

Encapsulated Skin-Ego and Anti-Corporeal Manichaeon Myth of Femininity in Transmission*

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Abstract

We propose, within the context of a *Skin Model of Ego Development* (SMED), that Didier Anzieu's work of the skin-ego is a useful entry point into understanding the Manichaeon mythic view of femininity as creating an *encapsulated skin-ego*, that tends to enclose the feminine object in a defensive-isolative capsule, through culturally transmitted ideals, shaped by misogyny. Utilizing this perspective, the unconscious and the myth are seen as being, in general terms, intertwined and expressed in epidermal psychoanalytic dialogue. As a result, the psyche and the body are radically split from one another through the dysfunctioning of the skin-ego that is an asexualized phantasmal-mythic dome of 'womanhood', which preserves misogynistic norms and ideals and blocks any possibility of femininity as a subjecthood. Moreover, a culturally transmitted myth-fueled psychic alienation is conveyed through a *linguistic mythic time machine*, which, in turn, results in transmitting a mythic mindset from one generation to another. In this sense, it is of utmost importance to mention that dysfunctional skin-ego leads to dysfunctional thinking ego therein the result is the isolated mind. Encapsulated thinking ego rejects embodiment, spontaneity, and connectedness with anything that has to do with emotional life. To enrich our discussion, the *Matrix movies* are used to discuss how the Manichaeon system of thought is in motion and survives in transmission.

They [Greeks before Socrates] knew how to live: for that purpose, it is necessary to keep bravely to the surface, the fold and the skin; to worship appearance, to believe in forms, tones, and words . . . were superficial—from profundity!

Nietzsche, *The Joyful Wisdom*, 1882/1924, p. 4

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Introduction

Freudian theory viewed the conscious ego as being a very early form of “a bodily ego” (Freud, 1923/1961, p. 27) that originated from within the body itself. Moreover, according to Anzieu (1990) it “is implicit in Freud: ‘the unconscious is the body’” (p. 43). This fact has opened a new line in psychoanalytic theory which is focused on a shift from bodily ego to skin-ego, the importance of skin, and good handling of the body (Anzieu, 1990, 1995/2016; Bick, 1968; Winnicott, 1955). Mohammadpour-Yazdi and Jandl (2019) called this conceptualization of bodily-ego *the Skin Model of Ego Development* (SMED) that is focused on the theoretical line from bodily ego to skin ego and three layers of experiencing unconscious: Oedipal, pre-oedipal and primal skin (Hinshelwood, 1997). For our paper, unlike Manichaeism and its bodiless ideology, this theoretical movement that began with Freud’s bodily ego and continued with Bick’s primal skin and Anzieu’s skin-ego, is called *epidermal psychoanalytic approach* by us, a significant shift from phallus to breast and finally to skin. In addition, the epidermal psychoanalytic approach is a hypothesis of embodiment in psychoanalytic thought that seeks to explain how body-skin can play a role in psychic development.

From a corporeal psychoanalytic point of view, body is the speaker of the unconscious (Anzieu, 1995/2016) and bodies tell stories (Campbell, 2000). Based on this approach, mythic ideas manifest themselves through body organs such as Achilles’ heel and Esfandīār’s eyes, they are two mythic ironsides respectively in Greek and Persian myths who had just a physical vulnerability. Moreover, a mythic mindset can develop and be passed onto an individual from one generation to another. Under certain circumstances, such a mythic mindset can even be transferred from one culture to another with the help of what we call a *linguistic mythic time machine* and we will discuss it later.

The development of cultures is inherent in the nature of societies, and cultures depend on the fabrication of myths, which hold those cultures together. Within this context, “a myth is simply any story that is foundational for the identity of a people” (Weaver, 2011, p. 96). As a foundational reality, “a myth is a projection of an aspect of a culture’s soul” (Leeming & Leeming, 1994, p. vii).

For our paper, “psychoanalysis as a body of thought” (Evans, 1996, p. 155) can help to trace shared unconscious cultural expressions and understandings of the world through our myths, movies, poems, folklore, and literature (Abraham, 1924/1988). Indeed, Freud (1913/1961) emphasized that culture and cultural background affect psychic functioning. On the very subject of myths, Freud (1908/1961) noted that they are “distorted vestiges of wishful fantasies of whole nations, the secular dreams of youthful humanity” (p. 152). As such, by its very nature, psychoanalysis tends to be complementary to the fields of mythology and anthropology, which accept that unconscious thoughts may meaningfully influence human life’s affections and motivations in the past and present (American Anthropological Association, 2019; Paul, 1989). Moreover, the study of humankind as a main task of anthropology cannot be dependent on an ancient or modern era (Langness, 1974).

