more experientially successful the earlier it occurs, with less residue from competing attachments, or, value-cathexis, interfering with the new bond.

However, a significant question arises when it comes to the interchangeability or intermingling of one set of cultural symbols and values with another, for conflict, often of the extremest kind, is the norm rather than the exception in this situation. While when dealing with an adoptive culture, the integration into the new cultural environment may be less conflicted the earlier this occurs developmentally for an individual, this process may in fact, still be complicated by the transmission of abstract cultural values through the superego of the ethnic parents or the ethnic community. In other words, even a preoedipal cross-cultural child is unavoidably exposed to two cultural value systems, one in the family and one in the host culture, which not only in effect compete for the emotional investment of the child, but which also inevitably relativize the very perception of value itself for the child.

Here, what the cross-cultural situation highlights is the fact that values only come from two places; experience and authority, where those that come from authority are already abstractions from past experience representing traditional patterns of need fulfilment; while those that come from experience represent creative contact with the reality of present

psycho-social situations be they culturally unitary or diverse.
This, in effect, is the basis of all generational conflict, which
may be heightened in a cross-cultural context. As Erikson (1989)
says, this ever present tension between experiential and abstract
value comes to a head in teenage years, where he sees the
adolescence questioning of established values as the creative
hope of every culture for better adaptation to current realities.

While a preoedipal child is sheltered within the ethnic
family in a cross-cultural situation from wholesale influences of
the value system of a host culture, they will inevitably become
increasingly aware of differences in what is designated as 'good'
by the family versus the larger social surround. A variable
which may make this process more or less problematic is the
degree to which the ethnic parents maintain their values in some
absolute fashion, which are clearly relativized in the eyes of
the maturing child. What I want to suggest here, is that this
type of static presentation of ethnic values to the preoedipal
child in a cross-cultural situation, will potentially set the
stage for more superego splits in later stages. In other words,
to the extent that ethnic parents do not deal with value
integration into the host culture, this will create more value
conflicts for the child in later developmental stages.

In understanding the ethnic parents resistance to dealing
with value relativization, a parallel may be drawn here relating
to Sandler's comment about the clinging behaviour of the toddler
in the face of stranger anxiety. What we can perhaps see in the

observation of the tendency to ethnic isolation within a host culture, is the clinging to ethnic cultural forms and values in the face of xenophobia and lack of validation of *established connections between cathected value and self-cohesion*. What I am trying to say, is that at the cultural level of variability in value-cathexis, we may be dealing with the same psychodynamics of value that are operative at the pre-oedipal stage. For, where the child's development is centrally about integrating a self-cohesive balance between 'good' and 'bad', past and present, representations of experiential and abstract value that are lived as self and world; so at the adult cultural level, the same task persists in order to maintain self-cohesion. This task of sorting out how the basic human need for self-cohesion is balanced between experienced value and symbolic or abstract value, stands out in particularly high relief in a cross-cultural setting.

For the preoedipal child, gradually through the self's inevitable experience of frustration of needs or drives by the object-mother, it begins to recognize the 'other' as separate from itself, even though the self may remain fused with some aspects of the object. Thus, even though the young child begins to recognize its mother as a separate centre of activity around the end of year one, enmeshment of boundaries at this stage of development remains high. The separation-individuation process from the parent, in the normal course of development, is a gradual process, and possibly never total in the lifespan of an

individual.

Here for our purposes, it is useful to note that childrearing practices, which may be seen as culture bound ways of establishing patterns in the connections between value and self-cohesion, can have a profound impact on this separation process. For example, one might postulate that in cultures such as the Vietnamese (Waxler-Morrison, 1990), where young babies are usually not allowed to cry but instead are held and soothed, that this may prolong the merger or symbiotic phase with the mother, with differentiation of the self from the primary caretaker taking place at a later age when compared to western children. Alternately, one could argue that in our own culture, where some parents have short maternity/paternity leaves of absence, that this might trigger, in some of these children, an early beginning of the separation process that is situationally out of synchrony with the developmental needs of the child. One might postulate, that early separation from the mother, may force an earlier shift from experiential value in the initial attachment, to more reliance on abstract value in order to maintain established levels of self-cohesion.

For example, a client's sixteen month old toddler was experiencing great distress when she was placed in the care of a babysitter because the mother had to go back to work. Every day, when dropped off at the babysitter's, the child would scream and exhibit clinging behaviour towards the mother. Also, the toddler, who had been disciplined with "time-out", began to tell

her mother: "Mammy bad, go to room". The child had also began to wet her pants again after being toilet trained and her communication patterns changed from verbal to more guttural sounds. One can speculate that the change of caretaker threatened the child's sense of self-cohesion which resulted in the regressive behaviour. My client, on the advice of a friend, gave her daughter a picture of herself and a cotton swatch scented with her perfume and these "transitional objects" improved the toddler's behaviour greatly. For the toddler, it represented a shift towards abstract valuing for the maintenance of self-cohesion, where the "transitional objects" became symbols that represented the mother. Here, we see the progressive development of maintaining self-cohesion by symbolic means, which is increasingly the case as we move towards adulthood.

In addition to demonstrating the progression of attachment to symbolic means of maintaining self-cohesion, this example of a shift from established experiential value to substitute abstract value, can also be seen as another instance of what I have been calling *the relativization of value*. For example, in the above case, the child's sense of the 'good mother' is relativized in terms of there now being competing 'good' things which meet the same basic needs for soothing, attachment, and self-cohesion; and, the 'good mother' is also relativized in terms of being now experienced as the 'bad' rejecting mother. In short, there is a quantitative and a qualitative relativization of the original

value attached to the 'good' mother as need fulfilling. This

kind of relativization of value, I see as a prototype of value

conflicts throughout life, for the child must be in conflict with

these competing senses of what is valuable related to the same

basic needs.   Later life is filled with competing values

claiming to meet the same needs, for example, the 'many roads to

salvation'; as well as many instances of, at one time,

experientially 'good' objects of value somehow becoming 'bad' for

me, for example, cigarettes, my ex-husband, the NDP party, and so

on. One way out of this confusion of relative and competing

'goods', I am claiming, is to focus on their common function in

maintaining self-cohesive experiencing in any present context,

rather than the value itself, in any absolute abstract way, due

to the idealization (a form of value-cathexis) of traditional

authorities which promote these various values.

This concept of the relativization of value is central to

the model being developed here. While this notion is related to

the variability of value-cathexis discussed above; the critical

experience in such relativization of value for the preoedipal

child, I believe, is what Parens (1989) has described as the

"conflict of ambivalence". Parens postulates, based on his

observational research of young children, that the experience of

the "first conflicts of ambivalence" are nodal points in the

development of ego functions and superego structuring. He

writes:

     "We inferred again and again, with subjects 9-16 months old,
      that conflict between mother and child led to the emergence

of an intrapsychic conflict within the child, a conflict
due to ambivalence...and it is, in fact, in consequence of
the emotional valuation of the object that this
interpersonal conflict creates the necessary conditions for
the development of an intrapsychic conflict: the wish to
destroy an object of great emotional value....This conflict
of ambivalence leads to a most salutary development: this
is where the ego's work of coping with taming, and
modifying hostile destructiveness begins...to
internalize that object's dictates (Parens, 1989)."

With increasing development, the original overriding

positive value for the mother as selfobject is relativized in

relation to the mounting experience of her as also frustrating.

This tension of ambivalence creates a psychodynamic within the

child in regard to the perception of the valued object and its

relation to established levels of self-cohesion. In order to

maintain at least a *partial awareness of the good object and the*

self-cohesion related to it, the child is led to an intrapsychic

crossroad, where one direction leads to an integration of the

ambivalent perceptions and subsequent cognitive-affective

differentiation and development, and, another direction leads to

the splitting of consciousness in an attempt to deny and defend

against the cohesion threatening tension of ambivalence. For as

Parens also notes, "The ego can protect against the anxiety

engendered by overwhelming helplessness in the face of such

opposing feelings...and the dread of destroying the need-

satisfying symbiotic object may lead not so much to

neutralization as to splitting of this emerging ambivalence

(Parens, 1989)".

Parens is thus describing the original core of a

psychodynamic that I believe repeats itself in different forms

throughout development. What remains consistent or recursive

throughout the various forms of this psychodynamic, this thesis

claims, *is the attempt to protect threatened self-cohesion as the*

value-cathected objects that have come to be associated with it

are relativized. The resulting ambivalence is then as much

about maintaining the consistency of the self, as it is about

maintaining any consistent and absolute sense of the objects of

value the self feels dependent upon for its cohesion. In short,

it is as much and perhaps more about maintaining self-constancy,

as it is about maintaining object constancy.

This model of the psychodynamics of value, while it is

motivated by the attempt to maintain self-cohesion in relation to

the objects of value associated with it, is also about

development itself in three fundamental directions. As Parens

observes, this conflict generates (1) the differentiation of ego

functions in order to "cope with, tame, and modify" the resulting

anxiety and aggression; (2) the development of superego

structures through defensive "internalization of dictates" and

aspects of the ambivalently perceived object; and (3) potential

fixation-regression in defensive splitting, where ego functioning

is overwhelmed in its attempts to maintain self-cohesion at the

task of integrating a new and more complex awareness of the

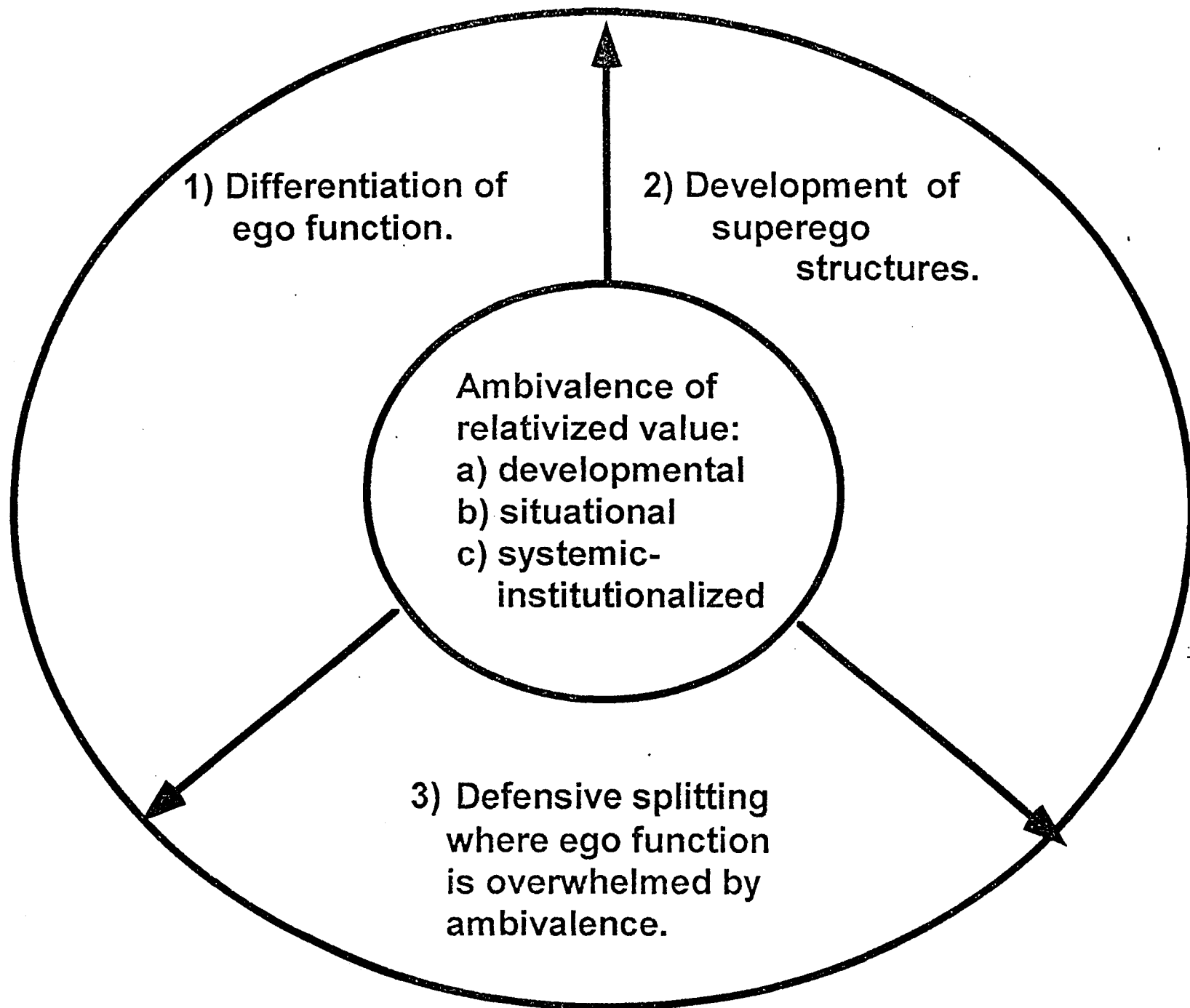relativized object of value (See figure I).

