

MASTERY, AGGRESSION AND NARCISSISM : A contribution to psychoanalytic drive theory

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Summary

The urge to master the environment is a powerful motivational force which presents a challenge to the psychoanalytical theory of drives. The author reviews critically the various psychoanalytic interpretations of mastery, beginning with Freud's concept of "component instincts, sublimation of the libido, expression of "destructive" and "non destructive" aggression, "neutral" psychic energy and "third instinct" theory. In the author's opinion none of these gives a satisfactory description of the nature of mastery.

The author then examines the development of mastery in children (ontogenesis), beginning with an infant's learning first to exert some control over the infant-caregiver relationship and later to manipulate inanimate objects, while developing perceptual, motor and cognitive skills.

Following this the author examines the origins of mastery in early living organisms (phylogenesis). Finally, he presents a hypothesis that seems to offer the best description of the nature of the urge to master, namely, that it is an evolutionary product of the need to exert control over the environment, a precondition to life rather than a characteristic of living matter. Its aim is to assure the availability of essential resources. It is separated from the two basic drives but served by both: aggression directed at obstacles, and narcissism in man and perhaps some higher animals.

mastery / aggression / libido / psychoanalytic instinct theory

*...the will to power) ...is the primeval tendency of the protoplasm (Nietzsche) [1]
There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting; it's luring me on as of old ;
Yet it isn't the gold that I am wanting, so much as just finding the gold. (R. Service :
The Spell of the Yukon) [2]*

INTRODUCTION

Ori, a toddler of two-and-a-half years tries very hard to join some pieces of Lego in a manner known only to himself. He is visibly frustrated by the difficulty and angrily rejects offers of help, saying : "Not that !" Finally he succeeds in putting together a sort of a landing platform which he raises in a triumphal gesture, his face beaming with pleasure, and announces proudly : "My Auntie Ettie 'teached' me !"

What is the motivational force driving his efforts ? What drive release provides the source of his joy ? These seemingly simple questions pose a challenge to the psychoanalytic theory of drives. Exploratory behaviour, manipulation of the social as well as physical environment, practising skills for their own sake : all these seem to form a life-long continuum of an urge to master one's own body as well as the environment. Like Ori, we all invest occasionally considerable effort into these activities and derive joy or frustration from success or failure.

Numerous psychoanalysts, beginning with Freud were aware of the issue of mastery but

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their attempts to integrate it into the theory of drives were different and sometimes contradictory. Freud used the term “instinct for mastery” on several occasions, but he never formulated a comprehensive theory as to its relation to the drive theory. His earlier writings followed the accepted biological theory of his day, i.e. the division between sexuality and self-preservative instincts, which he also called Ego-instincts [3]. Mastery of the environment would then become an expression of the self-preservative instinct. In his second, or “intermediate” theory he already attributed self preservation to narcissism [4] and therefore mastery would be a manifestation of the libido. This view was further elaborated in *The Ego and the Id* [5]. At the same time the aggressive manifestations of the urge to master, such as competitiveness would be tamed expressions of the death instinct turned upon the object. Curiosity, which is the affective aspect of exploratory behaviour, was considered by Freud to be a derivative of sexual curiosity, primarily directed to the infant’s own body and followed by the sexual curiosity of the Oedipal stage [6, 7]. He seems to have disregarded the infant’s manifest intense interest in his surroundings which can be observed from the earliest weeks of life and is followed by life-long striving to explore. (Consider Sir Hillary’s famous statement that he climbed Mount Everest: “because it was there”). In all his writings Freud implied that the different manifestations of the urge to master or manipulate the environment to one’s advantage are *components* of either one of the basic drives: libido and the “self preservative instinct” (in his earlier writings) or the death instinct (in his later works). It seems, however, that the vigorous urge to master one’s body and to exert control over the environment is such a pervasive and peremptory phenomenon as to deserve a place of its own in the theory of drives.

Psychoanalysts following Freud considered different manifestations of the urge to master the environment, such as exploration, manipulating objects or practising skills, to be expressions of one of the following: the sexual drive, the aggressive drive, a “neutral” form of drive energy, or a “third”, independent drive. I will consider all those approaches in turn. Much of the work reviewed dates from the mid-century; it is so not because of any bias against later contributions,

but because the fundamental principles of psychoanalytical drive theory laid down formulated at that time.