We consider Manichaeism myth of femininity as a case study and, consequently, the instant paper takes such an approach to Manichaeism mythology and, in so doing, it

reveals that in certain societies this anti-corporeal mythology can function as the source of misogynistic notions and actions. For this paper, we conceptualize misogyny as a concept which has a bodiless or imaginary nature and is passed on from generations to generations with the help of superego's functioning and the linguistic aspect of myths. These misogynistic beliefs are located in a capsule (Mohammadpour-Yazdi & Jandl, 2019) which is separated, alienated, and isolated from contextuality and intersubjective impact (Stolorow & Atwood, 1996). This isolated encapsulation has an influence on developmental shifting from skin-ego to thinking ego (Mohammadpour-Yazdi & Jandl, 2019). To command a more tangible view of femininity, the need is felt to tackle a theoretical explanation from Freudian theory to Manichaeic mythology, in other words, from a Western phallicism to an Eastern one, in the next part. Needless to say, our paper investigates myth and ideology within the context of a Manichaeic misogynistic context so a reader could feel a nonpositive approach to myth and ideology as a phenomena in motion that is more related to the subject of our paper and not to the nature of them that could be positive in other applications. At the end of this introduction it is necessary to say that Anglophone readers of Anzieu's works are used to seeing the work of Anzieu through the lens of Bion but we have tried to stay with Anzieu in a contemporary Freudian manner.

Femininity and Psychoanalysis

Modern scholars accept that the notion of femininity is itself a multifaceted phenomenon deeply rooted in culture. Just as the reduction of gender to the male-female binary may be challenged (Benjamin, 2000; Butler, 2000), femininity itself cannot be oversimplified (Dunphy, 2000; Grosz, 1994). Instead, it is a complex phenomenon structured by biopsychosocial aspects. In that regard, for us, Freud's theory of femininity now seems outdated and the product of Freud's time and culture. Indeed, it is controversial and "frankly, rather dismal" (Akhtar, 2009, p. 109) to the point that Freud (1926/1961) initially admitted that he found "the sexual life of adult women is a dark continent for psychology" (p. 212). In this darkness, Freud (1933/1961) developed the theory that women's sexuality is similar to the sexuality of men who had they been trapped in the body of a boy. This masculine account of femininity is created around phallic monism "i.e., the question of possessing the penis or not—was the key to [Freud's theories of] psychosexual development" (Quinodoz, 2004/2005, p. 64).

Indeed, Irigaray (1977/1985) criticized Freud's phallic attempts to form an imaginary body, which explains the feminine difference. Based on her explanation, the difference between femininity and masculinity are biopsychosocial concepts, heavily influenced by the culture. In this sense, she is heavily influenced by Lacan (1966/1977), who held that sexuality is in large part resultant from cultural roles projected onto a child. Indeed, Lacan saw that words and language signifying sexual differences are foundational in the formation of children's notion of themselves. Within this context, Irigaray (1977/1987) saw Western phallicism as being projected onto the feminine aspect, thereby robbing the feminine quality of its own unique expression of itself. In connection with this, Butler (1997) noted that although Freud's ideas in this area were accepted by traditional psychoanalysts, one must not fail to understand the significant effects that social power can develop and exercise. For example, what happened for many women in Victorian Viennese society was experienced by them in the context of misogynistic stereotypes. This is true even in

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the psychoanalytic context where a psychoanalyst can use their authority to form the feminine identity to satisfy their will to power and avoid violating zeitgeist.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that, the psychoanalytic theory seeks to understand the interaction of femininity and misogyny within the context of body and culturally specific transmission. In light of geographical and cultural background, certain parts of the Middle East are frequently perceived as having culturally ingrained expressions of misogyny inherent in them. These expressions can be directly traced to some myths like Manichaeism and its dualistic cosmogony. To understand why this is the case, the next part turns to the transgenerational function of superego.

In this, similarities can be found to Freud's thinking. Freud himself noted that he thought women were incapable of meeting the standards of ethics applicable to men, "for women the level of what is ethically normal is different from what it is in men. Their super-ego is never so inexorable, so impersonal, so independent of its emotional origins as we require it to be in men" (Freud, 1925/1961, p. 257). It can be said that Freudian theory of femininity occupies a benighted place in the modern body of research as a mythic system—magical and isolated in its nature (Stolorow & Atwood, 1992).

Manichaeism

Manichaeism is an ancient Near-Eastern religion which was established by Mani, who was born in 216 CE in the early period of the Sassanid Empire, in Mesopotamia. Ultimately, Mani died in 277 CE at the age of 61, in prison for practicing his faith, having been put in heavy chains by Wahram (or Bahram). His faith was considered as a Christian heresy for a long time. Manichaeism extended from Babylonia to the Roman Empire from the West and to China from the East and lasted until the 14th century; it lived in the Middle Ages in Europe (Manichaeism, 2019) in terms of neo-Manichaean sects. Mani's religion, as a new dualistic approach of Gnosticism, has had significant effects on some Islamic Gnostic doctrines to this day (Skjærvø, 2006); a good example is Sufism (Zarrinkoob, 1995), which follows the redemption of the light or soul from the prison of the body like Manichaeism (Corbin, 1983).

In broad terms, it is essential for present purposes to note that Mani's thought followed the concept of the Zoroastrian duality, which sees the world as being composed of the two distinct essences: good and evil. In orthodox Zoroastrianism and especially in *Bundahishn* (Bahar, 1989), Ahura Mazda, also being known as Ohrmazd, is seen as being the creator of good and evil, light and darkness. In the extreme dualism of Manichaeism, these two forces were seen as being in direct and eternal opposition to one another, having separate and mutually exclusive essences as well as different natures (Darmesteter, 1880; Zaehner, 1961).

Manichaean cosmogony and cosmology include four stages that each follow a mytheme or a central generic unit, all connected through the interaction of mythic characters amongst each other (Bahar, 2001; Boyce, 1975; Coyle, 2001, 2007; Lieu, 1992; Esmailpour, 2005; Sundermann, 2009).