Here in the preoedipal stage, these first conflicts of

ambivalence as we have seen, are examples of what I want to refer

to as (a) *developmental relativizations of value.* That is, established value is relativized because of developmental pressures. I would also suggest that there are two other types of relativization of value that are useful to recognize. These are (b) *situational relativizations of value,* where situations rather than development leads to an awareness of existing value as less than absolute as contrasted with other values that appear to meet the same needs. A third type of relativization is also possible to identify here, (c) *systemic-institutionalized relativization,* where conflicts and double-standards related to value have been carried over from historic situations, in abstract form, and function as 'policies', stated and unstated, specific to family and group systems as well as social and cultural institutions. For example, in a patriarchal family system the young child's perception of gender value becomes relativized by awareness of differences in valuing the sexes. Additional examples of this level of potential value relativization can be seen in political and religious ideologies which will be dealt with in the final section of this chapter.

We can now model the core psychodynamic showing the relationship between the ambivalence of relativized value and development, originally occurring in the preoedipal stage.

The Developmental Dynamic

(FIGURE I)

1) Differentiation of ego function.

2) Development of superego structures.

Ambivalence of relativized value:
a) developmental
b) situational
c) systemic-institutionalized

3) Defensive splitting where ego function is overwhelmed by ambivalence.

With this dynamic developmental model established we can now
move on to more fully consider prototypical splitting in the
preoedipal stage as the precursor of superego splits in later
stages of life. For, as Parens contends, the beginnings of the
internalization of "maternal dictates" starts to occur at the end
of year one, out of these initial conflicts of ambivalence; but,
the consolidation of the superego proper, in terms of a more
differentiated system of facilitating-limiting functions,
rewarding-punitive functions, and the direction-giving function
and structure of the ego ideal, does not crystallize until the
stage of oedipal resolution (Milrod, 1990).

The splitting occurring in defense of self-cohesion at the
preoedipal stage is still quite global and emotional, in terms of
partitioning awareness of self and object; as in the exclamations
of 'Mammy bad' and 'Mammy good'. As development of ego function
proceeds cognition comes to contain and integrate more of the
tensions of ambivalence related to value relativization, allowing
the self to maintain self-cohesion through more differentiation
and compartmentalization of perceptions of 'good' and 'bad',
where splitting of values and standards becomes more localized
within the superego structure. However, no matter how
cognitively differentiated values and standards become, the
basic human need for self-cohesion consistently persists as a
dynamic emotional stake in relation to perceived conflicts
between values and standards. From the developmental model
presented above we are now able to extract a psychodynamic model

of value.

With this prototypical model for the psychodynamics of value identified in the preoedipal stage, we can now follow its functioning in different contexts, throughout subsequent stages of development, with oedipal stage considered next.

The Psychodynamic Model Of Value

(Figure II)

THE PSYCHODYNAMIC MODEL

1) Relativization
of value.

2)
Ambivalence.

3) Threats to
self-cohesion:
- Anxiety
- Rage
- guilt

4) Potential defensive
splitting of:
- Self & object
- Values &
standards.

5) Integration & differentiation
with newly cathected self &
object values & standards.

and/or

OEDIPAL STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

According to psychoanalytic theory as the child becomes
aware of gender differences, around the age of three, it usually
develops incestuous wishes towards the opposite-sexed parent.
These ambivalent feelings of love and hatred for the same-sexed
parent, and fantasies of repercussions for the incestuous wishes
are believed to propel the child towards identification with the
same-sexed parent. It is also seen as a critical period for the
consolidation of the superego and ego ideal proper into a
coherent structure that begins to function in the absence of an
external authority. At this time, the ego ideal becomes more
differentiated from the facilitating-prohibiting and rewarding-
punitive functions and assumes a direction giving role related to
a set of wished for ideal images (Milrod, 1990). As well, Freud
believed that the oedipal period is a focal point in the
internalization of the cultural context by identification with
the parent's superego, a process which facilitates the
maintenance of tradition across generations.

For purposes related to the psychodynamics of value then,
the oedipal stage involves three particularly relevant
developments: 1) The formal consolidation of the superego and
its related structure the ego ideal, as a more cognitive-
affectively differentiated set of values and standards, when
contrasted to the more global and affective prototypical valuing
experiences of the preoedipal stage. 2) The consolidation of

these values and standards, in large part around culturally construed gender value; where the oedipal resolution can be seen as a mechanism whereby value relative to gender roles becomes internalized and transmitted to the next generation. 3) In consequence of the previous two developments, the oedipal stage lays the foundation for more distinct superego splitting along the lines of values and standards related to gender and culture in this stage, and the later ones of adolescence and adulthood.

From the perspective of the psychodynamics of value, the oedipal period is one where the child moves from a largely dyadic relativization of value within the symbiotic context of the mother and child relationship, to the triadic relativizations involving the father, or other 'outsiders' that compete for the emotional investments of the child. The emergence of incestuous wishes in the child triggers developmental relativization in the valuing of both parents. The same-sexed parent's value is potentially relativized from intense love to hatred-annihilation, while the opposite sexed parent also becomes relativized in the face of negative reactions from the opposite-sexed parent for the incestuous wishes. The conflicts in increased ambivalent feeling towards both parents, with its accompanying disruption in self-cohesion, can potentially mobilize structure building of ego and superego functions that, according to Freud, should involve identification with the same-sexed parent to establish integration of gender identity. However, the threats to self-cohesion in the oedipal child also mobilize defenses that can

range from adaptive splitting to more serious kinds of defending

that can potentially fixate development of the self. From the

oedipal stage on, this more and more involves degrees of

splitting within the consolidated and increasingly differentiated

set of superego values and standards for both sexes. Since much

of the relativization of value and resulting ambivalence in the

oedipal stage involves the re-balancing of self-cohesion around

culture-bound gender identification, it is useful to focus on

gender development in some depth.

Chodorow (1989) believes that in cultures where preoedipal

children have the mother as the primary caretaker and the father

is only peripherally involved, a situation is created where boys

and girls will have significantly different experiences in the

degree of sameness they experience towards the person they first

know. She believes that for females, the sense of sameness with

the mother usually leads to an extended pre-oedipal phase, while

for males, the increasing awareness of differentness to the

mother and sameness to the father, pushes them into an earlier

oedipal stage. Freud was well aware of the developmental lag in

girls, and erroneously interpreted it as representing the

formation of a 'weaker' superego structure in girls. Converging

evidence has not proven Freud's hypothesis right. Chodorow views

the issue as one of intrapsychic boundaries where girls due to

the greater sense of sameness with the mother, undergo a slower

de-enmeshment of mother-daughter boundaries; and thus, there may

be delayed internalization of the superego functions. In other

words, boys' earlier awareness of differentness from the mother relativizes their self-concept in terms of gender identity sooner than girls, whose relativization process is delayed compared to males.

Another factor that might facilitate earlier internalization of superego functions in boys, are childbearing practices where the punitive functions are relegated to the father, while mothers are allowed to be a more nurturing and less feared object for the child. As boys begin to have incestuous wishes towards the mother, the fear towards the punitive father becomes amplified (Freud's castration anxiety), thus facilitating a quicker identification with the perceived aggressor. Girls will also experience increased fear towards the mother because of their incestuous wishes for their father, but not to the extent of the fear experienced by the boys towards their father if the mother is less expressive of disciplinary and punitive responses, and, because the direction of identification for girls is continuous with the preoedipal object of value; the mother. Therefore, more differentiated identification with the mother might not be as rapid. This pattern of traditional role division in nurture-discipline parenting practices was most likely quite prevalent in Freud's time, and thus, could also partly explain his observation of a delayed oedipal stage in females.

Chodorow in fact suggests that if the cultural context has highly defined gender roles, it demands of oedipal boys that they more quickly and completely renunciate their early preoedipal

identifications with the mother and instead now strongly identify with the father, or some culturally idealized male image. Significantly for males then, the process of identity formation in the oedipal resolution is more abruptly discontinuous from their primary object of value, while for girls, it is founded more on a sense of continuity with their early primary caretaker. Therefore, from the perspective of superego development, one can hypothesize a similar sharp discontinuity in the evolution of the value-cathections that consolidate into the super-ego ideal structure, in the oedipal stage for males; since again, the mother is most likely the first idealized object. Thus, we can imagine there is more disruption of self-cohesion for males than females in the oedipal stage, because of this difference in levels of ambivalence towards the mother as the initial object of value.

Here we can see culture-bound pressures on males to give up their early ideal of wanting to become like their mother, and substitute it for a society's ideal male image. In terms of the psychodynamics of value, we can see that systemically-institutionalized values in relation to gender, where a culture values attributes in one gender, but disapproves of them in the other, relativizes for boys the value-cathections of their early 'ideal parental imago" that was abstracted from the mother. Now, instead, they are forced to consolidate in the oedipal stage, a 'male' ego ideal based on a radically different ideal image compared to that of the preoedipal stage.

The hypothesis here, is that these young boys would experience higher degrees of intrasystemic conflict related to relativized gender value within the superego-ego ideal structure than girls would. And, since their early introjects based on the idealized mother may seem irreconcilable with society's ideal male image, integration becomes almost an impossible task. To deal with this ambivalence of value relativization, which can threaten self-cohesion, young males may be set up to resort to more superego splitting through repression (horizontal split) where they deny the value and desirability of their preoedipal value-cathections based on the mother. However, repression is usually not permanent, and some males may later express symbolically, their now developmentally conflicted preoedipal value-cathections through a range of behaviours from homophobia to transvestitism. Or, projective identifications may occur, where these repressed early preodipal value-cathections are projected on to current significant females, such as girlfriends and marriage partners, which allows for safe re-experiencing of gender values associated with the female role, which were split off in the oedipal resolution.