SUBLIMATION OF LIBIDO

“Sublimation” was a term coined by Freud [8, 9] to describe pleasure-oriented activities in which the aim and often the subject of the sexual drive have been modified to comply with the demands of reality and/or of the super-ego, i.e. with the parental injunctions and ultimately with the moral standards of the society. Many activities involving mastery of one’s body or manipulating objects, particularly in the realm of creativity, seem to fit into that concept. In some, like the visual arts or ballet dance, the sexual element is barely disguised, if at all. Some sports, like archery, may well express symbolically a sexual wish, in many other sports, however, the dominant element is purely the excellence of performance. Likewise, symbolic play, which plays a major role in a child’s psychic life, may contain unmistakably sexual elements. Other forms of children’s play, however, notably many games or constructions, can only be interpreted as sexual symbols by a vast stretch of imagination. Even a casual observer will notice that children invest a great deal of time and energy in practising skills for the skills’ sake [10, 11]. The constant aim of the games, played by older infants and young children, like that of little Ori, is achieving a desired effect. It is not a particular content of the activity that is the source of joy but the fact that the child has achieved exactly what he or she intended. Hence, while some games and playful activities may well involve sublimated sexual drive, it does not appear to be a constant or necessary component.

AGGRESSION

There can be hardly any doubt that the urge for mastery is intimately related to aggression. The term “mastery” in common language, as in “master race”, implies social domination and forceful imposition of one’s will on the others. If we extend, however, the meaning of the term to describe the ability or the striving to control

one's body and mind (within limits of reality) and to induce favourable changes in the environment, not only social but physical as well, then we encounter considerable difficulty in ascribing all of them to aggression. Many adaptive activities do contain an aggressive element, e.g. many social encounters, even affectionate encounters, involve some measure of competitiveness or envy. Physical work involves often cutting, breaking or otherwise mutilating inanimate matter. Other challenging tasks, however, seem to elude any reference to aggression. Can solving a mathematical equation be attributed to the aggressive drive? Can building a bird's nest, an adaptive act involving highly skilled manipulation of inanimate matter be viewed as aggression?

Several psychoanalysts dealt with the issue of adaptive activities that seem closely related to aggression and yet cannot easily be considered as manifestations of the aggressive drive. I will limit the discussion to the views of Rochlin, Kohut and Parens, as the most pertinent to the topic under consideration. I will not attempt to give an exhaustive overview of their contribution, but present a few salient points, relevant for our discussion.

Rochlin [12] made a distinction between human aggression and aggression in animals. Human aggression, according to him is unique because its primary source is a defence of narcissism, a uniquely human quality. According to him aggression is not a primary drive but it appears whenever there is a threat of injury to the self-esteem. He, like several theoreticians before him, opposed equating aggression with destructiveness and recognized the adaptive, even creative manifestations of aggression.

Today we may have some doubts as to Rochlin's assertion that narcissism and narcissistic injury are uniquely human. There may well be a difference between conscious experience of an injury to self-esteem which appears to be uniquely human and an experience of having failed or having been demoted and humiliated, an experience which can be observed in numerous higher animals, especially social ones. Nevertheless Rochlin's valuable contribution is the recognition of the central role that narcissism plays in generating aggression.

Kohut [13] likewise recognized the link between narcissism and aggression, though he did not go so far as to deny the existence of an aggressive drive. He emphasized the role of the non-destructive manifestation of aggression, namely assertiveness, and considered that manifestation to be primary, while destructive aggression (exemplified by rage) to be secondary, evoked by traumatic, i.e. excessive, frustration.

H. Parens [14] wrote an exhaustive study of the different manifestations of the aggressive drive, its developmental vicissitudes and its relation to adaptive behaviours.

According to Parens there are four categories of aggression:

a) "Unpleasure-related destructiveness", which he assumed to be an inherent or innate disposition of the infant to tear down a structure against resistance. It is, according to Parens, "accompanied or associated with an affective state of unpleasure" [15].

b) "Non affective destructiveness", i.e. an activity which results in destruction of the object but is devoid of any hostile intention and is not related to unpleasure. A typical example would be feeding. Parens pointed out rightly that such destructiveness cannot be assumed to derive from self-destructiveness, in fact it serves self-preservation.

c) "Non destructive aggression", by which he meant manifestations such as "pressured" manipulation and exploration, determination to assert oneself, or to control, manifestations of the "thrust toward mastery of self and environment" [16]. He claimed that the "inner-drive-ness" of such activities and their constant appearance "gives one the impression of drive activity and of aggression".

d) "Pleasure related" manifestations of aggression appear later during the development and include various forms of sadistic behaviour, very common in children, but not relevant to this discussion.

