Superego and Will to Dominate Over Ego: A Synthetic Approach to Ideology Through Encapsulated Skin-Ego

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Abstract

The study of superego and ideology within the context of bodily ego and skin as a psychic wrapping is vital to understanding the intersubjective aspects of those individuals who are living in a mal-attuned or extreme situation. This paper investigates superego's will to dominate over the skin-ego to satisfy the id by itself and takes an intermediate position between id and external reality. The authors further attempt is to conceptualize superego formation in a skin model of ego development in a synthetic way and redefine ideology within the context of this conceptualization. The term *Encapsulated Skin-Ego* may explain how when the skin-ego is dysfunctional, a certain part of superego comes into being a psychic wrapping instead of the skin-ego and has left its developmental position. Consequently, the skin-ego takes refuge in the encapsulated skin-ego to be secure. In addition, ideology has a hegemonic character and wishes to control social symbols to continue its domination over people's minds and bodies. Ideology tries to encapsulate the skin-ego and deprive it of natural sensations to lead it to an isolated corner ultimately to suppress the thinking ego. Two-case studies present the psychoanalytic application of the authors' ideas.

> We have still very much to learn about the nature of that institution [the superego].
> S. Freud, 1927/1961e, p. 159

Introduction

Seeing the mind on the mirror of the Freudian structural model has occupied the psychoanalysts' brain beyond Sigmund Freud (1915/1961i, 1920/1961b, 1923/1961c, 1933/1961g, 1938/1961h). Within this context, an ongoing debate has occurred over the origin of superego and especially in the case of ego-ideal and superego formation (Britton, 2003; Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1984; Fenichel, 1928, 1931; S. Freud, 1927/1946; Jacobson, 1946; Kernberg, 1975; Klein, 1927/1975b, 1932/1975e, 1933/1975c, 1935/1975a; Lacan, 1994; Sandler, 1960). The debate has mainly shown how the genesis of superego has increasingly captured the interest of psychoanalytic community.

According to Lagache (as cited in Anzieu, 1987a, p. 423), Freud interchangeably used superego, ego ideal, and ideal ego to represent the superego. As a comparison between ego-ideal and ideal ego, Britton (2003) declared that the ideal-ego is an

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"illusional perfect self" (p. 105), while ego-ideal depends on what superego wants the child to be. In addition, Lagache (as cited in Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973) comprehended the ideal ego in the context of narcissistic formulation and omnipotence, and identification with praiseworthy figures; further, Chasseguet-Smirgel (1984) viewed ego-ideal as a tendency toward reinstating illusion while the (benign) superego helps encourage reality (p. 76).

Investigating superego formation depends on the level of experiencing in the unconscious chosen by researchers. According to Hinshelwood (1997), three levels or layers are evident in the interpretation of the unconscious. The first layer interprets the level of repression and symbolization by considering Oedipal rivalry, for example, like Freud and classical psychoanalysis. The second layer understands the unconscious through pre-oedipal object-relations and in terms of primitive defense mechanisms such as Kleinian psychoanalysis. Finally, the third layer of understanding the unconscious is primal skin, which considers the skin as an apparatus of containment as explained, for example, by Bick (1964, 1968), Montagu (1978), and Anzieu (1979, 1984, 1990, 1995/2016).

This paper selected the third layer of experiencing and understanding of the unconscious and called it the *Skin Model of Ego Development* (SMED) in psychoanalysis, which is the cornerstone of the study of this topic. This system of psychoanalytic thinking involves three characteristics. First, the origin of SMED goes back to Freud's concept of bodily ego (S. Freud, 1923/1961c); therefore, for this model, the self is a "pre-individual psychic whole" (Anzieu, 1979, p. 23) and existed before the ego, which constructs through defining boundaries and limits later. Second, the SMED's findings are based on observation of the infant-mother relationship (Bick, 1968). Finally, SMED focuses on the non-defensive functions of skin as a primary ego (Anzieu, 1987b). This way of beholding the skin gives an opportunity to the self to feel the sense of unity through the skin as a psychic envelope (Anzieu, 1995/2016). In this topographical model of the mind, the skin is a psychic container and "in fact found to be in front of the psychic apparatus as a filter, as a screen, as an interfacing between external reality and internal reality" (Anzieu & Anzieu, 1985, p. 43). As a result, the skin provides integration and characterizes SMED as a non-dualistic approach that operates within the context of intersubjectivity (Lafrance, 2013).