One could hypothesize that girls also, during the oedipal resolution, might have to renunciate value-cathections related to the ideal images that were abstracted from early preoedipal identifications with the father. This is specially true if the mother was experienced too negatively in terms of being hostile, unengaging, weak or inconsistent. Then the preoedipal female

might value-cathect, and turn almost exclusively to the father as the 'ideal parental imago' from which she extracts her oedipal ego ideal. For this particular type of female the degree of renunciation demanded by the cultural context becomes comparable to the one of males. However, the assumption here is that for the great majority of young females, because of the peripheral involvement of the father, the preoedipal content of the ego ideal abstracted from the mother, far outweighs the content that is abstracted from the father. Thus, the degree of superego-ego ideal splitting in girls is far less than for boys, at the oedipal resolution. Females might also potentially project on to future male partners, their "split off" preoedipal content, which would allow safe re-experiencing of aggressive behaviours if they were over identified with the 'nurturing' mother, at the oedipal resolution.

In cultures where values are relativized according to gender, that is, where what is valued in one sex is devalued in the other, there results a suppression of basic needs and drives in both sexes. This usually leads to a collective compartmentalization of human experience, or, systemically-institutionalized splits at a cultural level, where both genders end up "acting out" for the other, the "split off" parts by way of interlocking projective identifications. For instance, in the Hispanic-Mexican culture of the fifties and sixties that I grew up in, 'good' women were denied expression of autonomy and power, while 'macho' males were discouraged from expressing dependency

needs. Thus females would function as recipients of the repressed dependency needs of the males, while they in turn, gained vicarious power through their husband's achievements.

Probably many differences that are observed between the sexes are simply what Hall (1976) calls cultural 'extension transferences', or what I am calling systemic-institutionalized splits. That is, values and standards that have been invoked by a culture that has different ideals for each sex, which are eventually with time, confused as innate gender qualities.

The resolution of the oedipal conflict, that is, internalization of the parent's superego may be complicated for the child if it is being co-parented by individuals that differ greatly in their values and standards, possibly resulting in superego-ego ideal splitting. For example, when I was five years old and I moved to Mexico my parents hired a nanny from rural Mexico to look after me a great deal of the time because both my parents had to work to re-establish themselves. Since this nanny was very nurturing, and my sense of self-cohesion was probably very fragile due to cultural dislocation and the recent loss of my mother's time and attention, I developed strong attachment bonds to my new caretaker. That is, she became a highly value-cathected object for me. This, I believe, relativized for me the value of my mother's caretaking, since now I had someone else that was meeting similar needs to the ones that my mother previously had taken care of. Furthermore, relativization of my mother's care was also amplified because I soon learned that

with my nanny I could get away with behaviours that were unacceptable to my parents. This in turn most likely relativized my previously held standards of "good behaviour". To deal with the conflicting parenting styles and my resulting ambivalence, I believe that I resorted to the compromise formation of 'vertical' superego-ego ideal splitting. That is, in the presence of my nanny I would suppress and disregard the previously internalized values and standards that I had abstracted from my parents, and conversely, in the presence of my parents I would suppress and disregard the values and standards that I internalized from the nanny. This allowed me to maintain my self-cohesion in relation to these relativized values and standards in both contexts.

I do not remember having felt guilty in relation to my 'double standard morality'. Instead, I would simply 'switch gears' depending on which authority figure was present. One could hypothesize that in my case, this kind of cross-cultural co-parenting which lasted throughout my latency might have delayed to some extent, the development and integration of the limiting-facilitating and rewarding-punitive functions within my superego structure. In other words, from the perspective of the psychodynamics of value, due to the superego-ego ideal splitting we might conclude that a comfort level was setup with 'double standard morality'. In fact, what became a cathected value was my skill at the duplicity. Clearly, if we can generalize from this outcome, this has significance at the cultural level if the

value for skill at duplicity becomes institutionalized. Most importantly, what might develop out of this type of value relativization is the dilution of anticipatory guilt as a restraining influence on behaviour generally, because one has become 'comfortable' with simply switching gears.

I believe that my particular cross-cultural parenting by the highly value-cathected Mexican nanny also had a profound impact on my religious orientation. Even though I was born into a catholic tradition, by the time my parents moved to Mexico, my father had already converted to an atheist position and my family no longer went to church. However, through 'stimulus complex conditioning', that is, through exposure to the abstract symbols and values associated with the nanny as valued object, I ended up value-cathecting my nanny's "pagan-catholic" beliefs and faithfully went to church with her every Sunday. Also, with her I believed in a rich world of spiritual forces that we both attempted to align into our service by the practice of "pagan" rituals. While in my teens, I rejected Catholisism, my "pagan" beliefs resurfaced during my twenties where I became a devout student of the occult. Again, from the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, what can be seen here is the realignment of patterns of horizontal and vertical splitting under the pressure of value relativization in an adult stage of identity formation, related to religious and ideological values and standards.

My personal experience also serves to exemplify the

interaction of the three kinds of relativizations proposed in this thesis, which are: a) developmental relativization of value, b) situational relativization of value, and c) systemic-institutional relativization of value. That is, relativization of values took place due to my developmental changes, such as new cognitive functions that allowed me to perceive differences in valuing that I assumed previously to be absolute. Also, the cultural dislocation, which resulted in the loss of my German cultural symbols and exposure to Hispanic-Mexican values and symbols, is in fact, both a situational and systemic-institutionalized relativization of value where I was exposed to competing sets of beliefs and moral codes of behaviour.

Here for the purpose of clarity, I have given examples of the relativization of my values in the oedipal stage in a cross-culture situation, which demonstrates the interaction between the three types: developmental, situational and systemic-institutional relativization of value. For in actuality, all three types probably occur together to some degree, rather than in isolation.

With the oedipal child's increasing social circle that can now include preschool-kindergarten and neighbourhood friends, and with exposure to cultural sources such as media, the oedipal stage may indeed be an intense period for relativization of values, contrasted to 'absolutes' previously value-cathected within the family system. For most young children where the parents have been the primary caretakers and highly value-

cathected in positive ways, the ambivalence of this intense period of relativization of values is dealt with through identification with the parents' superego during the oedipal resolution. Thus, the family tradition becomes shielded to some extent from external "contamination" throughout the latency period, although to lesser degrees, as the child progresses towards puberty. This resolution of oedipal relativization of value also holds true for the crosscultural child where through the internalization of the cultural aspects of the parent's superego, the child becomes foreclosed to some extent, from assimilating host culture values. If an oedipal child generally does not have a more or less positive set of value-cathections with the parents this might hinder internalization of family values and standards, and facilitate instead, the idealization and identification with authority figures and symbols outside of the family system and tradition; for example a Kindergarten teacher, or an idealized cultural figure, in order to maintain self-cohesion.

As puberty sets in new developmental, situational and systemic-institutionalized forms of relativization of value are increasingly encountered. And, while the latency child might have refrained from value-cathecting outside the family tradition due to an attitude of "moral superiority" related to having accepted in absolute ways the values and standards consolidated in the oedipal resolution, the adolescent instead, can turn the family context in an arena of battle around values. In

crosscultural families, the conflict of values and standards, between parents and teens, usually involves more that just the "generation gap", making it more difficult, I believe, for those teenagers to achieve an integrated identity around values and standards due to continued splitting.

The next section will elaborate further on a psychodynamic model of values and standards in relation to the stage of adolescence, and its applicability to teenagers in a crosscultural context. Figure III is a rough graphical sketch meant to schematize the relationships between horizontal and vertical superego splits and developmental time. As can be seen, as complexity increases with development so too does the potential for superego splitting.

Superego Splitting and Developmental Time

(Figure III)

Degrees of Consciousness

Horizontal & Vertical Superego Splits Within The Self

Degrees of Cohesion

Repression Barrier

Developmental Time

Preoedipal Oedipal Adolescence Adulthood

The Adolescent Stage of Development

In Erikson's (1989) stage model of development, the primary task in adolescence is to reappraise earlier identifications and attempt to integrate them into a new cohesive identity for optimal functioning in the coming adult world. In terms of the psychodynamics of value presented here, the stage of adolescence will consider: 1) The types of developmental, situational, and systemic-institutional relativization of value that occur in adolescence; 2) The relationship between the relativization of value and the operation of the separation-individuation process in adolescence; 3) The issue of group membership as being a major factor in the psychodynamics of value in adolescence; 4) The cross-cultural context as a graphically demonstrative example of this issue of group membership in adolescence; 5) The detailed functioning of horizontal and vertical superego splitting in the stage of adolescence.

For many teenagers adolescence is a difficult and painful passage into adulthood. The relativization of existing values and standards potentially threatens the very core of the previously consolidated identity of latency, thus, the maintenance of self-cohesion is consistently challenged in this stage. While the relativization of value in the preoedipal period was typically dyadic within the symbiotic mother-child relationship, and in the oedipal period, was triadic within the mother-child-other relationship, the teenager will increasingly deal with group relativization in the adolescent period. The

task can become potentially more difficult, at least in our western culture, with the great variety of options for self-actualization, where the plethora of choices can overwhelm the teenager with the anxiety of making 'right' decisions. Gergen (1990) refers to the contemporary state of "multiphrenia", where there are too many options to pursue, all of which are "good" that results in a condition he calls the "saturated self". This is similar in psychological effect, though not cause, to Kohut's concept of the "overburdened self" where overstimulation can threaten the cohesion of the self.

If development progresses along normal lines the maturing self in adolescence will have developed formal cognitive operations allowing it to more easily shift from an egocentric and absolutist valuing mode, to an increasing awareness of the dialectical relativization of values. For example, while a parent might have been an idealized object in the superego-ego ideal structure up until the latency period, maturing cognitive functions and wider exposure to adults outside the family group will allow the teenager to make more realistic comparisons and assessments of the parent. In this way the youth becomes increasingly aware of relativization of value both within the family group and societal groups at large, where values and standards that were previously taken as concrete absolutes are more and more seen in relative terms. We might see this in terms of developmental relativization stimulating greater situational and systemic-institutional relativization of value.

Another developmental change that I believe is universal and transcultural, which fuels this intense period of relativization of value in adolescence is the re-emergence of the separation-individuation process due to physical and psycho-social changes, which propel the youth towards new objects of value in order to confirm his or her autonomy and differentness from the parents. Blos (1979) in fact, considers adolescence to be the "second individuation process" giving it a significance similar to Mahler's 'first' separation-individuation process in early childhood. Here, the teen engages in the testing of the personal relevance of the existing, abstract superego-ego ideal structure by experimenting with new experiences and behaviours. This exposes the adolescent to new situational contexts that can increasingly relativize existing value-cathections creating ambivalence and resulting threats to self-cohesion. As well, because of this renewed separation-individuation process, the adolescent is more and more moved away from the family group as representatives of stagnant value, towards new peer groups, and consequently becomes aware of factions within the social fabric that have valuing differences. From the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, the commonly observed mood swings of teens may be understood as the result of the increased levels of ambivalence in this intensified period of relativization of value, as prior perceptions of good and bad are compared to new value found in new experiences. Fundamentally then, what is underneath these the commonly observed fluctuations in adolescent

behaviour is the testing of abstract value accumulated from 'authoritative' sources against personally revitalized value found in new experiences. Before discussing these developmental changes in more detail, I will attempt to make a case for the universality of the separation-individuation process in adolescence.