The first stage was the Golden Era, when the light was primordially separated from the realm of Darkness. The different natures of Light and Darkness resulted in great wars and battles, starting when the King of Darkness became envious of Goodness
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and Light, which were governed by the Father of Greatness who had a celestial spouse called the Great Spirit or the Mother of Greatness. Secondly, there was the First Creation, when the amalgamation stage started, due to the King of Darkness (Ahriman)'s envious nature. Initially, Ahriman prevailed, and the demons imprisoned the First Man and his five sons as a part of Father of Greatness' troops. Thirdly, the Second Creation began, the First Man was rescued, and the motionless universe was given motion too. However, a second war broke between Ahriman's and the Father of Greatness's troops; the latter includes the Friend of the Lights, Great Builder, and the Living Spirit. The Father's forces were victorious. Lastly, the Third Creation, Narisah Yazd made the Sun and the Moon move, and through changing the seasons saves the light particles through rain and dewdrops. In the process, the universe was given motion and a conflictual war started between two forces. Mani taught that salvation was achieved by humanity through successfully warring against eternal darkness and its demons that try to save the particles of light from the prison of the body.

Manichaeism Notion of Femininity

Manichaeism divides existence into Light and Darkness, good and evil. As such, it transmits this perception that certain aspects of life are "good," and others are "bad". In this extreme dualistic cosmogony, it is imperative that one notes that Mani saw women as being inherently inferior to men. Indeed, he saw women as being the creatures of Darkness. In his mythic system, the first woman (Mordiyānag) was created by demons (the Greed Demon, Ašqalun, and Namrā'īl), and their sexuality was a product of evil. Mani attributed certain roles to women. Technically, some roles were seen as belonging to the realm of Light or good, while the others were seen as belonging to Darkness or evil. In essence, however, even the roles that were seen as being good can be seen as being inherently negative and reductionistic. For example, on the one hand, the Great Spirit feeds the dwellers of the kingdom of light, the Mother of Life prepares the son to send him to war. On the other hand, the Greed demon encourages to sexual corruption, and Mordiyāng cheats on her husband Gehmord, because of her ignorant nature and moral weakness. Ultimately, in an ideal situation, women were to give birth to children and to prepare them as pious people for war with evil, both spiritual and physical.

The pessimistic view on women in Manichaeism is derived from the notion that more sexual relationships send more particles of light into the prison of material and diabolic bodies. Although marriage and sexual affairs were prohibited for Manichaean Elects, the Hearers (the common Manichaeans) were allowed to marry and have children, but when they wanted to climb up the ladder of spiritual progress like the Elect, they had to avoid sexual relationships.

Manichaean Studies on Femininity

In terms of the connection of Manichaeism to misogyny, at first glance, one can see that the mythic system robbed women of their inherently creative and natural femininity. Within this system, femininity was seen as being derivative of and in the service of masculinity, it can be seen from the work of such authors as Zarshenas (2011), Tongerloo (2003), Coyle (2001, 2007), Franzmann (2007), Oort (2015), Malek Behbahani (2011), Burrus (1987), and Yorioka (2010). Moreover, in a psychoanalytic sense, it could be noted that Manichaeism shunned the material world in a misogynistic manner. For example, Jesus, a masculine figure, told Gehmord to

avoid Mordiyäng because she is an evil creature, and it had to be said, accused the first female human being to moral weakness. After receiving the message, Gehmord moaned as a lion, pulled his hair out, beat on his chest, and said: “Curse, Curse to the fashioner of my body, who drew me into slavery” (Esmailpour, 2005, p. 76).

This anti-corporeal point of view gives a bodiless character to Manichaeism and, consequently, it converts into a mythic discourse which is empty of corporeal qualities. After searching multiple databases such as Psychoanalytic Electronic Publishing (PEP), European Psychoanalytical Federation (EPF), EBSCO, PsycINFO, Google Scholar and Science Direct, the psychoanalytical study on Manichaean notion of femininity in transmission has not been able to capture researchers’ attention. To reach the purpose, a qualitative method uses to study Manicheism as a case study through textual analysis in a psychoanalytic fashion, with a special focused on the SMED.

Misogyny in Transmission

In terms of a psychoanalytic understanding of superego formation in Manichaean underlying dualistic-phallocentrism and misogyny and its cultural transmission, it must be noted that the superego is viewed as being the internalization of the ego ideal, which is representative of the external influence of parents, teachers, and external authorities (Freud, 1933/1961). In that regard, it is noteworthy that when Freud conceptualized the superego in this fashion, he demonstrated his interest in the influence of culture, society, and time on the individual: “Thus the super-ego takes up a kind of intermediate position between the id and the external world; it unites in itself the influences of the present and the past” (Freud, 1938/1961, pp. 206-207). In this context, the cultural transmission is in line with Freud’s notion of phylogenetic inheritance, the phylogenetic inheritance addressed by Freud (1913/1961) for the first time in *Totem and Taboo*. This transmission depends on identifications (Freud, 1923/1961); and the superego is the agent used in cultural transmission from one generation to another (Freud, 1933/1961) as an archaic foundation like misogyny, which can survive among generations. In essence, the superego is seen as an embodied, time-bound, future-focused thing, located in a transitional space between the soma and external reality (Loewald, 1980c). This transgenerational aspect of the superego and its impact on cultural transmission is important for this paper.