The term *ideology* has multiple meanings in different disciplines, but in this paper, ideology is viewed through the lens of superego, ideal-ego, and ego-ideal formation. Moreover, ideology is considered a distorting illusion and "camera obscura" (Marx, 1845/1998, p. 47) that tries to deceive and seduce people to join a certain ideological system (Kølvraa & Ifversen, 2017). Ideology gains control over the body/skin because the soma is the home of the psyche and subjectivity (Anzieu, 1995/2016). Consequently, ego strength can be perceived in the context of the boundaries of the body and its envelope, skin, which symbolizes social boundaries (Douglas, 1966), resulting in a mutual relationship between bodily ego and society. According to Broughton and Zahaykevich (1988), "the power and significance of ideology reside in its ability to penetrate silently into every aspect of human development" (p. 196). The nature of ideology is to serve as a defensive fortress that can reduce anxiety by producing handmade idols and a shared system of ideas (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1984). Indeed, ideology supplies a sharing space for transferring the omnipotent power to its

believers because "behind the ideology there is always a phantasy of narcissistic assumption" (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1985, p. 49).

Psychoanalysis as a critique of ideology (Barratt, 1985) and oppressive-fundamentalist discourses try to reveal a route from the primary to the secondary process thinking: from magical thinking to realistic thought (Loewald, 1962/1980c, 1978/1980b). In contrast, ideologic-oppressive systems attempt to disturb this process to govern the person's mind through invisible cultural controls thereby producing confusion of the symbolic formation and generating an ideologic discourse in service of producing oppressed objects without independent thought or a harmonious identity. Additionally, ideological systems apply suggestion and brainwashing methods to gain control over minds in order to recreate a mythical ancient past and its idols (Britton, 2002; Kernberg, 2003a, 2003b).

The reader will realize how the authors will see classical terminology through a contemporary lens. This implies that what someone sees in the structural model's mirror could not be a perception of contemporary human beings but only reflects them. Concerning this matter, for example, Britton (2003, p. 93) asserted that how Melanie Klein "was happier using the term the unconscious than the id". Additionally, Klein applied the term self to refer to the entirety of the individual and considered ego as a part of self that calls these days subjective self.

From a psycho-socio-political point of view, this paper views ideological systems as the generator of extreme limitation to normal ego development (Broughton & Zahaykevich, 1988) in order to pose a danger to ego independence (A. Freud, 1937/1993). The limited milieu refers to the importance of sociopolitical context in a historical background where the individual sometimes lives in an extreme situation (Bettelheim, 1967) such as prison, war, and asylum.

Upon reflection on superego formation within the context of SMED, this paper follows three essential theoretical lines: First, considering superego functioning within the context of domination and affect-regulation. Second, looking the superego through the SMED lens with a special emphasis on dysfunctional skin-ego and how superego can be re-understood within the framework of skin-ego and thinking ego (Anzieu, 1995/2016). Finally, redefining ideology with the help of a new formulation of the relationship between superego, skin-ego and thinking ego.

The Importance of the Paper and Method

Sigmund Freud (1923/1961c) believed "the ego is first and foremost a bodily ego" (p. 27), one which shows the primary process of thought. This means bodily sensations are important in forming the primary ego, and some key psychoanalysts thought about the SMED. Bick (1964, 1968) and Anzieu (1979, 1984, 1990, 1995/2016) developed their theories based on the Freudian term *bodily ego*. Anzieu (1979) recognized Winnicott (1945/1958) among those who supported the SMED because Winnicott accentuated "the visual signals" (p. 23) in reference to Winnicott's (1971) quotation, "When I look I am seen, so I exist" (p. 114). Winnicott (1955) promoted "living in the body" (p. 264) and asserted that without a sense of embodiment, no sense of otherness is possible (Winnicott, 1963/1965a, 1971).

The concept of skin as a subjective boundary refers to the soma as a home for psyche (Winnicott, 1962/1965b). Good enough handling of the body and its needs facilitates developmental shifting from skin-ego to thinking ego in terms of personalization (Winnicott, 1962/1965b) and individualization (Anzieu, 1995/2016). Synthesizing Winnicott's and Anzieu's notions indicates that individuation (personalization) depends on a "tactile envelope, which is also an envelope of warmth, softness, and firm holding" (Anzieu, 1990, p. 65). Within this context, depersonalization is the outcome of a split between the psyche and soma, and it rises because of non-good-handling (Anzieu, 1990, 1995/2016; Winnicott, 1962/1965b). There is a strong tendency for psychoanalysts to formulate an intermediate position that protects the self from mental pain, trauma and extreme situation. During depersonalization, the second skin operates following extreme frustration and tries to protect the individual through the second skin's omnipotent phantasies and overusing some mental functions (Bick, 1968). Furthermore, Winnicott described transitional space "as the resting place of illusion" (in Rodman, 1987, p.123) and Rosenfeld (1950) considered confusion as intermediate stage between splitting and reintegration. Additionally, Freud (1938/1961h) suggested that the superego locates itself at a strategic position between the id and the external world to become an intermediate function. This fact draws authors' attention to the role of superego as an intermediate agency which functions developmentally and pathologically.