From my clinical and personal experience I am inclined to believe that the re-emergence and intensification of the separation-individuation process in adolescence is transcultural. Many parents that I have worked with, that came from cultures that did not overtly exhibit parent-teen conflict, confessed to having had what I call 'private selves' during their teen years, that were unknown to their parents (Here, 'private self' is used with similar meaning as discussed in chapter two, but not restricted to the context of 'collectivist' cultures). Within these private selves they committed transgressions of values associated with the family group and attempted to express their separation-individuation needs in symbolic ways. When probed, most of them admitted to pleasurable feelings in what was experienced as self-directed behaviour mixed with anxiety, shame, and guilt feelings. Some of these parents ended up projecting their own split-off teenage private self, on to their adolescent children, some of which ended up "acting out" aspects of these parents' projective identifications.

More personally, when I was a teenager in the sixties in Mexico even though overt defiance towards parents by teenagers

was almost non-existent, many of my peers developed private selves and experimented with behaviours that were deemed unacceptable by their parents, such as having secret encounters with boyfriends (as opposed to being chaperoned), where sexual relations went well beyond the accepted standards. Other friends would resort to more symbolic gestures to act out a sense of differentness from their parents such as covertly reading forbidden books, or wearing makeup and clothes outside of the home that were not allowed by the parents.

The degrees and kinds of individuality and autonomy that are desired of course, vary across cultures. Some cultures manage to cultivate strong feelings of obligation in their children, towards becoming what the parents and society at large expect them to be. Thus, these teens "sublimate" through anticipatory guilt, fuelled by filial loyalty, a great deal of the impulse to individuate. Other cultures resort to external controls that facilitate supervision and punishment of behaviour deviant from expected roles. Here, fear of punishment becomes a limiting factor in the expression of individualism. However, this pseudo-compliance to parents may in some instances only be surface and teenagers may find creative and symbolic ways to covertly defy their parents. Here again, the use of a private self that is unknown to the parents is likely to develop in these familial and societal groups that, in the above ways, rigidly promote abstract values that are experientially removed from basic human drives and needs, and that subsequently allow little acknowledgment or

expression of new value found in new experience by their adolescents. Clearly, from the perspective of the psychodynamics of value, this use of a private self for the purposes of rebalancing self-cohesion in relation to vitalizing new value-cathections, that are felt to be unsupportable when contrasted to the prevalent values of the family system is a basic form of superego splitting.

However, it is important to note that the development of superego splitting in the form of a private self does not only come about as a reaction to an authoritarian family system or cultural group. For adolescents in general, including cross-cultural teens, an increased need for boundary setting with their parents develops, which appears to be in the service of protecting autonomy and denying dependency as legitimate development needs in and of themselves. This can be deduced from behaviours such as teens drastically reducing self-disclosures to their parents compared to the oedipal and latency periods, wanting parents to ask permission before they enter their room, becoming very upset when parents go through their belongings even when they have nothing to hide, being protective of personal notes and journals, and, wanting their telephone conversations with peers to be private. These observations suggest the conclusion that the development of a private self, for the protection of autonomy, is a derivative of the reawakened transcultural separation-individuation process and a distinct need in its own right. This need is perhaps related to the basic

need for self-cohesion in some ways, but is not reducible to the
defense of superego splitting as a means of maintaining self-
cohesion.

However, once a boundary is created in the service of
autonomy, if systemic-institutional values outside of it are seen
to be in too great a conflict with values felt to be more
personally relevant on the inside of it, then the private self
can come to function largely as a superego split, or, set of
superego splits. For example, I have observed that some teens
that come from authoritarian family systems tended to develop
what I call 'amplified private selves' where a great deal of
energy and secrecy went into maintaining the boundary between the
values and standards on the outside that were unsupportive of a
new set of value-cathections on the inside.

Ideally speaking, a parallel process of separation by the
parents from their children should take place where they
gradually give up authority over their children, to allow the
development of autonomous self-capacities in their unfolding
separation-individuation process. For, it is also an opportunity
for the parents to reassess their own cathected values and
standards, some of which can become relativized under the
influence of the newly cathected values of their teenagers. For
instance, several times I have observed in patriarchal families
where mothers are given little power, that the developmental
reawakening of the separation-individuation process in the
adolescent can also spark increased need for differentiation by

the mother from her husband. A "feminist daughter" may become an ideal selfobject for the mother, who may in effect empower the mother's own liberation from the patriarchal system.

However, frequently the relativization of the mother's valuing of the patriarchal status quo, which on one hand, might now be seen by her as less desirable in the light of the newly cathected values, on the other hand, might also threaten her sense of self-cohesion because fulfilment of important needs are still being provided by that system in traditionally valued ways. This might mobilize defense mechanisms in the mother to reduce a variety of possible feelings such as guilt, anxiety, loyalty conflicts, narcissistic tensions and rage induced by this relativization of value. One possible way for the mother to deal with her resulting ambivalence is the denial of her own value for the new need to individuate from aspects of patriarchy (horizontal superego split). Then, through projective identification the mother may externalize the repressed value for individuation on to the daughter, who becomes the perfect hook for the mother's split-off projection, if she exemplifies defiant behaviour towards the patriarchal father. Thus the mother vicariously fulfils her repressed need for individuation, through the daughter's rejection the patriarchal system of values and standards. The mother may also facilitate amplification of the defiance of her daughter towards the father, by giving her non-verbal encouragements during confrontations, as well as by establishing covert rules for the daughter that are unknown to

the father, thus supporting the development of collusive superego splits within the family system.

Support for this observation comes from Luepnitz (1988) who also suggests that the development of secret alliances between a mother and her children in patriarchal families can occur. Again, these kinds of family systems exhibit one set of values and standards that are overtly acknowledged in the presence of the authoritarian father, but which are covertly defied with adherence to another set of values and standards by the mother and the children, all of which develop collusive 'private selves' in relation to the father and what he stands for.

In cross-cultural parent-teen conflict, if the parents have highly value-cathected their tradition, where much of their identity is bound up in their 'cultural self', the relativization of these traditional values and standards is strongly resisted because the resulting ambivalence due to this relativization would strongly disrupt their sense of self-cohesion. This might mobilize in the parents defense mechanisms leading to their foreclosure to change where they cling more intensely to their tradition. These parents may also react to perceived relativization within the cross-cultural context, by becoming more authoritarian and controlling with their children, which many times can result in intensified defiance by the teenager. This can occur in either overt or covert ways, sometimes to the point that the teenager resorts to a "negative identity" formation that is the polar opposite of the parent, in

order to protect both autonomy and the new set of values that the cross-cultural teen has cathected in their experience of the cross-cultural context. The example of Julia, which will be described later, is a clear example of this type of strategy for the maintenance of self-cohesion in this situation.

As mentioned earlier, the adolescent period is not only a trying time for the parents and the family system as a whole, but also for the teen. Relinquishing parents as idealized attachment objects and figures of authority due to relativization, may create intense feelings of grief in the teenager. To cope with the loss of this previously cathected superego-ego ideal structure, adolescents transfer their need for attachment and ideal objects of value from the parents, more and more to idealized peers and cultural symbols outside the family tradition; such as group leaders, sports heroes and movie stars, which function as auxiliary superegos during their restructuring process. Usually, teenagers will take on what I call a 'transitional identity', where they strongly identify with a 'brand name' peer group of some sort. For example, in our present western and local culture, gangs of both criminal and social types occur under such labels, as "Bloods", "Lotus gang", and in less dangerous forms as the "Prepies", "Skaters" or "Rockers". Here, they will begin to wear hairstyles and clothes that are specific to their attachment group, to reaffirm their sense of "oneness" and self-cohesion within the group. From the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, established

patterns for the maintenance of self-cohesion that were consolidated in oedipal and latency periods, and subsequently disrupted by the developmental relativization of the re-emerging separation-individuation process in early adolescence, have been rebalanced by cathection of new values and standards related to groups outside the family system.

According to Tyson (1990), superego restructuring that involves the accommodation-integration of newly cathected values and standards from the peer group with the previously internalized parental ones, usually begins with a regressive personification of the superego. Here, the previously internalized superego-ego ideal functions and content become externalized through projective identification on to an external object of authority. In other words, the self deals with the intrasystemic superego-ego ideal conflict by the defense mechanism of superego splitting, whereby it denies identification with the previously internalized values and standards (horizontal split), and projects the repressed content on to an authority figure. This process allows for the reduction of experienced ambivalence in relation to values and standards and increases the sense of self-cohesion. It also resolves for the youth the internal conflict of loyalties (ie. filial loyalty vs. individuation) with the accompanying feelings of guilt, anxiety, shame and so on, which now are replaced with feelings of self-righteousness in the rejection and defiance of parental values and standards. This mechanism demonstrates that the defiance of

teenagers is not always conscious, but in fact, can be a sign of opportunities for superego-ego ideal restructuring. This is a useful reframe for beleaguered parents.

To clarify the early stages of superego restructuring I will discuss a cross-cultural family that were clients of mine, because it exemplifies so well the psychodynamics of value in early adolescence. Julia, a 14 year old teenager from a Spanish-Catholic background came to my attention after her mother initiated family counselling when she discovered some personal notes from her daughter that alluded to the effect that she was dabbling in satanism, while at the same time, her school performance had taken a turn for the worst. The family history had been a tumultuous one, where the marriage of the mother ended in a bitter divorce because the older daughter had disclosed sexual abuse by the father. Before the breakup, the father had been extremely authoritarian and controlling with the daughters, especially with the one that he was abusing sexually, allowing her little socializing with her peers. Julia had internalized the strict standards of her father (identification with the aggressor), and had been a compliant and model child during the latency period. She had also strongly cathected the Catholic beliefs, values and standards, and up to a few months before entering counselling, would willingly and diligently go to church every Sunday.

However, as Julia's developmental need for separation-individuation from the mother gained momentum she transferred

her self-cohesion needs to her peer group, and began to cathect
their values and standards which were in conflict with her
earlier ones. In her particular case, she felt drawn to a group
that dabbled in satanism partly because it offered her an
opportunity to symbolically assert her differentness from her
mother, who she construed as being as intolerant to drift from
tradition as her father had been. In actuality, the mother had
much more liberal attitudes, but because of a lack of
communication the daughter lacked this awareness. Julia was
probably also drawn to the 'transitional identity' of "Satan
Worshipper", that was the polar opposite of being a Catholic
because her father had sexually abused her sister, even though
he espoused being a devoted Catholic, and, because her best
friend who introduced her to satanism had also been sexually
abused by her Catholic father. Now, she globally perceived all
Catholics as "phony".

In terms of the psychodynamics of value, the extreme
relativization of Julia's values with the accompanying threats
to self-cohesion, created a need for horizontal superego
splitting (repression) that would allow her to deny her
previously internalized traditional values and standards, and
embrace in absolutist fashion the newly cathected ones. And,
through the process of projective identification Julia projected
her now repressed values and standards, extracted in large part
from the father, on to the mother. She now experienced her
mother similarly to the punitive-forbidding father and as a

result, resorted to the development of a "private self" that allowed her to covertly differentiate from her distorted representation of the mother.