Parens' formulation leaves unanswered the question of what should be the essential attribute of behaviour which qualifies it as an expression of "aggression", a quality which applies to all three forms (and all four manifestations) of the aggressive drive. If neither destructiveness nor

unpleasure are indispensable characteristics of the aggressive drive then what is? His criterion of "unpleasure" as the specific affect of aggression is also questionable. Unpleasure resulting from frustration certainly arouses aggression but need not accompany it. In fact activities aimed at mastery are accompanied by a conspicuously pleasurable affect as long as they are successful. The affect most closely related to aggression is anger in its various forms, from mild resentment to murderous rage. It seems more appropriate to assume that the essential characteristic of aggression is an antagonistic aim and, in higher animals at least, an angry affect of any shade. That will allow us to exclude those adaptive behaviours which have no apparent relation to aggression, e.g. exploration or creativity.

Konrad Lorenz [17] distinguished between "intra-species" and "inter-species" aggression, i.e. aggression directed at individuals of the same or of another species. It seems to me that a more applicable distinction would be between "alimentary" and "competitive" aggression. Alimentary aggression is usually, though not inevitably, directed at organisms of another species (animals or plants) and is inevitably destructive. It is not easy, however, to draw a line at which point alimentation, which is clearly a form of mastering the environment, involves aggression. Plants obtain their resources from inanimate elements, some lower organisms feed on decaying matter. Is munching grass an act of aggression? It certainly does not seem to involve any hostile affect on part of the cow, though it is destructive as far as the grass is concerned. (Indeed, many plants defend themselves by various means against such "non affective" destructiveness). Predation, in contrast to such placid destructiveness, does involve manifestation of aggressive affect. It is particularly dramatic in those predators (like leopards) that attack an animal larger than themselves. In such situations we may observe facial and body expression of intense fury. We may conclude therefore that alimentation is a form of mastering the environment and aggression seems to be directly related to the resistance to satisfying the need.

Competitive aggression, in contrast to alimentary aggression, is more often than not directed at individuals of the same species and it is usually aimed at obtaining resources (i.e. food) or

reproductive opportunities and/or social dominance. In higher animals it may be intense but is rarely destructive.

In conclusion, mastery of the social environment is, by its very nature, aggressive, though not necessarily destructive. Mastering inanimate environment, like digging a burrow or nest-building, may or may not be destructive and need not be aggressive. In other words, despite the close relationship between mastery and aggression, the two are far from identical.

Some empirical studies also lead to the conclusion that mastery needs to be differentiated from aggression. Ethel S. Person [18] studied sadistic fantasies in men and came to the conclusion that the primary aim of the such fantasies is not aggression in itself, but the wish for power, a defence against the fear of lack of male competence and a fear of being rejected and ridiculed. Przybylski and Ryan [19] studied aggressive video games and concluded that the degree of violence contributes little to the enjoyment of the game and to the motivation to play it again. Instead, it is the sense of competence that correlates with enjoyment and motivation. In other words, in some seemingly typical manifestations of aggression, the underlying motivation is not aggression as such but a sense of power and competence.

NEUTRALIZED ENERGY

Freud [20] assumed that instinctual energy, more precisely libidinal energy, can be displaced and "neutralized" to serve adaptive ego functions. Sublimation, however, refers to an aim-inhibited release of instinctual energy, still under the influence of the pleasure principle, albeit tamed by the reality principle. In contrast, neutralization would imply a total detachment of the psychic energy from the original drive and its diversion into an adaptive function, entirely under the control of the Ego and the reality principle. Freud, however, was not entirely clear as to the distinction between the two.