Following Atwood and Stolorow (1993) that emphasized on context as a generator of our hermeneutics, it is necessary to describe a little bit about the first author's contextuality that as a clinical psychologist had an analysis with a Post-Kohutian analyst and as a psychoanalysis candidate is in a Freudian psychoanalysis. Both valuable experiences have encouraged him to build up his identity as a contemporary Freudian within the matrix of SMED through his Ph.D. dissertation under supervision of the second author. Thereupon, for authors, the outcome of depersonalization is the disturbance of the developmental line from skin-ego to thinking ego; thus, the dysfunctional skin-ego opens a space for an imaginary skin to occupy the key position instead of skin-ego to wrap the psyche, even transitionally. In other words, when the skin-ego does not function as an envelope it seeks another skin shelter or refuge as a halfway home. After searching psychological-psychoanalytical databases such as PsycINFO, PEP, Google Scholar, Science Direct and Humanities Source, the psychoanalytical study on a synthetic approach to superego formation, skin-ego and ideology with a focus on SMED has not been able to catch a significant attention.

The paper plans to conceptualize this imaginary and defensive skin in order to understand the superego's will to dominate over the skin-ego. Within this context, ideology will define into the matrix of SMED. For this purpose, the paper uses a qualitative method to shift from convergent thinking to divergent thinking through a fresh pair of eyes. It wishes to refer the gap in literature review and consequently re-understanding the literature through two-case studies the first is based on a deep interview and its qualitative analysis, and the second is discussing a refugee experiences with the help of his written works, textual analysis.

Towards a Synthetic Conceptualization of Skin-Ego

To find common ground in the presence of the tower of Babel in the psychoanalytic discourse, Anzieu (1990) asserted that "…(it) is implicit in Freud: "the unconscious is

the body" (p. 43), accordingly, gathered id, body and unconscious in one place in harmonic way. The body-unconscious as a corporeal foundation cannot meet the external reality by itself and bodily ego as a forerunner faces reality at the surface or skin, like a tree trunk that develops from a pitch to bark and its bark is a shield against external stimuli. This bodily ego for growing and developing the thinking ego, subjective self, needs to attunement and containment within a relational atmosphere. In this sense, the self cannot find itself directly but needs to perceive itself with the help of some representations such as ideals and defense mechanisms and, resultantly, "The self arises as separate structure out of the relation between ego and superego, just as the superego arises out of the ego's relation to the world" (Havens, 1986, p. 370).

The superego is rooted in its biological origins and involves "acoustic roots" (Freud, 1923/1961c), such as parental rules, while ego is formed on its tactual experiences (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 105). The ego envelops the psyche, and the two egos are the skin-ego and thinking ego (Anzieu, 1995/2016). Anzieu defined *skin-ego* as a first bodily-psychological organ that is in contact with the surrounding environment. Anzieu (1995/2016) listed the following eight non-defensive functions of the skin ego: (a) maintenance or holding (b) containment, (c) protection, (d) individuation (e) inter-sensoriality, (f) sexualization (g) libidinal recharging, and (h) inscription. Most important to the current revision of the present investigation is Anzieu's formulation of an auto-immune activity as a ninth function for the skin-ego called "attacks against the skin-ego" (p. 114) or "the attacks on the psychical container" (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 14). This function follows a self-destructive manner and wishes to remove the self and sets up a state of "non-self" (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 115) in a pure thanatic way and in the opposite direction to the attachment drive (Unlink, 2008).

Specifically, the skin-ego is a primary structure that will later be replaced by the thinking ego. After this replacement, the ego can think symbolically through two elements: (a) desire and (b) language. Besides, the thinking ego is close to the secondary process of thinking and operates symbolically in close relationship with language and consciousness (Anzieu, 1989, 195/2016). As a result, the basic assumption of Anzieu's theory is clear: Without sensations, perception cannot exist. That having been said, thinking ego cannot be created without a normal development of skin-ego, "not touching is like not thinking" (Ulnik, 2008, p. 32), because the intersubjectivity depends upon recognizing an individual's feelings, thoughts, and wills through the caregivers (Fonagy et al., 1995; Ogden, 1994). Deprivation of the ego of its tactual experiences results in a dysfunctional state of skin-ego.