Even though Satanism and Catholicism seem polar opposites, they both provided similar functions in the maintenance of Julia's self-cohesion. The Catholic worldview had allowed Julia to bind existential anxiety with the belief that if she chose to follow the Ten Commandments, she would have control over entrance to heaven, the place of ultimate safety for the experiential self. While conversely, Satanism promised immortality through alliance with the evil but all powerful forces.

During one of our family sessions Julia described a nightmare in which she found herself trapped in a huge house, full of darkness and evil apparitions that she was desperately trying to get away from. She could see her mother through barred windows, calling her and stretching her arms out towards her but could not find an exit to the bright outside world. This dream I believe, symbolized to me, that Julia was beginning to relativize her values again, and was now struggling to integrate her split-off superego parts.

At the end of my involvement, Julia had decided to reject Catholicism and stopped going to church, something her mother was prepared to accept. However, she also decided to stop her involvement with her satanic peer group and instead began to worship a more benign God again.

For the cross-cultural teenager who has value-cathected

host culture values and standards, the intrasystemic conflict

within the superego is potentially more acute then in mainstream

adolescents, sometimes manifesting itself in more severe superego

splitting. In some extreme cases the valuing process can become

dichotomized, where what is perceived by the teenager as

positively value-cathected is personified by the peer group,

while the traditional group becomes anti-cathected and becomes

the personification of all that is negative. Some cross-cultural

teenagers even internalize the racist attitudes of the

mainstream culture towards their own ethnic group. For example,

once I had a thirteen year old Indocanadian boy who defiantly

refused to have any social contact with his ethnic group, and had

run away from home several times, in the hope of being placed in

a foster home. He also would pick fist fights with other

Indocanadian schoolmates and call them "diaperheads".

In this case, the strong anti-cathecting of the ethnic group

and their tradition was partly due to the dysfunctionality of

his family system. His father was an unemployed alcoholic who

he perceived as weak and pathetic, thus possibly hindering

identification with the traditional values of the father.

Another important factor that could have contributed to this

extreme reaction was his need for acceptance from peers that he

perceived as rejecting and racist towards his ethnic group.

The teenager's ambivalence towards values and standards may

also result in the formation of vertical superego splits, where

the self shifts (consciously or unconsciously) from valuing and

accepting one set of values and standards, to complete disregard and denial of that set, in favour of another set under different circumstances. For the cross-cultural teenager the vertical superego splitting might involve identification with parental values and standards within the family context, only to be abruptly disregarded and substituted for peer values and standards within the peer group context.

To exemplify vertical superego splitting, I will use here, an example of a nineteen year old single Indocanadian female client that sought counselling with the presenting problem that she was experiencing frequent conflicts with her boss, and, who she perceived as being very critical of her work performance. Her life had recently also become complicated because she was having a secret romantic relationship with an Indocanadian who was committed to an arranged marriage with a woman that was still in India.

The client was still living at home with her parents who she described as traditional but very loving. Her childhood had been a happy one and the parent's marriage, which was arranged by the grandparents, seemed ideal. Her relationship with her parents had always been good, and she had been a model compliant child. She experienced some discrimination in school, but had always felt a sense of belonging and acceptance within her ethnic community.

During the early stages of counselling, in some sessions, the client would express strong commitment and pride towards her ethnic tradition and rationalize the impossibility of her

relationship. In that mode she would express strong filial loyalty and intense feelings of guilt for having betrayed her parents. She was also concerned of shaming herself and the family within the ethnic community. In other sessions she would disclose her wish to marry her present boyfriend, and would rationalize her tradition away, which was being reinforced by some coworkers who were advising her to go with her heart. She also expressed feelings of anger towards her boyfriend for not standing up to his parents and marrying her. On one occasion she also allowed herself to express anger towards her parents for making her feel obligated to follow the traditions.

From the perspective of the psychodynamic model being presented here, the client seemed to have highly value-cathected her tradition including the belief in arranged marriages, possibly in large part because her parents had been such good role models. Also in this case, her invalidating experiences with peers from the host culture might have foreclosed her to some extent from value-cathecting the values and standards from the host culture. In contrast, the sense of validation and belonging she experienced with her peers in the ethnic community probably helped reinforce the tradition of her family system.

But now, the abstract value-cathected belief in arranged marriages was being relativized in the face of the experience-near valuing of her present romantic relationship. However, the value of her romantic experience was also being relativized by

her loyalty bonds towards her parents and her experienced guilt for betraying them. The resulting ambivalent feelings which threatened the client's sense of self-cohesion, due to being pulled in opposite directions, triggered the formation of a vertical superego split. This compartmentalization of her values allowed her to be both, still loyal to her parents and at the same time continue in her relationship.

I also hypothesized that this client was having a transference reaction towards her boss whereby she was to some extent, projecting on to the boss, her feared disapproval from her father. Also, through the projection she was able to displace some of the anger she felt towards her parents on to the boss, a relational context in which she allowed herself to be assertive towards a figure of authority.

During the course of counselling the boyfriend broke off the relationship and for a while, the client reverted back to the traditional mode. However, she gradually shifted back into the realm of value ambiguity but instead of splitting this time, she held together in that uncomfortable state, in the cohesion maintaining structure of the psychotherapeutic context, and began the process of integration. In the course of the process she had some fruitful discussions with her parents, who agreed to respect her choice to have the last say in the choice of a marriage partner, but at the same time, she was committed to strongly consider prospective choices by her parents. Thus, the client became a catalyst in the relativization of her parents

values which also lead to increased integration of ethnic and mainstream values in them.

As can be seen from the above examples, adolescence is indeed a tumultuous time, especially for cross-cultural teenagers where the sense of cohesion is very fragile due to increased, developmental, situational, and systemic-institutional relativization of values that were previously held as absolutes. This conflictual ambivalence may serve to motivate further development and differentiation of superego structure and ego functions, but it almost invariably leads to greater or lesser degrees of superego splitting to manage disintegrative anxiety related to the disruptions of self-cohesion. And, while some splitting might be considered as developmentally advantageous, more severe and persistent splitting can come at a high cost to the self, where such compartmentalization results in regression to an earlier stage of development and/or foreclosure to new growth in the self.

This section has looked at the stage of adolescence in terms of the psychodynamics of value. It has considered the effects of developmental, situational, and systemic-institutional relativization of value that occur in this stage, with particular emphasis on these effects as related to the issue of group membership which intensifies in the adolescent period. The cross-cultural context has also been drawn out in this section, as a situation that graphically highlights this issue of group membership in adolescence. Most centrally, this section has

tried to demonstrate in some detail, the functioning of superego splits in the psychodynamics of value as related to the occurrences of the relativization of values and standards in the adolescent stage of life.

The next section will attempt to look at the stage of adulthood in terms of the psychodynamics of value.

The Adult Stage of Development

As discussed earlier, transition into adulthood may be preceded by a tumultuous adolescent period, where the self feels very fragile in the face of developmental, situational and systemic-institutional relativization of value, especially if those relativized values were central in functioning as core regulators for the maintenance of self-cohesion. This section will attempt to look at the struggles with these types of value relativization in adulthood on three different levels: 1) The individual adult's experience of challenges to his or her self-cohesion from competing value systems in a complex society. 2) The phenomena of 'within group disjunction' where splitting occurs along the lines of values and standards within groups as opposed to individuals. 3) And, a broader dimension where groups are involved, but the values and standards at issue have become visible phenomena at a culturally institutionalized level and take on, in the words of Gergen, the form of "totalizing discourses".

In an ideal world, cultures would provide support systems for adolescents on their way to adulthood that would act to 'cushion' the discomforting states of ambivalence experienced during this process of relativization of value. Such ideal cultural support for the new psychic structure building of adolescence, or any psychosocial transition, would encourage conscious appraisal of previously cathected values and standards, in order to better facilitate psychic integration at new levels. Most importantly, increased conscious cultural support for these psychosocial transitions, in the form of critical reflection on *the process and psychological function of valuing itself, as opposed to overfocusing on the more abstract content of values* would tend to minimize the destructive implementation of regressive defense mechanisms and superego splitting.

In our western culture some privileged individuals have the option of a 'contained moratorium', that is, a time and place where they can compare, experiment with, and reflect on new values and standards, in a fairly safe environment such as a college or university which supports the experiencing of ambivalence, and allows postponement of commitment to the values and standards of any particular adult social role (Marcia, 1980). However, for a large number of individuals in our culture this option is not feasible, where instead individuals are by expectation and circumstance required to make a fairly rapid transition into assuming the responsibilities and values of an adult role before, or, shortly after high school graduation.

Functionally, this may adequately meet basic circumstantial needs related to economy, family systems and individual self-cohesion, but may deprive the person of the opportunity for developing tolerance and experience with ambivalence and consequent disruptions of self-cohesion related to value relativization. From the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, an individual who has not had positive experience with the tolerance of ambivalence related to value relativization will tend to be more prone to regressive superego splitting in adulthood.

As the young adult separates and individuates from the family, she seeks affiliation with new groups to fulfil the need for belonging and merger to something greater then herself which mirrors the beginning adult self, and alleviates existential isolation. This identification with the group functions to give a sense of empowerment, safety, and meaning in life, while helping bind existential anxiety and increase the sense of self-definition and cohesion. However, this need for group membership which functions to support the individuating adult self has a universal price. The price demanded in any cultural context is some sign of the acceptance of the groups beliefs, values and standards, in order to maintain self-cohesion of the individual at some new level of integration, as well as maintain the cohesion of the group itself.

Once again, from the perspective of the psychodynamics of value, the more rigid a group is about adherence to its values and standards, the more it potentially sets an adult up for

superego splitting in order to belong. However, this dynamic of
group rigidity priming the individual for superego splitting
occurs with developmental qualifications. For an adult who has
not adequately developed self-regulating capacities related to
the maintenance of self-cohesion, we can say that generally, they
will have a stronger need to value-cathect in a less critical
way, the value systems of such a group. For example, in working
with clients involved in diverse types of "cults" I have observed
that they tend to have a history of traumatic failure related to
the need for maintenance of self-cohesion. In fact, I have
noticed that the time of entry into such a group is often
correlated with a personal crisis where self-cohesion has been
severely disrupted. Here, there may be observed global superego
splits where alternate and previous value systems are repudiated
wholesale, in favour of the group ideology because of the
psychological functions it provides at the critical time.

On the other hand, the adult who has had "good enough"
experiences related to self-cohesion developmentally, and
therefore is more able to self-regulate challenges to self-
cohesion, will be less motivated to value-cathect in any absolute
way narrow group values. This less developmentally desperate
adult will in effect, have a higher tolerance for ambivalence
related to the potential value relativizations of group
membership, and be more comfortable with the reality of having
'contextualized selves' in a complex society such as ours; with
a greater ability to maintain self-cohesion at functional levels

while integrating perceived differences in group value systems.
For, it is the norm in our complex Western culture that adults
must adapt to increasing group diversity and specialization, and
the different values and standards each can represent. In short,
the healthy adult must be able to integrate to some functional
degree, while maintaining some minimum level of self-cohesion,
these varying value systems, and develop a comfort level with a
repitoire of contextualized selves in order to function with any
social range at all.