In setting up this dualistic-phallocentricity in which the first female human being (Mordiyäng) was deemed to be inferior to the male one—if not necessarily outright evil—Manichaeism established the groundwork for the cultural transmission of misogyny. This occurred through its use of mythological ideological tools to culturally skin the femininity from its subject, thereby eliminating the natural connection between sensation, perception and apperception (interpretation) (Hopp, 2008). In other words, a “magical communication between” ego and reality (Loewald, 1980a, p. 19) is hidden in the heart of Manichaeism in the case of the cultural transmission of misogyny.

From Bodily Ego to Skin-Ego and Encapsulated Skin-Ego

Considering skin as a “leading organ” (Segal, 2009, p. 56), Anzieu (1995/2016) innovatively developed the concept of skin-ego, which is a temporary developmental surrogate ego that plays an essential role in psychic development (Lafrance, 2013). As

Anzieu (1990) noted, the skin-ego arises from the skin's function, a function that is designed to provide the developing infant with information about and strategies toward, the inner and outer worlds. While the skin-ego is normally developed to the "thinking ego" (Anzieu, 1995/2016)—which enables the person to think symbolically through their language and desires as a secondary process, the skin-ego is akin to Freud's primary processes (Freud, 1905/1961), impulses and drives. Needless to say, the primary processes are the most fundamental mode of being in the world (Anzieu, 1990, 1995/2016) and "it is fundamental for the ego to have a skin that is consistent, with safe limits and a flexible structure. Grounded in these foundational capacities, a thinking ego emerges that can speak and think associatively" (Anzieu-Premmereur, 2015, p.676). As skin is the wrapping for the body, the ego is the wrapping for the psyche, and the thinking ego is wrapping thoughts that keeps thoughts in a coherent unity. Seeing that the body is the first object, "each of the functions of the skin-ego carries across to a function of the thinking-ego" (Segal, 2009, p. 52) and, consequently, the thoughts will be the next object; it means thinking tries to bring thoughts into a single body of ideas. It is necessary to say that the thinking ego depends "anaesthetically on the body and on bodily sensations and images" (Anzieu, 2016, p. 274).

Within this context, Anzieu (1979, 1990, 1995/2016) assigned eight functions to the skin-ego, which are a linkage between skin and self: including containment (handling), protection (against stimuli), maintenance (holding), individuation, intersensoriality (consensuality), sexualization, libidinal recharging (energization), and inscription (signification). Considering the skin-ego is a product of biology, it can be said that its function is intersubjective, these functions are immediate in nature and related to life and libidinal drives (Anzieu, 1995/2016). He added a ninth function to the skin-ego under the title of "attacks against the Skin-ego" (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 114). This negative activity of skin-ego is considered as a self-destructive function against itself in the service of death drive. It shows how the skin-ego tends to the state of "non-self" (Anzieu, 1995/2016) and, consequently, the "unconscious attacks to the psychical container" (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 116). For Anzieu, the protective cover of the ego, the skin-ego, because it is under attack from this self-destructive function, becomes toxic and coats construction with destruction (Segal, 2009).

For us, as a reader of Anzieu in a contemporary Freudian manner, the relationship between functions of life and death's drives acts in a such a way that disturbs the developmental shifting from the skin-ego and its main accomplishment (i.e., primary thought) to the thinking ego and its secondary thinking process. In other words, considering that the skin is wrapping the body and it is also a living organ, it can be affected by diseases such as eczema or cancer. To shift from the body to psyche, for example, itching could be considered a part of horror (Segal, 2009). For this paper, the skin-ego functions are very important and lead to a new conceptualization of the superego in relationship with the skin-ego when the skin-ego finds an entity within the context of a deprivation system of affects and cognitions.

Moreover, Stolorow and Attwood (1992) and Stolorow (2007) asserted that the isolated mind as a myth and a mode of being in the world becomes manifest in three states: alienation from nature and the physical world, alienation from social life and, most importantly, alienation "from the nature of subjectivity itself" (Stolorow & Attwood, 1996, p. 191). For us, how the encapsulated-skin-ego affects the experience

of femininity in Manicheanism is important. In line with Stolorow and Atwood (1992) and Stolorow (2007), the Manichaeic account has alienating impacts on three areas to encapsulate feminine object in a dualistic way:

1. Natural area: Manicheanism denies the body as the first object and denying the body equals repressing the unconscious. It calls “the differentiation of gender a particularly diabolical invention” (Chadwick as cited in Coyle, 2007, p. 142).
2. Otherness area: Sending the body to a diabolic corner of existence deprives the individual’s perception of sensual qualities of an object that can only be perceived on the skin. The symbolic formation cannot be created without continuous contact with (m)others and their containing function. Even though the myth has respect for the mother and other pious women, it has a major conflict to recognize the earthly women as significant others and consider them as a femme fatale in collaboration with the evil part of life. In addition, it disconnects the dialogue among selves and provides a place for the motherhood to be separated from its womanhood (Coyle, 2007).
3. Subjectivity area: With the help of Manichaeic culture and literature, the myth adverts for the alienation of woman from her subjectivity. This is because it sees femininity, which is the quality of being woman, especially in a subjective way, as a threat to being a virtuous woman. In the presence of this misogynic ideologic point of view and encapsulated feminine (m)other, enclosing skin-ego through encapsulation ends in an encapsulated thinking ego too, i.e., the isolated mind.