Anzieu. (1995/20160 explained how "archaic sadistic Superego" (p. 184) is activated from the initial development of language and begins to show itself in the position of the regulator of cognition and behavior. In other words, the superego has language structure and children learn it not only through words, but also rules related to acquisition of speech. (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 105). Further, superego can operate in two levels of functioning—benign and malignant, and utilizing only the superego cannot reflect the destructive and pathological aspect of the superego. It is necessary to say that the nature of (benign) superego suggests the "primary taboo on touching replaces the tactile wrapping as the essential anaclitic support for the Ego" (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 105). Additionally, the abnormal superego disturbs the process of affect-cognition regulation and, consequently, the development of the symbolic

formation and language, and deviates the shifting from skin-ego to thinking ego. Superego, then, resulting from constructive identification can regulate affect effectively, but when it is the outcome of defective identification with mal-attuned parents, the superego cannot regulate the self and its affect (Krystal, 1988). In this sense, abnormal superego is anti-object-relational and originating from earliest dissociations and separated from ego functions (O'Shaughnessy, 1999).

The question is then raised: How can the dysfunctional skin-ego disturb the function of the thinking ego in the presence of superego's will to dominant? The answer comes back to the nature of superego formation and the SMED. In line with superego's domination, Anna Freud (1937/1993) showed how the ego could be overwhelmed in dealing with id's manifestation and found refuge in the superego. Subsequently, the ego under pressure of anxiety opens its gate to the superego's troops and loses its independence "and [the ego] is reduced to the status of an instrument for the execution of the superego's wishes" (pp. 111–112). Moreover, Lacan (1988) helped to understand the role of the superego by noting that the superego wishes to govern the ego and to satisfy the id by itself. Further, in terms of the domineering nature of the superego, Anzieu (1995/2016) decided the id, ego, and superego are competing for superiority on the surface to be a psychic wrapping, and even the id tends "to offer itself too as a total wrapping" (p. 92). Considering this rivalry as a will to power, the failure of the skin-ego to provide a wrapping for the psyche ends in the sense of the discontinuity of the self (i.e., anxiety).

In addition, within the context of SMED, it is important to clarify the differentiation between primal skin and second skin. Bick (1968) explained how the inadequate containing object pushes the infant to generate omnipotent phantasies to hold himself by another skin called second skin:

> Disturbance of the primal skin function can lead to the development of a "second-skin" formation through which dependence on the object is replaced by a pseudo-independence, by the inappropriate use of certain mental functions, or perhaps innate talents, for the purpose of creating a substitute for this skin container. (p. 484)

According to Bick (1968), there is a need for a containing object in case of experiencing the unintegrated state by the infant and it generates "a frantic search for an object" (p. 485). The authors think that this frantic search for the containing object in overwhelming states of mind opens the way for a defensive skin to provide continuity through projecting the entire of self into a capsule object. This capsule assumes that replaces itself as a protective skin/object and is related to abnormal superego. Anzieu (1995/2016) believes that the superego wishes to be dominant over the ego: "Superego tends to make itself coextensive with the whole surface of the Ego and to substitute itself for the latter as a psychical wrapping" (p. 92). Following Bick and Anzieu, the current investigation contends that the current conceptualization of the second skin in the matrix of the skin model of ego is confusing and misleading

because of its overlap with abnormal superego and dysfunctional skin-ego. The present paper recognizes that abnormal superego has desire to dominate over skin-ego to protect the individual from "transitory states of unintegration" (Bick, 1968, p.136) through building a psychic protective capsule against hurtful reality. The authors apply a new term, *encapsulated-skin-ego* to explain an isolative aspect of dysfunctional skin-ego that is separated, alienated and dissociated from emotional experiences.

The encapsulated-skin-ego wishes to wrap its capsule closely about the dysfunctional skin-ego in order to be an alternative-imaginary skin to protect the self, although this protective function belongs to skin-ego developmentally (Anzieu, 1990). Encapsulated skin-ego succeeds in encapsulating the skin-ego through two types of imaginary defensive wrapping: 1) an encapsulation related to superego and its components and 2) an encapsulation related to overusing some skin-ego's functions. The first one shows itself in identifying with authority figures (Lorenz, 1973) and defective identifications. Within this context, the individual wishes to use the imaginary skin of the object as a coat phantasmically that is more related to ego-ideal and its idealized objects, thus providing internal security for the vulnerable and fragile skin-ego. Moreover, taking refuge in the ideal ego and its illusional struggles to the reunion with the perfect-self and its omnipotent phantasies in order to regulate painful affects. This type of wrapping is more interconnected to the concept of second skin, it means unlike the previous type of wrapping the omnipotent self and its phantasies replace itself with dependence on the object.

Furthermore, encapsulated skin-ego uses certain functions of skin-ego extremely to provide wrapping through current mental functions. In other words, to patch the sieve ego-skin a certain protective function of skin-ego overused by the individual. For example, imagine somebody who is addicted to massage to support his skin with the help of masseur's hands. This overusing pattern creates a substitute for the first function of skin-ego, holding.