Hartman [21] pointed out that many adaptive Ego functions could not be explained in terms of conflict resolution, which means they could not fit into the accepted dynamic theory and coined the term "conflict-free Ego zone". He de-

veloped further the concept of innate “neutral” psychic energy to account for self-preservative (adaptive) Ego functions, serving an individual’s biological and social needs, including mastery over the environment. This ingenuous hypothesis helped to expand the horizons of psychoanalysis in order to become a general theory of human behaviour, but it also raises serious difficulties. To begin with, the concept of “psychic energy” became more and more problematic with time. Even Freud was aware of the fact that the term “psychic energy” does not refer to any concrete entity and is, at most, an apt metaphor that describes the peremptory power of the drives [22]. Unlike affects, “psychic energy” can hardly be experienced subjectively nor is it in any way correlated with the intensity of neuronal stimulation.

The second difficulty with the concept of “neutral” psychic energy is that it can hardly account for the intensity of pleasure upon achieving the goal, since pleasure was assumed by Freud to express the consummatory release of drive tension.

The “neutral energy” theory seems also to disregard a distinction between those adaptive (i.e. Ego) functions, like perception or memory, that are stimulus bound and those, like exploratory behaviour, that seem to derive from an inner urge. The first ones hardly require any assumption of “psychic energy”: they are a direct response, “energized” by the stimulus. The others, however, require an assumption of a self-activating internal process, manifested in all drive-related behaviours. The concept of “psychic energy” does not appear to be the best assumption to explain such self-activating processes and I will return to this point later.

“THIRD DRIVE” THEORIES

R. W. White [23] presented numerous examples from animal studies as well as from infant and adult human behaviour, which demonstrate the urge to explore and to manipulate the environment in order to produce stimuli (rather than reacting to them), and the pleasure that many creatures seem to derive solely from the sense of success and from “attaining a more differentiated cognitive map of the environment :” (p. 320).

White presented strong arguments to suggest that this urge is neither a tension-reducing urge (like the sexual drive) nor a response to the environmental stimuli, though, admittedly, external stimuli do play a role in determining its direction. Rather, it seems to be the effect of internal neural processes. It is, metaphorically, “what the neuromuscular system wants to do when it is otherwise unoccupied” (p. 321). White suggested the term “effectance” to describe this urge and assumed that its ultimate adaptive goal was to foster competence.

Hendrick [24, 25] was the most prominent psychoanalytic exponent of the “third instinct” theory. He presented a detailed account of the motivational force and the pleasure derived from mastery, beginning in infancy and then resulting from work in later life. He derived his conclusions from the developmental studies of Myrtle McGraw [23], as well as his own observations of young children and argued that the need to master and the urge to practice skills, when devoid of any competitive or hostile intention, could hardly be viewed as a derivative of the aggressive drive. Therefore he suggested the hypothesis of a third, independent drive. In his later paper [25] he postulated the existence of a “work principle”, operating in the service of drive of mastery, as opposed to the “pleasure principle” related to the sexual drive. He argued that not all pleasure derived from work can be explained as reaction formation to forbidden libidinal or aggressive fantasies and claimed that the pleasure derived from a well accomplished act is evidence of a drive separate from libido and aggression.

Hendrick’s papers were received with considerable scepticism by other leading psychoanalysts. Besides the natural reluctance to adopt such a fundamental revision of the psychoanalytic metapsychology, there are serious drawbacks to the assumption of three, rather than two, basic drives. The model of two opposing drives and the balance between them is not only endowed with a philosophical elegance (yin and yang, good and evil), but, more importantly, it is consistent with the observation that countless natural phenomena can best be described in terms of two opposing forces. Such is the case of the co-ordination of an athlete’s voluntary movements, a bird’s flight, the motion of plan-

ets, the flow of an electrical current, or the matter-antimatter theory ; an admittedly extremely broad range of phenomena. Much can be gained by having a model of psychic functioning based on the same principle. The most important reason, however, to preserve the dual drive-conflict theory is its invaluable contribution to the understanding of human behaviour in general and neurotic symptoms in particular.

The two basic drives, i.e. libido and aggression are different from the urge to master in an additional aspect. Each one of them is inseparable from its specific affects : libido affects range from tenderness to sexual excitement ; aggressive affects range from assertiveness or irritation to murderous rage. In each case the continuity of the affective range, broad as it may be, is unmistakable and so is its specific connection with the drive. No such specific affect seems to precede and drive exploratory or play behaviour, even though the success of the action does result in pleasure. In order to elucidate the elusive nature of "effectance" I propose to review the philogenesis of the urge to master as well as its ontogenesis, i.e. its development in the infant.