Due to this fact, the isolated mind is considered by us as the mother of all myths. It means not only the isolated mind is separated and alienated from the nature of human being and its contextuality, but it can also be encapsulating affects and quite isolative thoughts in a mythic way. In other words, for us, the isolated mind governs a magical linguistic distortion instead of the thinking ego’s reality testing, and it connects language and thinking through a magical participation (Loewald, 1980b). As a result, the process of having the notions of femininity indoctrinated by the inaccurate cultural perceptions can rip the person from their immediate and spontaneous contact with the world, thereby creating the isolated mind and a mode of enclosing femininity in a capsule.

A close connection can be seen between the skin-ego, intersubjectivity, and seeing the world in terms of an immediate and non-dualistic fashion, as discussed by Lafrance (2013). Accordingly, based on Anzieu’s theory (Anzieu, 1984; 1995/2016), it can be thus said that the connectedness of the skin-ego to object prevents the development of the state of isolated mind within the individual. As a result, it could be concluded that the isolated mind is a lack of connectedness or the feeling of belonging to the external world and otherness through the skin-ego.

To fill the gap in the literature review, this paper pays attention to the role of the deprivation system of mythic-ideologic teachings on skin-ego development. Mythic-ideologic discourse can limit skin-ego and its developmental functions through filtering sensations and controlling perceptions. It means mythic-ideologic systems can control the ego’s experiential discharge through implanting guilt feelings and horror about good and evil. Then, they gain control over the skin-ego to deprive it from experience. Additionally, encapsulating the skin-ego with the help of mythic-

ideologic teachings can deprive the skin-ego from normal contact with nature, gender, otherness, and its own subjectivity. It gives a bodiless characteristic to this kind of ideological doctrine. This encapsulation produces an encapsulated object that has the isolated mind to perceive the external world and otherness, and is manipulated by ideologic-mythic systems. In other words, the ego considers everything out of its encapsulation state as a stranger, bodiless object, and perceives it in terms of ego-dystonic.

Within this context, encapsulation means enclosing femininity in the mythic-ideologic capsule in an abnormal manner. For us, the mythic-ideologic capsule demonstrates a distorted point of view to the human being ideologically. It is necessary to say, for our paper, ideology is a distorted world-view and “camera obscura” (Marx, 1845/1998, p. 47) that wishes to mislead people to merge into an undeniable ideological system (Kølvraa & Ifversen, 2017). As a result, Mohammadpour-Yazdi and Jandl (2019) called this state of encapsulating the skin-ego *the encapsulated skin-ego* which is an extreme wrapping in reaction to the chance of possible and potential threats which can lead to losing continuity of self which, indeed, is provided by “continuity of contact with the object” (Ulnik, 2008, p.66).

In this sense, based on Anzieu’s reading of Meltzer, the sense of object is not separable from sensual qualities that are related to perception through surface or skin (Ulnik, 2008). This encapsulation state of the skin-ego deprives higher cortical functions, the thinking ego, such as cognition of sensory input such as vision, hearing, and somatic sensation. It is necessary to say that from Anzieu’s approach (Anzieu, 1984; 1990; 1995/2016), without sensation there is no perception and “not touching is like not thinking” (Ulnik, 2008, p. 32), then dysfunctional skin-ego leads to dysfunctional thinking ego. In other words, a frail skin-ego cannot protect the individual against internal world drives and external world stimuli so it fails to provide a protective shield. Subsequently, if the skin-ego is seen in the context of sensation and primary process thinking, the thinking ego would be considered as perceptual and apperceptual attempts to sort chaotic impulses (Anzieu, 1995/2016; Bion, 1967; Loewald, 1980b).

We integrally use the term of *encapsulated skin-ego* to refer to the overprotective reaction of the skin-ego to a mis-attuned caregiver, culture, or ideologic-mythic system. In another sense, in the face of traumatic and extreme situations, the skin-ego takes shelter in a capsule to protect itself against stimuli. The dome of this capsule consists of imaginary mythic-ideologic skin. Based on this formulation, the encapsulated skin-ego handles any radical ideologic system of beliefs. As such, the superego’s will to govern over the ego is targeted to satisfy the id by itself, as Lacan (1975/1988) noted controversially. Following Anzieu (1995/2016), who asserted that the superego wants control over the ego to replace itself “as a psychical wrapping” (p. 92), it had been said that this superego’s will to dominate comes true through transmitting encapsulated skin-ego among generations similar to a *keep away* game. Within this context, the superego is the agent that is used in cultural transmission of value systems from one generation to another (Freud, 1933/1961) like a conveyor. Therefore, the superego transmits encapsulated skin-ego through generations as a mythic system of thoughts that is immune to change. It can explain why some mythic mindsets like misogyny are transmitted across generations through the intergenerational transmission of mythic-religious beliefs to a new generation. As

discussed previously, the superego is the outcome of the identification process; therefore, the encapsulated skin-ego is the result of encapsulation with “defective identification” (Chasseguet-Smirgel, 1974, p. 352), which involves bizarre mythic-ideologic teachings in order to protect the self from a threatening external world (Abraham & Torok, 1976/1986). It is the idea of the mythic system in authority, incorporated into the self through alienating identification, so that the self has to represent itself through the encapsulated skin-ego, which can transmit the mythical descent.