In this sense, the encapsulated skin-ego as an imaginary skin is a thick and non-sensitive skin which is created by filtering sensations to protect the dysfunctional ego from stimuli and, consequently, provides distorted mental functioning, in conclusion, it is strongly believed by authors that if you don't touch and if you are not touched, you won't be able to reach higher levels of language and thinking. Resultantly, it could be said the encapsulated skin-ego supplies the prohibition to touch not to define normal borders but to gain control over shifting from touching to thinking. For this reason, the encapsulated skin-ego builds a secure capsule for insecure self that cannot stay current home, i.e., dysfunctional skin-ego. This type of psychic-encapsulation is defensive and is not restricted to people with traumatic experiences, but everybody can use it to different degrees.

Discussion

If ideology were redefined in a dysfunctional system of skin-ego, one might reconsider ideology in the framework of the encapsulation of skin-ego with the manipulation of skin-ego functioning. Thus, for these authors, ideology as a mass production of depersonalization and the main outcome of second skin development can be redefined in the SMED and be revised under the umbrella of encapsulated

skin-ego formation. In this sense, the ideal-ego grandiosely gathers inside itself defective identifications, and the ego-ideal tries to reinstall an illusionary guideline in the face of disappointment (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1974,1984). Fleeing to the superego makes the wounded self be left unprotected, and the individual feels the gap between the ego and the ego-ideal painfully and perceives it as "a very deep wound" (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1974, p. 352). This gap is experienced as a "defective identification" (p. 352) by the individual, and the gap blocks any sublimating attempt. In this way, the defective identification develops a pathological superego, and the constructive identification creates a developmental superego.

A clear definition of ideology was not offered by Anzieu (1987b, 1990, 1995/2016); he simply referred to ideology in parentheses in trying to explain how patients fill an inner space through "the imaginary presence of an object or an ideal person" (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 137). From a pathologic point of view, the superego sends auditory commands to deprive the skin-ego from touch and its tactile nature, presenting a double taboo on touching (p. 149). This deprivation can create the emptiness within the self, and the individual has to fill the gap by consuming ideologic figures. In the following discussion, an attempt is made to synthesize what was reviewed in order to define ideology within the context of an epidermal system of thought. One could argue that ideology with its hegemonic character (Boggs, 1984) and encapsulated skin-ego with its domineering nature constitutes a destructive twin to threaten the psyche's integrity.

Consequently, in a synthetic way (Anzieu, 1995/2016; Bick, 1964; Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1974,1984; Winnicott, 1962/1965b), ideology is a defensive fusion of ideal-ego (illusionary perfect-self) and ego-ideal with a dysfunctional skin-ego to wrap the discontinuity of the self with the help of the encapsulation as an alternative skin. This fusion is an outcome of the activated encapsulated skin-ego to regulate the self and its affects pathologically. In fact, it is a response to a disturbance of the primal skin's functioning (Bick, 1964), de-personalizational states of mind (Winnicott, 1962/1965b), or inner empty space of the self and the dysfunctional skin-ego (Anzieu, 1995/2016). It means that the ideologic system tries to replace the defensive epidermal fusion with skin-ego to gain control over the sensory-motor gateway. Ideology wishes to inhibit the thinking ego or a secondary process thought on a cortical level (Anzieu, 1995/2016) in order to remove "individual critical power and moral sensibility" (Flugel, 1945, p. 182) and it means ideology wishes to removes or manipulates the developmental superego (Brainin & Teicher, 2015); consequently, implanting an idealized imaginary object instead of an actual object. The function of the idealized imaginary object is to satisfy the individual narcissistically when faced with external situations of frustration (Jacobson, 1946).

Unlike the ideologic discourse and its hegemonic domination, Winnicott (1950) defined *democracy* in mutual relationship between society and its members, suggesting a democratic "society [is] well-adjusted to its healthy individual members" (p. 176). Furthermore, Winnicott believed that the individual who is "personally-immature" and "prosocial but anti-individual" is obviously the one who governs an anti-democratic society (p. 178) or, as these authors view it, the idealized imaginary object. In other words, the idealized imaginary object as democratic discourse serves the same function for people as an attuned mother or caregiver does for the child. The mother or caregiver supplies an affect regulation and feeling of continuity or, in the

case of a mal-attuned caregiver, generates the feeling of discontinuity. For these authors, a democratic system prepares a containing environment for skin-ego and personalization.

Using the idealized imaginary object and ideological teachings to fill the gap that emerges following self-discontinuity causes some disturbance, disturbing the process of thinking and language—the fundamental functions of the thinking ego (Anzieu, 1990, 1995/2016). In the same way, the ego across the individual's development forms word-presentation and speech and thinking in a more creative way (Anzieu, 1995/2016). Loewald (1962/1980c) showed a missed link between the ideal-ego and primary narcissistic identification through "magical participation" (p. 47) in the world that is connected to the bodily origin of early language. Additionally, the earliest language experiences led to a magical power of words (Loewald, 1978/1980b). This magical usage of language encapsulates the individual and makes him more susceptible to projecting the ego-ideal onto an idealized leader, the idealized imaginary object who is prosocial but anti-individual (Winnicott, 1950).