From the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, we
may extract a principle from the above related to adult
functioning and group membership: The degree of absolute and
global value-cathection of group values and standards will tend
to covary with the degree of development of self-regulating
capacities for the maintenance of self-cohesion. And, corollary
to this, destructive superego splitting will tend to occur the
more one value-cathects in absolute and global fashion, the
different values and standards of different groups.

Support for this principle related to adult functioning in a
complex society can be found in many different sources. For
example, in most present day cultures, the adult world is
comprised of competing groups such as political, religious,
consumer-financial and so on, that actively seek new members from
the adult population. These groups, through the use of emotional
appeal in various forms such as charismatic personalities and
images implying ideal and absolute self-fulfilment are contrasted

with the less than ideal existential realities of its audience.
This invokes relativization of the audience's values and take
advantage of the experienced ambivalence by offering magical
solutions for fulfilment of basic human drives and needs within
the dimension of group belonging; while common anxieties and
fears are associated with group exclusion and rejection. This,
coupled with a charismatic leader promoting such ideal-types, who
projects self-assuredness and personal power, triggers idealizing
transferences in his audience who may then be more prone to
cathect the values he espouses as necessary for group membership.
Thus, the resulting identification with the leader and his group
helps individuals achieve a sense of identity and self-cohesion.
For those individuals with developmental vulnerabilities around
maintaining self-cohesion, this exposure to competing "cultural
selfobjects" in Kohut's words, can result in limiting over-
identification with the particular images of what is good and
valuable. An extreme negative example of over-identification
with "cultural selfobjects" can be seen in the tragedy of 'Jones
Town', where parents ended up killing their own children and
themselves under the command of their idealized leader. Clearly,
these particular individuals' sense of self-cohesion had become
hostage to an over-valued leader and the abstract system of
beliefs he and the group stood for; and it is extremely painful
to imagine the degree of superego splitting these parents must
have engaged in, in order to participate in the killing of their
children.

As can be seen from the above example, individuals can potentially develop such great dependency on a group and their leader for the maintenance of self-cohesion, that they buy wholesale the 'culture of value' exemplified by the particular group. And, if the group has little tolerance for differentness among its members, it interferes with the development of self-differentiation and individual boundaries which can then lead to member exploitation by unscrupulous leaders.

These claims about the degree of rigidity of adherence to within group values as priming individual members for superego splitting leads to another level of understanding about the mechanism and effects of splitting in a psycho-social context. From the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, the phenomenon of splitting does not only occur within the psychic realm of an individual, but can also be observed to take place within a group at a collective level. Kahn (1991) refers to this process as "group disjunction", and observes the relationship with individual psychic splitting. She writes:

> "Like splitting, disjunction is a mechanism that separates partly organized sets of experiences from the main body of experiences. Intrapsychically and in groups, this may take the form of a "horizontal split", resulting from the repression of unacceptable ideas and feelings from the realm of consciousness into the unconscious; or a "vertical split", which maintains conscious awareness of contradictory ideas and feelings, although not simultaneously... Grotstein (1981) writes that "the ego can split itself off from the perception of an unwanted aspect of itself or can split an object into two or more objects in order to locate polarized immiscible qualities separately"...Repudiated and disavowed ideas and feelings in groups may manifest themselves by the formation of discrete subgroups, which become the containers or the symptoms of the disjunction."

This relationship between individual splitting and group splitting or disjunction, when seen in the context of superego splits is particularly important to the psychodynamics of value. For, from the perspective of the psychodynamics of value, superego splits which occur in individuals, but also occur for a group of individuals along similar lines of values and standards, is a major phenomena of adult life; accounting for a large amount of conflict at this stage of development. Critical to this phenomena is the fact that the maintenance of individual and group cohesion remains tied to splitting within groups, along the lines of *shared* values and standards. Again, a central claim of this thesis is that the extent to which one is aware of how intimately their self-cohesion is related to value, they will be potentially less defensively reactive. For when individual superego splitting is triggered collectively in the process of value relativization on wider cultural levels, resulting in group disjunctions along shared lines of values and standards, with little awareness of this dynamic between self-cohesion and valuing as a fundamental psychosocial process, the stage is set for degrees of violent defense of the values at issue which are often perceived as absolutes. However, this thesis also claims that it is this very awareness of the dynamic relationship between self-cohesion and group values that is most missing in group conflict.

Further support for these claims can be found in Erik Erikson's (1989) recent review of his theory of psychosocial

stages, where he makes reference to the phenomenon of communally

shared defense mechanisms that can:

> "assume an ecological value in the lives of interrelated
> persons and in communal life...are shared or
> counterpointed as they become part of the ritualized
> interplay of individuals, and families as well as of
> larger units."

We can relate Erikson's notion of shared defenses to the

defense of individual and group self-cohesion where he states

that:

> "At the same time, only two or more persons sharing a
> corresponding world image as well as a language can, for
> moments, merge their "I"s into a "we"."

In other words, the original structure of a preoedipal

cohesive self, where the cohesion of the infant is maintained by

the symbiotic quality of its relation to the caretaker as object

of positive value, persists into adulthood in the form of adult

cohesion being maintained through symbolic symbiosis based on

shared views and values. This reality of adult cohesion being

maintained through such symbolic symbiosis of shared meaning and

value systems cannot avoid, in a complex society, multiple

challenges from competing meaning and value systems; or as

Erikson says from competing "sisterhoods and brotherhoods". Most

importantly, for the psychodynamics of value, this inevitably

results to what Erikson refers to as "pseudo-speciation".   That

is:

> "...that split into imaginary species which has provided
> adult rejectivity with a most moralistic rationalization of
> the hate of otherness. Such "speciation" has supported the
> most cruel and reactionary attributes of the superego where
> it was used to reinforce the narrowest tribal
> consciousness, caste exclusiveness, and nationalistic and

racist identity, all of which must now be recognized as endangering the very existence of the whole species in a technological civilization."

What we see in Khan and Erikson is support for the widespread effect on human behaviour, of splitting in relation to values and standards, on individual, group, and cultural levels; which are always interrelated.

This process of pseudo-speciation, which amounts to the differential valuing of people and behaviour, can be seen where groups have cathected highly abstract values and standards, which are far removed from human experience, leading to the development of within-group disjunctions, and the establishment of systemic-institutionalized relativization of values.

For example, twenty years ago when I lived in Mexico girls were told to deny and devalue their sexuality, which was only proper for the purpose of procreating children within a marriage. However, the boys were indoctrinated with "machismo" where manliness was equated with sexual conquests. Even though these men would go to great lengths to preserve the honour of their virginal sisters, they would not hesitate to seduce someone else's sister and slander her name afterwards. Thus, the men in this particular culture exemplified a collective or institutionalized vertical split, where behaviours that were acceptable in one set of circumstances (to seduce a virgin), was not tolerated in other contexts (to have a sister seduced). And, we can say that in relation to this institutionalized split concerning good and bad women, women were differentially

'speciated' according to their sexual behaviour.

That is, in this particular Mexican-Hispanic culture, the female image had been dichotomized into two distinct polar images: a) The asexual-virginal woman that becomes the nurturing, self-sacrificing wife-mother, and, b) The temptress to be outwitted and used. The "machismo" philosophy in my teen years encouraged men to give the "seduction test" to women and find out to which category she belonged. The ones that wanted to be considered "good girls" had to pretend nonarousal in romantic encounters, which then made them desirable as a future wife. While the girls that allowed themselves to be seduced, would be publicly slandered by the "conquistadores" and would become collectively objectified or, 'speciated', as subhuman and lustful beings to be used and abused as sexual objects by others. As can be gathered, the value of sexuality itself was relativized between these two images which had become institutionalized many generations earlier and is still to some degree present today.

Similarly, as in family systems, disjunctions within groups are maintained by collective projections and interlocking projective identifications between subgroups, so that those segments act out affects or attitudes that the group as a whole is unable to acknowledge and integrate. In the above example, the Catholic-Hispanic culture with its highly abstract value system that denied female sexuality, resulted in group disjunction, where a subgroup of women became the recipients of the disavowed female sexuality.

It has already been discussed how some cultures dichotomize many other values along gender lines, such as assertivness and independence being desirable in males, while for females compliance and dependence is the cultural ideal, and how both sexes act out for each other through interlocking projective identifications, the repressed collective horizontal splits in both sexes, that do not allow the expression of basic human drives and needs in both men and women.

Another example of group disjunction can be observed in the Catholic Church, where the symptom of the disjunction was exemplified by Catholic priests who sexually abused children. Some of these priests appeared to have acted in collusive concert, supporting and covering up the abusive behaviour of each other, in effect institutionalizing such abuse in orphanages and Catholic schools. The Catholic culture, with its abstract valuing of asexuality by its members at large and the demand of celibacy by its priests, could not contain experience-near human sexuality. And, as Jung pointed out, when the "shadow complex", defined as potential selves that strive for expression, is denied, it may end up manifesting itself in perverted ways. At the individual level, these priests most likely dealt with the relativization of their sexuality between abstract value and experiential desire, by vertical superego splitting that allowed them to temporarily suspend their Catholic morals and express their otherwise repressed sexuality in perverted ways.

Group disjunction is a phenomenon that can also be readily

observed in the American culture at large, with its various ethnic subgroups, where the "melting pot" ideal has been unsuccessful to a large degree, and instead, the divergent groups have become fragmented from each other. The movie "Jungle Fever" exemplifies this beautifully, where we are given a picture of New York City that is composed of ethnic groups, each of which have followed to a great degree the "separation mode" of cross-cultural encounter to maintain their unique culture, and avoid "contamination" from the others. Again, one could generalize that individuals who follow the "separation mode" are motivated to do so when self-cohesion has become, in the course of development, heavily invested in ethnic specific "cultural selfobjects". Here, the "cultural self" has been rigidly structured around abstract values for maintaining self-cohesion, which in the new cultural context, are held to at the expense of forming a more adaptive contextual self, that is able to tolerate ambivalence and integrate abstract values with new experience-near valuing. In the movie, a black man and an Italian woman fall in love, where the experience-near valuing of their relationship, relativizes their different abstract ethnic values. However, in the end, their relationship was not strong enough on its own to support enough self-cohesion for either to break away from the loyalty bonds to their respective ethnic groups.

Unfortunately, disjunction or splits between ethnic groups are often cemented with the value-cathection of stereotypical representations, which serve as the basis for collective

projections from one ethnic group towards the other. These
collective projections can then be acted out in the many forms of
discrimination where for example, it is felt as an absolute fact,
that members of ethnic groups are indeed 'inferior, dirty,
untrustworthy, and malicious'. And then, if the recipients of
these projections are an ethnic minority who lack social-
political powers of repudiation, they may internalize and act out
these received stereotypical projections as psycho-social
realities. This process may be seen as associated with the most
violent and prolonged types of group conflict.

Gergen (1991) observes that when the social atmosphere of a
group is one of "totalizing discourses", such systems will tend
to:

> "...truncate, oppress, and obliterate alternative forms of
> social life... and set the stage for schism....When
> convinced of the truth or right of a given worldview, a
> culture has only two significant options: totalitarian
> control or the opposition or annihilation of it."