As the skin-ego represents a primitive, biological stage of ego development, however, we posit that a similar culturally founded prototypical encapsulated skin-ego develops in early childhood through an intergenerational process and with the help of mythic-ideologic discourse. In that stage, a distorted view of reality and what is necessary to negotiate it can be transmitted to the next generation within a mythic-ideologic capsule based on now culturally irrelevant mythic systems, which no longer function as practical cultural ideas, but which are, nonetheless, transmitted from society to the child through identification in service of regulating affects effectively (Krystal, 1988). The introjection of such inaccurate images and phantasies have profound effects on society—for when confronted with an inaccurate mythology that contradicts reality, thinking and language- myth centered societies tend to distort reality through magical usage of language rather than correct the inaccurate perceptions. Identification with these magic-mythic ideals forms a malignant superego and leads to disturbed regulation of self and its affectivity.

For our paper, the mythology of every culture is critical for its identity, but sometimes a mythic system such as the Manicheanism can encapsulate freedom of the feminine aspect of a society in a gnostic way. As a result, a dissatisfaction can be beheld throughout this text about the gnostic core of Manicheanism, which has a misogynistic and ideologic character. Moreover, Manicheanism in transmission has fueled other following religious systems such as Sufism (Skjærvø, 2006; Zarrinkoob, 1995), which believes in blaming worldly life (Corbin, 1983).

Linguistic Mythic Transmission as a Time Machine

Lévi-Strauss (1974) distinguishes between *langue* and *parole*, that respectively the first involves the structural aspect of language and is related to a reversible time and the second, speech, refers to the statistical side of language and belongs to a non-reversible time. However, myth can be considered as the third level of language that is timeless and consists of language and speech characteristics at the same time. Myth can extend itself in a range of time from the past and the present to the future. In other words, myth has a universal nature in a historical and ahistorical fashion. Also, it is not definable at certain times and in certain places and can be understood in the level of a sentence because the basic units of myth are not phonemes, morphemes or sememes but the myth is reducible to the smallest component units which are called *mythemes* (Lévi-Strauss, 1974).

Considering the Manichean myth of creation, Mani uses binary pairs of light and dark as structures to put his mythic units within a tension of the relation among pairs opposites: light-dark, spiritual-earthly and woman-man. According to Lévi-Strauss (1955) that myth functions culturally “to provide a logical model capable of overcoming a contradiction” (p. 443), as the Manichean myth of creation tries to

solve this contradiction of light-dark opposites. In other words, Mani hires the binary opposition of light and dark to think better as Lévi-Strauss (1974) explained “natural species are chosen not because they are “good to eat” but because they are “good to think” (pp. 161-162). Within this context, binary opposites are basic structures of all human cultures and, for example, the light is better than the dark, and this binary can be transmitted from one generation to another without being under structural influence of paraphrasing, distorting or reducing by translation. This survival aspect of the myth gives the transmission character to the Manichaeism notion of femininity to survive among generations.

For us, linguistic communication is not only the transmission of concepts from one brain to another, but it transmits conceptualizations from one generation to another. For humans, traveling in time is a big dream, while few people think that they travel through generations in the channel of their culture by means of language, or what we call linguistic mythic time machine. The mythic systems of thought are a source of knowledge about cultural contextuality of humanity that show us how a certain myth tries to transmit its mythic structure of thoughts in a completely modern shape and form. Thus, myths can emerge in dreams or phantasies or even art, literature and cinema in the contemporary world. For instance, binary opposites and the radical dualism of the Manichaeism point of view can be seen in *The Matrix* movies, 1999-2003. Let us give an example of *The Matrix* movies in the next part, the discussion, to show how the mythic structure of mind is passed on from one generation to another, from one era to another and even from one millennium to another. Moreover, with the help of what has been reviewed thus far, it is possible to present the discussion.

Discussion

This discussion uses a cultural extension of Anzieu's (1984) notion of the skin-ego, and “the skin [is seen as] functioning as a boundary” (Bick 1968, p. 484). In this context, the opposite force of the skin-ego that interrupts shifting from the primary thinking process to a secondary one is the encapsulation of the skin-ego, which is governed by a need to protect the self against extreme situations. The encapsulated-skin-ego can adhere to mythic-ideologic doctrines to transfer mythic ideas through generations, with the help of the superego's role in transmission. For us, the Manichaeism account of creation is considered as a sample to analyze the process of encapsulating the object, such as woman from her womanhood. It has to be said that the Manichaeism notion of femininity is an imagined skin, instead of a living skin-ego, against corruption of the soul based on Mani's teachings.

In Anzieu's theory (1995/2016), the body is the speaker of the unconscious. Moreover, Klein “regarded the body as the vehicle of mental life” (Gomez, 1997, p. 36); therefore, it can be stated that denying the body in the Manichaeism point of view runs a defense mechanism against the unconscious manifestations that reflect through the body. The presence of a woman with her female body can disturb this schizoid defensive operation, which tries to disavow the quality of womanhood. By calling gender and body diabolic creatures, Manichaeism sees femininity as a frightening representation of the body's personification. This fear produces a fusion between representations of the self and the object (Jacobson, 1964, 1967). As a result, in Manichaeism, a feminine object perceives a stranger, who must leave her feminine body and femininity behind to be able to enroll into the circle of the blessed women.