Filling the gap with the idealized leader or ideological teaching can prevent the individual's collapse (Simmel, 1948) through using projection, idealization, and splitting (Kernberg, 2003a, 2003b; Summers, 2006). For these authors, ideology takes on this magical linguistical aspect of ego-ideal intentionally to dominate its discourse by putting emptied objects from any independent thought in the first line of defense against democratic discourse. Maybe because of this, ideological systems try to span the gap between skin-ego and thinking ego with the help of producing traumatic experiences, for example white torture. As Ferenczi (1933/1949) suggested, traumatic experiences disturb the capacity for symbolic representation, which is a required prior condition for developing language.

Shifting from primary to secondary process thought (Freud, 1915/1961j, 1923/1961c) depends on normal development. The encapsulated skin-ego inhibits functions of skin-ego as a primary process and defines a distorted lens to see the external world in terms of "magical communication between" ego and reality (Loewald, 1951/1980a, p, 19) in the secondary process. Ideology comes and uses this magical communication to gather omnipotent images as a false self-concept in terms of identity (Hollander, 2006), which is illusionary and imaginary. In this sense, extreme situations (Bettelheim, 1943) and traumatic events (Stolorow, 2007) like prison, torture or asylum experiences dramatically recall the certain part of superego and dysfunctional skin-ego's failures to play the epidermal role to protect the self instead of skin-ego. The first case study is of a young man who experienced prison and is explained from the SMED point of view.

Case Study: Horror Room

A young man with a history of prison experience accepted to participate in a deep interview with the first author by signing consent forms. The three sessions of the interview showed Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depersonalization symptoms, and psychosomatic symptoms due to physical torture and white torture. In addition, the interview considered his personality before prison, especially the positive parts of his character. One important symptom was psychosomatic symptoms involving losing weight and appetite at the beginning of his arrest and continued after

the prison by Gastrointestinal disturbance. The case family history demonstrates a calm atmosphere during childhood, and he found the house in which he spent his childhood secure and described how he started to stay home alone from age 12. Based on this paper's aims, a short report of the interviewee's experiences follows:

When I was arrested by them, they sent me to solitary confinement, which was an isolated cell. Before the arrest, they explained you are under arrest on suspicion of collaboration with Group X which was a shock for me because I had serious ideological conflicts with that group and also any participation in mentioned group was a serious crime in my country. Following the shock and two intense interrogations my body reacted with nausea, loss of appetite and diarrhea and spent a week not eating anything and just drinking water and tea. I started to have hair loss consistently in enormous amount. After the somatic reactions, they started to give me some tablets under the pretext of treating my anxiety and medical condition. During the day, I was indifferent after taking pills, but during nights, I experienced a strange state of mind that was something between sleep and wakefulness I woke up in panic every morning. I started to refuse to take pills and put them on the back of my tongue or sometimes vomited after ingesting oral tablets. I had to collaborate with interrogators under pressure and threat of torture, but I told myself they cannot be your friends so do not trust their smile and do not be afraid them because "Black will take no other hue". I had understood that I was going to lose my mind and I do not have any control over my thoughts. They threatened me with execution or imprisonment for life and said to me, "Your collaboration can reduce your sentence". I felt a deep feeling of emptiness, and during that time, I waited to meet my interrogator impatiently maybe I can convince him that I am not guilty.

One terrible memory that comes to my mind is one night I wanted to eat my dinner, but the prison guards called me they wanted to carry me to the interrogation room. We went downstairs to a dark basement where a horror room had been arranged to interrogate prisoners. A new interrogator asked me the earlier questions aggressively then started to hit me after he had turned off lights. Suddenly feelings of terror started running through my body and I felt my heart was about to stop. After a while, I found myself in prison's medical service. I felt awfully bad—a deep feeling of being a toy in the hands of the interrogator as a broken individual.

I should even make a confession that I had a reoccurring dream of an anonymous object which was believed to be a ghost by me approaching me along with my inability to move my body as if I had been paralyzed with fear and I need to even state that the closer that ghost was getting to me the more fears were being struck into my body and finally when that so-called ghost got close enough to touch my bed I would be awakened.

About empowerment factors during prison, I used to take the longest showers so that I could feel more secure. Another refreshing factor was relationship with other prisoners especially after I was transferred to a cell shared with two other prisoners. They gave me spirit and wisdom to resist.