From the point of view of the psychodynamics of value, this
supports the view that when abstract value is relied on for the
maintenance of self-cohesion without awareness of the intimate
connection between individual and group cohesion and cultural
values, the most destructive of effects is potentially possible;
including as Erikson suggested, annihilation of the human race.

These dramatic dynamics at the cultural level are brought
full circle where we remember the observation of Kohut (1985),
which is a central starting point for the psychodynamics of
value, that "fanaticism" in groups can be directly linked to

group values functioning as important "cultural selfobjects" in the regulation of self-cohesion. The self tends to strongly resist relativization of such values which are experienced as an extension of the self, and therefore, when these values are challenged, it is experienced by the self as a personal attack, rejection, and narcissistic injury, that leads to disruption of self-cohesion and consequent defensive feelings of rage and anger towards the challenging object.

The narcissistic rage of group members can be powerfully directed by leaders into the commission of atrocities towards perceived "outsiders" that are viewed as a threat to the group's sense of oneness, safety and cohesion. One only has to turn on the television to see numerous examples of disjunctions within the human race, where collective narcissistic rage which is fuelled by perceived threats to cultural selfobjects results in warring factions. Under the sway of such rage, members objectify the perceived enemy, and cease to feel an empathic link based on their mutual humanity. This is what social psychology refers to as the phenomenon of "social distancing". Such groups, exemplify a collective split in their code of ethics, where members follow one set of values and standards with group insiders, while another set of ethics is applied to perceived "outsiders". This relativization of values in relation to "outsiders" can become institutionalized whose power may persist throughout many generations.

In extreme cases, the group as a whole can regress into a

state of "mob morality" that allows the expression of archaic

sexual and aggressive drives against "outsiders", as for example,

when soldiers in Vietnam committed atrocities such as the rape,

mutilation and killing of innocent Vietnamese children and women.

These soldiers exemplified situationally induced vertical

superego splitting that allowed them to temporarily suspend their

usual morality, and value instead, the gratification of sadistic

drives. Such splitting within each soldier, was not only

triggered by ambivalent feelings towards the "enemy", but such

extreme objectification of the victims was also facilitated by

the recursive dynamic relationships of each individual in

relation to the leader and the involved group as a whole, which

reinforced regressive splitting at the collective level within

this group.

In our complex modern world, where many sociopolitical-

economic structures are in a state of increasing flux, many

individuals are setup to potentially experience an intensified

relativization of their values. As counsellors and therapists

the most frequent and concrete example of value relativization

we are likely to encounter in adult populations are clients

undergoing change in social roles. For example, an increasing

number of adults in our society are having to deal with change in

work roles, due to social-technological change. It is widely

recognized that such role change can be variably stressful as it

demands adaptation to change in many related but different

dimensions of the persons life. From the perspective of the

psychodynamics of value, one of these central dimensions of the
person stressed by role change involves the sense of self-
cohesion as related values and standards are relativized by such
change. In terms of job change this is true to the degree that
the individual has highly value-cathected his work role and
relied on it heavily for self-definition and the maintenance of
self-cohesion. As counsellors, we may be in better position to
help such individuals deal with the stress of change in work
roles if we have an awareness of the psychodynamics of value, and
so are able to help individuals identify and cope with the
ambivalence, and potential superego splitting largely related to
the relativization of self-value, that is at issue in such
change.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to present a model for the
development of the self in relation to values in terms of the
processes and mechanisms involved in the psychodynamics of value.
One central concept here, has been the self's innate tendency to
value-cathect objects relative to their need-fulfilling function,
where perhaps the most basic need is, the maintenance of self-
cohesion. It has also been discussed how the self's value-
cathexis of objects may vary, and that this relativization of
value results in ambivalent tensions, that may be experienced as
feelings of anxiety, rage, guilt, shame, low self-esteem and so

on. The self in an attempt to maintain the threatened self-cohesion as value cathected objects that have come to be associated with it are relativized, moves development of intrapsychic structure in three fundamental directions: a) The differentiation of ego functions; b) The development of superego structure; and c) Defensive splitting of self and objects, including values and standards. The latter will tend to be emphasized, if the ego feels overwhelmed in its attempt to maintain self-cohesion in the face of the task for integration of a new and more complex awareness of the relativized object of value.

This psychodynamic model of value is initiated early on in the preoedipal stage within the dyadic relational context of mother and child leading to self and object constancy, and repeats itself numerous times, in different forms throughout development. Later, nodal points in the relativization of values that were emphasized in this thesis were: a) The oedipal conflict period, where relativization is predominantly triadic involving both parents and which normally culminates in the consolidation of a superego structure; b) Adolescence, where previously value-cathected objects are predominantly relativized by the peer group's values and that ideally should lead to the formation of a stable identity; and c) Adulthood, where modern man's exposure to competing group values has reached dramatic levels that require the development of a repertoire of contextualized selves in order to function with any social range at all, while

maintaining self-cohesion at functional levels during attempts to integrate the perceived varying value systems.

This thesis also distinguished three different generic forms of value relativization: a) Developmental, where established values are relativized within the context of developmental pressures; b) Situational, where awareness of value relativization is brought about by situations; and, c) Systemic-institutionalized, where relativization of value has been carried over from historic situations in the form of stated or unstated double standards, that is, collective splits or group disjunctions.

As counsellors, we can help clients deal with value relativizations by facilitating critical reflection on the process and psychological function of valuing itself, rather then focusing on the more abstract content of values. And, by providing a safe therapeutic relational context, that helps sustain functional levels of self-cohesion in the face of value ambiguity. This will enable the client to be better able to avoid the costs of regressive splitting, and instead, facilitate more efficient integration and differentiation.

CHAPTER FOUR

AREAS OF APPLICATION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The relevance of a psychodynamic model of value rests on the
assumption that the self has the innate tendency to attach an
emotionally charged value to its interaction with objects, and
that such "value-signs" can perform psychological functions, and
become in themselves, powerful motivators in subsequent
encounters with people and situations. The model is
psychodynamic because the self is conceived of as a conflicted
entity that must continually seek compromises between opposing
intrapsychic tensions. This thesis proposes the relativization
of value as a major, developmentally continuous, and therefore
inescapable source of intrapsychic tension; which can be resolved
both constructively and destructively throughout life. This
psychodynamic model of value particularly calls for the insights
of psychoanalytic developmental and depth psychology, into the
structuralization of psychological functioning involving value,
to be applied to conflicts between values and standards
generally. The view of this thesis is that the psychological act
of attachment to value, or, value-cathection, always performs
multiple functions; biological, psychological, aesthetic, social,
political; and so on, but that most attempts at the resolution of
value conflicts only focus on superficial content, as opposed to
the deeper function of the values at issue, in the psychic

economies of the individuals involved. Thus, this thesis has attempted to formulate a transcultural psychodynamic model of value, the constructs of which are hoped to be found useful in the understanding and prediction of human behaviour related to conflicts between values and standards.

This model does not claim to be absolute and final, but instead, should be considered open to change in the light of new clinical observations that point to revisions of this model. Rice and Greenberg (1984), refer to this cyclic process as the "discovery oriented approach", where tentative theories are tested against observations which in turn "fine tune" the models.

The proposed psychodynamic model of value may also be tested empirically to establish its construct validity. For instance, the most general inference from this model would be that individuals in a situation creating ambivalence towards core values will have significantly higher scores on an anxiety scale than a group that is not in a situation creating ambivalence towards core values. This could be taken as an operationalized measure of the disruption of the psychological function of self-cohesion maintenance by core values. Such a naturally occurring situation may be the crosscultural context, where by definition, core values of intersecting cultural groups are open to relativization and therefore, the subsequent experiencing of ambivalence towards them. A specific case within this naturalistically occurring research context, for the testing of

hypotheses about the psychodynamics of value, might involve that
of the crosscultural teenager in the process of identity
formation. The psychodynamic model of value would predict that in
general, crosscultural teenagers would score significantly higher
in ambivalence towards values when compared to their mainstream
counterparts. It would also predict a positive correlation
between scores of ambivalence towards values and scores on
anxiety. One could further hypothesize that for certain ethnic
groups, where filial loyalty is high, ambivalence towards ethnic
values may also correlate with high scores on a guilt scale.

Such empirical research may also help us design programs and
services that reflect the specific needs of our various ethnic
communities, which may potentially help prevent tragic symptoms
of crosscultural stress such as suicidal ideation and attempts,
clinical depressions and psychosomatic disorders in crosscultural
clients.

One potential area of application of this model is in the
educational-preventative field. Educating individuals about
valuing processes, and helping them develop skills that
facilitate critical evaluation and selection of competing values,
may help in dealing with inevitable conflicts between values and
standards with less dysfunctional effect. Such education, for
instance, could be made part of our school curriculum, where
students are educated about the function of values in psycho-
social economies, as opposed to being solely focused on the
content of values. This may promote the ability to examine

values, implicit and explicit, and help develop the capacity to make less conflicted value choices based on this 'functional' knowledge of the psychodynamics of value, as distinct from knowledge about the specific content of values. This use of an understanding of the psychodynamics of value may have applicability to all levels of developmental and social conflict, where confusion between function and content is, in the view of this thesis, often an unrecognized basis for values conflict. For example, conflict between ethnic groups might be minimized by exploring with students commonalities in transcultural drives and needs, and the similar functions that different values play in the psychic economies of such divergent groups. Such a learning environment might facilitate the formation of empathic links and increased tolerance for the culturally different, and aid in the development of relational ethics that have a higher degree of acceptability and integrative power for all parties involved.

Another potential area of application of this model is in the education of parents on the types of relativization of value that their children will experience, and the various stages of development at which they might most typically experience developmental, situational, and systemic-instituitonal heightening of ambivalence around value-cathections. This developmental knowledge of value may then serve as the basis for making better choices in childrearing practices that are conducive to helping children develop adaptive and stage appropriate ego functions and superego structures, and minimize

defensive superego splitting.

The presented psychodynamic model of value suggests that a child's development of an internal "moral agency" may be affected adversely if the father and mother differ greatly in their values related to childrearing practices. Such a child, if motivated to please both parents, will most likely develop a superego structure that exhibits vertical splitting, and then, the presence of different external authorities may serve as cues for acting-out different values in different contexts; a pattern of superego splitting that may persist into adulthood. In other words, this kind of a familial context may hinder the child's development of a consistent and integrated internal moral agency that can function in the absence of an external authority. High risk groups would include children of cross-cultural marriages and of divorced parents.

In the preventative field, prenatal education could emphasize the importance of parents practicing discussions where they attempt to come to a consensus in relation to their childrearing practices. This does not mean that parents have to share exactly the same values. What is important is that their future child will perceive them, for the most part, as supportive of each other's value as parents, while modelling a dialogical process that acknowledges distinctions between clarification of value-content and clarification of value-function, as a move towards establishing a psycho-social ambiance which may help prevent undue ambivalence and defensiveness in the face if

inevitable value relativization. This kind of a familial context would facilitate identification with the parents and the internalization not only of their specific values and standards that will become operative in the superego of the child; but also, would support internalization of a functional part of the child's ego-superego structure with the ability regulate intrasystemic conflicts *within the superego itself.*

For parents that are divorcing, services that may help them to clarify the content and functions of values in relation to continued, but separate parenting of their children might be a useful adjunct to the divorce process. Such preventative measures could minimize the conflict of loyalties and the setting up of double standards in children of divorced parents, and therefore, provide a conducive environment for the continuing development of an integrated superego structure without excessive superego splitting occurring.