In this sense, separating womanhood from motherhood hurts the totality of being a woman. In pregnancy, for example, mothers (previously young girls) are the psychical container of existence, and through this wrapping of existence dialog with the self and others begins. These (m)others' voices, smells, looks, warmth, and hugs surround the babies and define the mother-infant's existence in a mutual-relational-reactional matrix of wrapping which is called the skin-ego.

As a result, the Manichaeism view tries to see the world and its phenomena through a non-embodiment glass and instead of experiencing the subject through exposing bodily experiences, it attempts to deny sensuality. The skin-ego is related to experience through bodily proximity with internal and external worlds. This connection at the surface is vital to create a sense of self based on its developmental functions. It is obvious that the Manichean system of thoughts believes in a non-touching manner in order to free believers from the diabolic body and get them to salvation. Manichaeism's strategy is enclosing and encapsulating the skin-ego and its functions to prevent its hypothetical human being's soul from corruption. Within this context, femininity perceives a threat for the faith of believers and must be put into the encapsulation state and be separated from subjecthood because the woman's nature is unstably unreliable. Additionally, in Anzieu's theory, body, skin, touching (sensation) and perception are directly related to epistemology because "each of the functions of the skin-ego carries across to a function of the thinking-ego" (Segal, 2009, p. 52).

Talking about the Manichaeism myth of creation highlights a myth that uses an anti-corporeal language and bodiless discourse and tries to suppress any bodily-temptation and avoid all drive-related impulses. It means Manichaeism language involves anti-corporeal grammar and fundamentally prevents articulation of the biological aspect of the psyche. To come back to Anzieu's reading of Freud that says the unconscious is the body (Anzieu, 1990), it can be said that psychoanalysis is an epidermal discourse that begins with the body as an object to support when an infant is not able to speak, i.e. the pre-Oedipal stage of psychic development. While mythic-ideological discourses like Manichaeism are bodiless and empty of corporeal aspects it gives them a phantasmal character targeted to salvation rather than well-being and well-saying. Considering that the body is the invention of devils in Manichaeism, it is then seen as a powerful tool of distraction and deception especially in the feminine form.

As a result, this certain austere mythic system used a seductive superego to manipulate its believers by promises that there is a pie in the sky and consequently, Manichaeism passionately followed a moral masochistic lifestyle, in other words, Manichaeism needed to sacrifice their body and also to send the skin-ego into the encapsulated state of mind to reach spiritual transcendence. This masochistic manner is notable in every single detail of Manichaeism, for example, they avoided slicing or tearing bread with their hands because it may damage tiny light particles that are hidden inside bread (Esmailpour, 2005). To sum up the aforementioned points, Manichaeism sends the body to the encapsulated state of mind and the same goes for the skin-ego, then ultimately leads to a muted body (unconscious). As an example, imagine a gnostic ascetic who places a stone under his tongue in his mouth to deprive himself from the ability to talk, the question here is: what is the outcome of this austerity? The body is the unconscious and clearly when it comes under the control of

such masochistic behavior, it is unable to articulate the bodily manifestation of the unconscious, as a result individuals speak of an extraterrestrial life rather than deal with their earthly realities and here is where the bodiless discourse is formed in terms of ideology.

Manichaeism, however, culturally transmits the idea that not only a feminine other is dangerous for the belief of believers, but her gender and body are hands made of evil. By encapsulating the object, feminine other, from its femininity in this way, Manichaeism creates an isolated mentality of the feminine object and develops the encapsulated feminine, which is separated from its nature and subjectivity. The feminine object cannot, consequently, experience itself as a subject with sexual desires. This deprivation of womanhood occurs through encapsulation by mythic-ideologic instruction. Considering that the encapsulated-skin-ego—through imaginary wrapping of mythic ideas and notions—is formed in a culture, which itself is anathema to the notions of sexualized and spontaneous motherhood through emphasizing the misogynous world-view, enclosing women in the encapsulated feminine object is inevitable.

From our new conceptualization, it could be seen that the Manichaean notion of femininity mythically encapsulates the feminine other in its mythic skin and separates femininity from the body and skin-ego from sensual qualities of (m)other. As if through encapsulation similar to the isolated-mind, which refers to the encapsulated thinking ego which causes to a bigoted approach to femininity. When the skin as a primary ego is encapsulated in a deprived mode of being in the world, the resultant encapsulated feminine object cannot rightly be called a real woman or the (m)other any longer. In other words, from a non-dualistic approach, the feminine (m)other that is separated from her body and her external world does not exist as Heidegger says “a bare subject without a world never “is” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 116).

In transmitting the notion of the encapsulated feminine object in this fashion, the skin-ego is actually encapsulated by the deprival system of mythology and ideology culturally, which can be conceptualized as a situation, where a societally introduced foreign parasite attacks the person’s individuality and inherent truth-and-connectedness abilities. This is what Anzieu would characterize as the “toxic function of the skin-ego” (Anzieu, 1995/2016, p. 117). Thus, cultural transmission wraps colonized and eradicated innate facts of femininity in a toxic envelope by activating the culture of destruction. This toxic function in collaboration with external threats and sometimes punishments, sends and keeps the skin-ego in its capsule in an isolative way. It must be said that Mani is one of architects of the culture of destruction and renunciation of real life historically, who established an anti-material, dualistic and mythic-ideologic system of thought in a misogynistic manner. Wilhelm Reich (1973/1927) sees psychic armor as a defensive reaction to naturalness and, what is alive. In this vein, ideology deprives people of real life and creates the negation of life in terms of social ideology:

To be able to cope with this world, people had to suppress what was most beautiful and most true, what was most basic in themselves; they had to strive to annihilate it, to surround it with the thick wall of the character armor. (p.186)

In that regard, it is interesting that misogyny and misogamy, as the mythic mindset, are passed onto children by (m)others in terms of transgenerational transmission, within an isolated capsule of the skin-ego, and with the help of the superego as a conveyor. In this context, however, Butler (2015) pointed out:

The superego, with its transgenerational transmission of rules and laws; the id, where drive representatives meet what has been repressed; the ego, which comprises countless other egos—all are concepts which offer a way forward into thinking about ideology as “how we live ourselves” as sexually differentiated beings. (p. 58)

In order to make our discussion more engaging, we need to give an example to show how the Manichaeic system of thought can be transmitted to a contemporary film. Binary opposites of the Manichaeic approach are analogues to *The Matrix* movies that are a trilogy which was created by the Wachowskis.

In around 2199, a war happened between machines with artificial intelligence (AI) and humans. With the intention of depriving the machines from the sun's light as the source of power, humans planned to defeat the machines by imprisoning them in darkness. Despite the fact that the strategy of humans limited the machines' power sources they found another solution to supply the needed energy in a creative way. Machines, with the help of their AI, succeeded in using human bodies as a bioelectrical and thermal source of energy in terms of brains in vats. AI started to cultivate human bodies in farm fields to use the power of their brains and gained control over the bodies through creating a computer program simulation which was called the *Matrix*. In order to keep the activated human brains generating power, the machines kept humans in a hypnotic state of mind and stimulated their brains by simulation. Under the control of the Matrix, no one had an identity and all were only a brain in a vat like an isolated brain (Ford, 2016; Clover, 2008).

The main theme in the *Matrix* is the contrast between machines and humans and the efforts of machines to exploit humans as a source of energy. Moreover, the envatted life in the *Matrix* is hypothetical, worthless and tempting, in fact, the reality of body and bodily pleasure is denied, i.e. a modern mythic account of the anti-corporeal Manichaeic myth of creation. The machines in *the Matrix* that used the brain power of mankind are comparable with Ahriman's agents in the Manichaeic myth of creation that imprisoned the particles of light. It can be said that they used humankind like living batteries and the *Matrix* was invented by Ahrimanic intelligence in terms of the Manichaeic mythic system. In Manicheism, demons wished to keep the mixture of light and dark and, consequently, they invented the human body as a prison to detain the particles of light. On the one hand, in Manicheism, demons hired material life to imprison the light and on the other hand, in the *Matrix*, cyber illusion is applied to create a hoax to control human brains.

In other sense, the existence and the survival of the AI is dependent on keeping humankind in the prison of the Matrix, similar to the Manichaeic point of view that Ahrimanic agents have to get control over material life to survive by keeping the particles of light as hostages. As the significant similarity between the Matrix and the Manichaeic myth of creation can be seen, this example shows how *linguistic mythic time machine* can transmit the mythic mindset from one generation to another, from one era to another and even from one millennium to another. This aspect of mythology, which can repeat and rewrap itself in a new and a modern skin elevates itself as a crucial topic for contemporary psychoanalytic research and gives a specific position to the psychoanalytic study of mythology. It can explain why the mythic mindset is transmittable through generations and survives through the linguistic nature of myth.

Conclusion

The isolated mind as a mother of all myths, generates the encapsulated skin-ego, which demonstrates the skin-ego separated and alienated from nature, the other, and subjectivity. The encapsulated skin-ego considers everything out of its dome as a stranger and inhibits experiencing and introjecting new experiences. The Manichaeic account of femininity attempted to keep encapsulated femininity as a deprived capsule of the woman as a diabolic creature who owns an empty and a blank body. With the help of encapsulating the (m)other from her humanistic-affective aspects in a non-contextual and bodiless way, Manichaeism even went beyond this and considers human beings and the soma as the devil's invention in terms of bodiless ideology and an anti-corporeal world-view. The encapsulated skin-ego and its mythic mindset can be transferred from one generation to another through identification and, to be exact, the cultural transmission under the influence of the superego as a conveyor. Moreover, a linguistic mythic time machine is activated by ahistorical and timeless aspects of myth as a part of language. This time-free and history-free dimension of the Manichaeic point of view allow it to survive with the help of its binary opposites and radical dualism among generations, as we analyzed in the case of *the Matrix* movies. In conclusion, for us, the skin is the place for the representation of cultural tensions, social limitations and mental (unconscious) conflicts. There is a significant trend in history of thoughts to conceptualize how mind, society or culture are under attack from diabolic agents or destructive machines who wish to gain control over the skin and body to survive or spread themselves. We have shown it in the Manichaeic mythic view and the Matrix trilogy which put the finger on encapsulating the skin-ego to be dominant over the gateway of sensations and the generator of thoughts to conceptualize their ideological discourse in an anti-corporeal way. In our paper, there was not enough space to discuss the relationship between the dualistic mythic mind, ideology, and the creation of the encapsulated skin-ego with the help of clinical examples. Therefore, the formulation requires some clinical case studies to evaluate the theory in a psychoanalytic setting.

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