Placing a great deal of pressure on the interviewee did not meet their objectives and after three months of intensive interrogations he was bailed out from prison. He had the courage to pursue his dreams and finally immigrated to a country to study and work freely. The man obviously experienced attacking skin-ego to control thinking ego. In other words, the white torture was used to replace abnormal superego instead of the normal psychic wrapping to suffocate ideologically opposing voices. A psychoanalytic analysis of the man follows:

- Breaking the borders of the body/skin by accusing him of being a member of Group called X which filled him with feeling of terror and insecurity, and the skin-ego felt helplessness that could not function to protect the body and psyche.
- Semi-Sensory deprivation and prevention of any resistance to changing the deprival atmosphere (Mason & Brady, 2009) served to send the skin-ego into the isolated capsule like a sending into a skin cyst.
- Cutting the relationship between the psyche and the soma in order to create depersonalization and empty space through giving unknown pills with psychological effects disrupted the border between sleep and wakefulness as a part of skin-ego's envelope.
- Producing terror and panic about being or not being alive for the victim and also sending to the horror room to break the last line of skin-ego's resistance, all eight functions of skin-ego were broadly under attack. Panic attacks could be seen as a possibility of skin-ego's collapse.
- The helpless and dysfunctional skin-ego took refuge in the encapsulated skin-ego. The encapsulated skin-ego came to protect him by identifying with the interrogator and satisfying his demands as a part of a hypnotic type of relationship, "addiction to illusional otherness" (Dorsey & Seegers, 1959, p. 56). In addition, this process could be understood in terms of negative attachment, which refers to "the alliance of the attachment instinct with the self-destructive instinct rather than with the self-preservative instinct" (Anzieu, 1993, p. 45). Fortunately, he did not trust his interrogators and also never fought with them. A psychoanalytic explanation is he had a kind and stable father and a protective mother during childhood. It helped him not to accept their allegations and did not fall into the trap of negative attachment.
- To continue, after prison, the panic attacks showed the ego loses its functioning when the encapsulated skin-ego envelopes and encapsulates the skin-ego. It appears when the skin-ego functions normally, and the role of the superego is going with the skin-ego developmentally in a normal situation. In extreme situations, the dysfunctional skin-ego recalls the malignant part of superego to help it, but the superego, in this new functioning, changes to a sort of non-natural skin because the superego has to supply the skin-ego's psychic wrapping, too. The encapsulated skin-ego never can be a psychic envelope in the long-term and needs some compensating backup. For example, in this case, psychosomatic symptoms were a part of a fruitless attempt to compensate the lost skin-ego's functions through controlling fears with somatic pain. It could be said the soma tries to contain the trauma with psychosomatic symptoms painfully or as McDougall (1980) says "Pain is a bridge that spans psyche and soma" (p.421).
- The dream of ghost refers to two facts: First, having near experience to skin-ego's collapse is very important factor that symbolize the integrator as an

intrusive ghost who entered his protective skin. In the disturbance of tactile wrapping of the skin-ego, the wrapping of dreams (Anzieu, 1995/2016) started to protect the psyche as a protective shield. Second, the dream shows after a long time the protective shield has not been repaired and Nocturnal panic attacks have stayed and had the permanent influence on ego functioning. The horror room penetrated the unprotected skin-ego by implanting panic ideas.
.

His immigration shows that the encapsulated skin-ego cannot suffocate the ego forever. A window of opportunity is needed to activate the linkage between skin-ego and thinking ego. It appears under the epidermal coverage of encapsulated skin-ego in a dictatorial manner, and the skin-ego continues to live in looking for an opportunity to come back to the previous functioning. As a matter of fact, the first author's clinical experiences with refugees and traumatic cases have demonstrated that scars and injuries on the self and skin-ego need plenty of time to be cured. Any compensative over-activity such as substance abuse and gambling with a compulsive and self-destructive nature makes the cure process more difficult and challenging. The process of cure is depending on the capacity of analyst to bear primitive projective identifications of client to use therapist as an ancillary container skin. In other words, analyst needs to survive when client tries to live under their skin in symbiotic way and recognizes client's intense fear of intimacy, individuation and separateness (Lothstein, 2019) better understand the roots of client's shame about seeing their defects of skin-ego and being seen by analyst.

Case Study: Boochani

Another extreme situation that invoked the encapsulated skin-ego is the asylum experience. Behrouz Boochani (2018b) was an imprisoned refugee on Manus Island, a remote part of Papua New Guinea, for more than 6 years. In *No Friend But the Mountains,* he demonstrated how Manus Prison was created in the heart of contemporary democracy, where human beings are daily reduced to a number and receive psychological torture (2018a, 2018b, 2019). He painfully reported his feeling of depersonalization in the vicious circle of panic attacks:

> I imagine myself looking back from an unknown place beyond—myself looking back at me. I see a dead body, but with eyes still alert, struggling to survive.
>
> *In that moment everything is absurd/*
> *I search in my unconscious/*
> *For whatever shaped my existence/*
> *In the depths of my mind and soul/*
> *Or the ground/*
> *For belief in a god/*
> *Or a metaphysical force/*
> *I don't find anything at all* (emphasis added)…*I uncover nothing but myself*
> *and a sense of enormous absurdity and futility.*
> (Boochani, 2018b, pp. 112-113)

In an article for the Persian BBC, Boochani (2019) wrote, "In fact, Manus Prison is a pure version of a system which is emptying Man from identity, human freedoms and individuality" (para. 14). Surprisingly, he stands for a realistic picture of the ideologic

attempts to empty the individual's self and to offer the illusionary idealized objects in the framework of the encapsulated skin-ego. It means anti-immigrant policies try intentionally to create a depersonalization state in refugees to push them to return to their homeland. Boochani explained how Manus is a human experiment of repressed ideologic policies of Australian government immigration to send skin-ego to the isolated corner and invoke encapsulated skin-ego to produce helplessness among refugees:

> You can see clearly that the most vulnerable people of society have been ignored.
>
> The system is designed in a particular way to treat their fellow beings and each
>
> other in a ruthless manner and they have been educated as robots indifferent to the
>
> suffering of others. (para. 17)

Ideologic systems, then, are machines organized to break the individual's spirit with the help of a perverse formula of torture which is deprival in its nature. Ultimately, a sick refugee can do nothing other than search for his name on waiting lists, but no one ever receives medical care. In fact, this is all very well-planned, and after persevering through countless trouble and stressful situations, the refugee experiences the full force of this perverse form of torture (Boochani, 2018a, 2019). The nature of ideology as a mass product of the encapsulated skin-ego is given control over the skin-ego and generates more traumatic experiences to overwhelm sensations to block following perceptions, such as the thinking ego. The result of this organized sabotage ideologic system is disturbed symbol formation and limited secondary process thought, which are represented in restricted usage of language. Slavoj Žižek (2002) explained this alexithymia, disability in emotional awareness, very well: "We 'feel free' because we lack the very language to articulate our unfreedom" (p. 2).

Manus Island itself is regarded as a very exact symbol of an encapsulated unwanted cyst over the skin of Australian democracy and a capsule into which refugees are forcefully pushed which makes confined people inside it end up committing a suicide, being addicted to drugs and finally dying of not being provided with critical medical care, despite the fact that doctors are within an easy reach of them.

Boochani exemplified well living the skin-ego under the epidermal repression of the encapsulated skin-ego as he tried to connect his repressed skin-ego by text messaging his writings via WhatsApp to a translator. He won the Victorian Prize for Literature as a result. Consequently, within the context of encapsulated skin-ego, the individual experiences ideology as a wound and makes an attempt in curing this wound through "bringing the two edges of the wound closer together [that] may involve elaboration, thinking, creation, culture, and humanization" (Jacobson, 1946, pp. 108-119).

Conclusion

A competition is evident among id, skin-ego, and superego to occupy the surface and to be the psychic wrapping for the psyche. The superego has two types of functioning. First, when the primal skin functions well and the superego helps skin-ego and

thinking ego to operate normally, the functioning is based on the acoustic nature of superego and word-presentation. Second, when the skin-ego is dysfunctional and cannot wrap the psyche, then the malignant superego in company with the skin-ego's failures, and sometimes over using its functions, tries to dominate over the skin-ego and fill the emptied and deserted self through negative attachment, defective identifications and omnipotent phantasies. Considering the superego wishes to be a psychic envelope and regresses to its idea's origins, the authors named this type of wrapping and patching the *encapsulated skin-ego* to show the regulating character of superego to regulate thoughts and affects instead of the ego.

In conclusion, the core of the encapsulated skin-ego is functioning as a psychic wrapping instead of the skin-ego to provide an illusionary skin to protect the self. As a result, ideology as an isolative and phony configuration is a "lazyish" solution to fill the empty self of a group of people or nation through mass-producing prosocial but anti-individual leaders and shared systems of idealized ideas. This paper discussed the theoretical argument with the help of two cases. The first comprised psychoanalytic deep interview with an interviewee who had imprisonment experience, and the second was Behrouz Boochani's book (2018b) that explained his experience as an imprisoned refugee on Manus Island. In both cases, the encapsulated skin-ego attempted to encapsulate the skin-ego and gain control over the psyche. In addition, the ideological discourse wanted to manipulate the encapsulated skin-ego of these two cases to break their spirits to acquire control over their minds and bodies. The discussion explained how the ideological machinery system designs white and perverse tortures to recall the encapsulated skin-ego to implant their illusionary idealized objects pathologically and govern a magical linguistic cognitive distortion instead of the thinking ego. It remains, however, debatable to apply this contribution to other analytic topics such as clinical cases, mythic and religious areas of theoretical investigation.

Acknowledgements

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