INFANT DEVELOPMENT (ONTOGENESIS)

A newborn infant is capable of directing his gaze to follow visual and auditory stimuli [27, 28] He will also spontaneously direct his gaze at the environment, especially at the people near to him. In that manner he or she can "choose" what to look at, can exert rudimentary control over the visual field, i.e. over the visual stimuli he receives. Within the next months he or she develops the basic social skills to initiate and to terminate contact with the caregiver [29], i.e. a measure of control over his most vital need, the primary object relationship. During that time the infant delights in "games" with the caregiver. The content of those "games" is an exchange of stimuli, often imitation by the adult of the infant's vocalizations or actions, and later mutual stimulation by the infant and the caregiver. For instance, most infants delight in the "game" of mother tickling the baby's belly while he or she laughs and they keep repeating this over and over. The essential element, however, in those "games" is the expectation of the caregiver's re-

sponse. If the latter fails to respond or responds in an unexpected way the infant appears uncomfortable or distressed. (Incidentally, the same is true of the mother: she is invariably distressed if the infant fails to respond to her advances). Thus the first mastery acquired by the infant is a (relative) control of his social environment.

Beginning from the second half of the first year the infant dedicates himself to practising control over his inanimate environment. Opportunities for triumph and frustration abound. Banging objects, taking them apart or putting them together, rolling a ball : all these provide endless opportunity for practising skills. Many of those activities may result in damage to objects but a careful observer will not fail to see that in most cases it is neither intentional nor gratifying. Quite the opposite: the infant may become visibly distressed if the manipulated object unexpectedly breaks apart. Neither is such exploratory activity accompanied by an angry affect, unless the child is frustrated first. The goal is to achieve the desired (and expected) effect, be it a sound or a motion of the object. It is precisely the achievement of a predicted outcome that results in delight. Praise and admiration on part of the adult add greatly to the child's pleasure but are not an indispensable element of it. The triumph of achievement is a goal of its own, pleasure resulting from accomplishing a task. The more challenging the task, the longer the toil, the greater the elation following success, like the joy of the prospector in Service's poem.

Papousek and Bernstein [30] studied contingent conditioning in four months' old infants. The subjects were presented with a series of coloured lights which were lit by the infants turning their heads in a specific way, e.g. two turns to the left followed by one turn to the right. The infants, once they learned the rules, engaged in this "game" with obvious delight and persistence. The authors add an interesting comment: "Sometimes we had the impression that successful solving of a problem elicited more pleasure in the subject than did the reward", i.e. the coloured lights.

More recently Dissanayake [31] wrote an exhaustive study of the urge "to do things with one's hands", of its importance in child development and in the culture of pre-industrial societies. She came to the conclusion that the intense-

ly pleasurable affect which accompanies successful completion of a manual task has presumably an evolutionary significance and in her opinion played a critical role in the evolution of Man as a thinking animal.

During the second and third year of life the children's urge for mastery finds expression primarily in the rapidly developing motor competence i.e. control over one's own body. At the same time social skills also become more evolved and more complex, and the emerging issues of dominance and competition inevitably introduce an element of aggression. Control of another human being, no matter how benevolent, involves inevitably a clash of wills and encroachment on the other's autonomy and therefore an element of aggression. From then on, the aggressive drive becomes intertwined with the striving for social status, dominance and sexual competition. However, even in adult life there are innumerable instances of pure joy of competence, devoid of aggressive intent or angry affect, like the scenes of delight in NASA's control room when a spacecraft enters its orbit.

PHILOGENESIS OF MASTERY

Freud assumed that the basic drives are characteristics of all living organisms. Therefore, to understand the origin of the urge to master we need to trace its roots all the way back into the evolution of living organisms. Nietzsche ascribed it to the "will to power" which he considered a primary motivation of all living matter, the adaptation being only a secondary derivative [32]. Such an idea seems too anthropomorphic to be useful, but it contains an element of truth.