As mentioned in chapter three, this model suggests that value is differentially attached to stereotyped sex roles, and that research on this area may be facilitated with an understanding of the psychodynamics of value involved. Where the mother is the primary caretaker of young children there are differences between male and female children in their experience of the relativization of the value the mother, in the separation-individuation process, that may have implications for the development of both sexes throughout the lifecycle. The oedipal stage for example, demands of boys that they renunciate their

early identification with the mother in a more abrupt and
discontinuous way than girls, and identify with the father or
some other culturally valued male image. For the male this
amounts to a greater degree of relativization of established
value for the primary object of attachment, and not only
increases the possibility of superego splitting for boys during
the oedipal resolution, but also, according to Chodorow
(Luepnitz,1988), predisposes males to experience intimacy
differently from women. This, in fact, may be an early basis for
misunderstanding between the sexes which is only beginning to be
researched. This thesis suggests that the constructs presented
in the model of the psychodynamics of value may be applicable to
the furthering of such research.

Related to using the constructs of the psychodynamics of
value to research the developmental structuralization of gender
identity differences is the area of research into different
childrearing practices, which may help perpetuate stereotyped sex
roles that limit the options for both sexes. While it was
suggested above that it would be useful to look at parental
'consensus' on childrearing practices, in this context one might
approach the establishment of a bifurcated culture along gender
lines, through an understanding of the psychodynamics of value
involved in 'different' childrearing practices themselves, which
serve to maintain and transmit gender differences in values and
standards. When such gender differences are established as a
cultural context, the expression of basic needs and drives in

both sexes can be subject to patterns of denial and distortion.

For example, men may be unable to express dependency needs and

women may be discouraged from being assertive as a result of

specific childrearing practices. These childrearing practices

then can be seen as amounting to the cultural imposition of

patterns of repression of basic drives and needs, which then may

create the conditions for various kinds of superego splitting and

projective processes in both sexes. It follows from this

discussion that one way to minimize intrasystemic superego

conflict that can lead to dysfunctional splitting, would be the

implementation of childrearing practices that avoid sex-role

stereotyping and encourage both males and females to share the

task of caring for their young. This would potentially allow for

less conflicted cross-gender identifications and would also

create an environment that minimizes the differences in early

relational experiences for both males and females, resulting in

the development of more similar modes of, and pathways to

intimacy. In terms of research questions then, this study

suggests that the whole area of childrearing practices and their

differential effects could be fruitfully viewed through the

additional lens of the psychodynamics of value. Childrearing

would be looked at from this perspective, in terms of the

function of the value attached to different gender roles in

maintaining the psycho-social cohesion of individuals and groups,

in order to better understand patterns of gender development and

transmission, as well as change and resistance to change in

gender roles.

The model presented here also points to preventative measures in the parenting of teenagers that may facilitate integration of value relativization which is greatly intensified during the adolescent period. For instance, it might be useful for parents to know of the set of common developmental relativizations which can take place during this period; such as the likelihood of value-decathection of parents as idealized love objects, and rejection of their values in exchange for increased cathection of peer relationships and values. This knowledge may help minimize feelings of rejection in the parents and allow them to see the ambivalence towards established value as a signal, rather than a threat, for the need of adjustment in their parenting skills around their teenager's developmental need for separation-individuation. And, at this stage, parents should avoid the demand for absolute acceptance and adherence to familial values; and instead encourage discussion of competing values and allow some room for experimentation with them. This more flexible attitude towards values by parents avoids creating severe loyalty conflicts in the teenager, and minimizes implementation of defense mechanisms such as superego splitting that could manifest itself in the form of a global rejection of parental values or inconsistent superego functioning.

Another potential area of application of the model presented here is in the mediation field. Conflict resolution might be facilitated by the mediator focusing the adversarial parties on

the common drives, needs, and intrapsychic functions related to
those values; in addition to merely dealing with values content
and differences. This involves identification of implicit values
that are held as absolutes by the various parties which are
hindering conflict resolution. The mediator would have the task
of facilitating relativization of such values so that an
integration of differences can be worked through; since none is
possible with the absolutization of value.

The proposed psychodynamic model of value might be generally
useful in the clinical process with any individual, marital,
family or group issue. This is because conflicts between values
and standards, either intrapsychically and/or in the
interpersonal realm is universal. Clients as a matter of course,
come into therapy because they are experiencing difficulty in
coping with the need to restructure their sense of value for
something either concrete, abstract, or both, due to the
relativization of established value, be it through loss or
development. Whether it is due to a broken marriage, an illness,
death of a loved one, challenged ideals, changes in social role
or culture; we are all continuously faced with the demand to
restructure our attachment to value. Therefore, knowledge of the
psychodynamics of value may have universal applicability to all
therapies at some point in their process.

More specifically, the universality of the need to
restructure attachment to value may imply a therapeutic technique
involving the fostering of adaptive superego splitting in

clients. For example, clients commonly seek therapy in order to deal with behaviours which were once valued, but which have become highly ambivalent; as in the case of addictions and other habits that are now interfering with their goals in life. Thus, this model implies that therapeutic change also requires helping the client to engage in superego splitting, which would facilitate the restructuring of dysfunctional defensive compromise formations into more adaptive forms. This would involve increasing the client's experience of ambivalence towards a valued behaviour or object, which they have unconsciously over valued because of defensive functions it performs in maintaining self-cohesion. This may apply in dysfunctional relationships, addictions, fetishes, and so on.

The psychodynamics of value implies that one of the initial tasks of therapy is to create a safe and nurturing therapeutic relationship that will help support any disrupted sense of self-cohesion in the client. This may be best achieved by using a person-centred approach which is characterized by the counsellor presenting herself as respectful, empathic and validating towards the client. This atmosphere in the therapeutic context maximizes the chances of the therapeutic relationship becoming positively value-cathected by the client and in the process, becomes a powerful motivator for working towards desired change. The 'safety net' created by the therapeutic relationship will also aid in allowing the client to tolerate the ambivalence related to the relativization of values, which is the central client

condition necessary for more functional integration of values and standards.

This model points in the direction of specific questions that might be useful to explore with clients such as; a) What are some of the implicit and explicit values involved in the intrapsychic and interpersonal conflicts that the client is experiencing?; b) What levels of awareness are operating within the client in relation to those values?; c) How are these values related to the client's sense of self-cohesion?; d) What functions of the self do these values help to regulate?; f) How does the client experience threats to self-cohesion (eg.anxiety, guilt, rage, shame) when identified values that serve as regulators of self-cohesion become relativized?; g) At what internal point does the client deal negatively with ambivalence towards competing values?; h) What are the client's self-capacities for self-cohesion regulation?; i) What are the client's patterns of defensive superego splitting due to value conflicts?; j) How are these splits acted out and under what circumstances?; k) How is the client integrated in terms of the balance between abstract and experiential value?; l) How much resistance is present in the absolutization of values that keeps them attached to dysfunctional behaviour?

Questions of this nature help the counsellor develop a framework for processing the client's behaviours in terms of the psychodynamics of value; which identifies underlying values and their functioning in the psychic economy. This probing process

in conjunction with assignments such as genograms that identify

family values, can all add to valuable information that can be

used for the formulation of therapeutic interventions that might

aid in the client's development of superego structure and

differentiation of ego functions that allow for integration of

the conflicting values.

Analysis of transference reactions can also give useful

information about the client's unconscious value conflicts, since

this model predicts possible externalization of the unconscious

split-off values through projection on to the therapist. For

example, a teenager that has through the defense mechanism of

superego splitting repressed and disavowed parental values, might

in the transference reaction project those split-off values on to

the therapist and perceive her as an authority figure similar to

the parents. Making clients aware of the transference reactions

and giving them insight into motivating factors that lead to the

establishment of his or her particular defensive compromise

formation for dealing with value conflicts can all be valuable

steps for the process of adaptive intrapsychic restructuring.

Most importantly, it is from observations within the clinical

setting, of the psychodynamics of value related to processes such

as the tranference, that a typology of superego splits may be

begun to be identified. This, in itself may be a significant

direction for research.

Once the client has gained some awareness and insight into

his or her individual psychodynamics of value, the next task

becomes helping the client find their own integration of value at a new functional level. This can be achieved in a variety of ways, that can include the use of Gestalt techniques such as 'role-playing' and 'two-chair' where the client is asked to have a dialogue with his or her unintegrated superego parts. Psychodrama may also be adapted in a similar fashion, in order to externalize and help the process of clarification of the function of values in the individual's life.

As this thesis points out, resolution of conflicting values and standards involves the development of ego functions and superego restructuring. When this metamorphosis is facilitated by therapy the process will invariably be affected by the 'cultural' context of the therapeutic relationship where the values of the therapist, whether explicit or implicit play an important role in the shaping of the client's intrapsychic structure. As MacKinnon and Miller point out:

> "Whatever stance the therapist takes, even the stance of avoiding taking a stance, reflects a political position within the larger system, regardless of the therapists intentions. Relationships cannot remain neutral, nor therapists apolitical in such contexts. (1987)"

Since it is impossible to leave the therapist's values out of the therapeutic process, it is important for professionals to work on their own awareness and understanding of their ethical dimension to minimize countertransference reactions to value with their clients. In particular, therapists should have developed a 'comfort zone' where their self-cohesion does not feel threatened

with relativizations of their own values in the therapeutic

encounter. If the therapist lacks these qualities, there is the

danger of collusive therapeutic relationship formation that is

not conducive to adaptive therapeutic change. For example, it is

a well known fact that frequently clients develop idealizing

transferences towards their therapists. This is especially true

of clients that lack a cohesive ego ideal structure and thus look

to an external authority for direction. Such individuals may

perceive their therapist as encompassing all that is 'good, wise

and powerful', and see them as the direction giver of the 'road

to salvation'. Identification with the therapist is usually

global where clients 'buy wholesale', the values perceived in the

therapist. If a therapist has little tolerance for value

relativization because it threatens his or her sense of self-

cohesion, he or she may actually reinforce the global

identification process, cementing a 'clone' version of themselves

in the client, and bypass the processing of superego splits and

other intrasystemic conflicts.

Although it is impossible for the therapist to be value-

free, it is necessary for her to have a certain degree of openess

towards the relativity of values. This is especially true in the

cross-cultural therapeutic encounter where it also essential that

the therapist have a general knowledge of the client's cultural

patterns in order to avoid misdiagnosis. For instance, a western

therapist who values individualism might misdiagnose a client

from a culture that values interdependence to a greater degree as

'having poor personal boundaries'; or being 'enmeshed with significant others'. As theorists of human behaviour we have a responsibility to increase our awareness of the underlying values of our theories and recognize the fact that those constructs might not necessarily apply to individuals from differing cultures.

This in fact, may be where the potential power of the model of the psychodynamics of value presented here lies. For, this study attempts to provide a step in the direction towards a generic description of the functioning of value in the psychic economy of individuals, groups, and therapists, at a transcultural level. In other words, this study has valued pursuing the answer to a central question: What is the correct and functional relationship between the universal and the relative in the dimension of human value?

Adaptation for survival may depend on the answer to such questions, where effective integration of competing value systems within the human race as a whole may be becoming more of a necessity.

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