Life arose on earth when complex molecules, probably RNAs acquired the ability to replicate themselves [33, 34], a process which required absorbing matter and energy. In the course of evolution those "protobiotic" systems developed into more complex organisms, always maintaining the ability to obtain those two essential resources from the environment. Hence, this ability is not merely a characteristic of living matter – it is a precondition to life.

During the process of evolution, living organisms developed increasingly complex and efficient means of controlling the environment and

maintaining internal stability, i.e. homeostasis. Both ends are achieved by motor systems and control systems respectively. For most vertebrates and many invertebrates, the organs of locomotion became the main, though not exclusive, means of controlling the environment. The motor system of many animals is also the primary instrument for expressing aggression but there is no reason to assume identity between the two and conclude that every motor activity is necessarily an expression of the aggressive drive as many analysts seem to assume.

It is a far cry from the pseudopodia of the amoeba engulfing a food particle, to the toddler's delight in completing a picture-puzzle. Nevertheless it is possible to trace the development of means to manipulate the environment to an organism's advantage all along the evolution.

Higher organisms have developed more efficient motor systems compared with lower ones, but the most dramatic evolutionary achievement is the complexity and effectiveness of the control systems of higher organisms, especially mammals. The toddler's control system, i.e. central nervous system, is infinitely more complex than that of any invertebrate, it is capable of integrating, internal and external sensory input with stored information, of developing an "action plan" and evaluating feedback.

The most striking quality of mastery in human beings (and seemingly in many mammals) seems to be the delight of "effectance". Somewhere along the evolution, essential adaptive behaviours became endowed with affects. We know very little about the antecedents of affects in lower animals but we can see clearly that in mammals and birds, at least, survival and reproduction "lean" (to use Freud's term) [35] on the affects expressing the two basic drives. What is then the affect concomitant with mastery? The obvious answer is a sense of competence, enhancement of self-value, i.e. narcissistic gratification [36]. Here we have to agree with Rochlin that the effect of achieving one's desired goal on the self-regard is a uniquely human quality. In man, the "protobiotic" need to obtain resources from the environment evolved into a conscious urge to exercise skills and explore and to control the environment.

NEUROBIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Recent advances in neurobiology stimulated renewed interest in the psychoanalytical theory of drives, as drives are the most “biological” aspect of analytic metapsychology. Drives, according to Freud, are the psychic representatives of biological needs [36]. Panksepp [38] is one of the leading investigators of the neurobiology of affects and motivation, and his studies are relevant for psychoanalytic drive theory. Panksepp conducted his studies on rats and it is well-known that transferring to people conclusions drawn from animal observations can be misleading. In the case of affects, however, animal observations seem to be more applicable to human psychology. Affects are generated and controlled primarily by midbrain structures, notably the amygdala and the limbic system, although the neocortex, especially the prefrontal cortex plays also a major role in modulating affective responses. Midbrain is anatomically and presumably functionally quite similar in all mammals; it is the neocortex that is so strikingly more developed in man. Moreover, drive-related behaviours, such as rage, nurturance of the newborn or sexual acts are mediated by the same neurotransmitters and neuropeptides in all mammals, including man [36].

Panksepp came to the conclusion that there is a “seek and play” system, presumably activating exploratory and skill-practising behaviours, unrelated to the fear-rage, amygdala-hipocampus-orbito-frontal circuit and the sex-nurturance circuits. He believes that the primary seat of the “seek and play” circuit is in the periaqueductal grey matter (PAG), i.e. an evolutionally old part of the mammalian brain, and it is self-activating rather than responding to stimuli, a hypothesis strikingly similar to that of White [39]. Thus, animal studies seem to support the hypothesis of an independent, self-activating urge to explore the environment and exercise skills for their own sake.

CONCLUSION

We can now formulate what seems to me the most appropriate definition of the urge to mastery: It is an evolutionary product of a basic characteristic of living matter, a biological imperative, not a

quality of living matter but rather a precondition to life. At some point of the evolutionary process it became imbued with a positive affect. In man it is driven by narcissism, i.e. a derivative of the libido, and has a critical impact on self-regard. It is closely associated with aggression, since any challenge to the urge to master mobilizes aggression in one form or another. That, in turn is a highly adaptive process, as aggression is the most natural means to overcome obstacles to mastery. We should not, however, be misled into equating aggression with the urge to master. The latter can manifest itself entirely devoid of the antagonistic intent or the angry affect, which are the essential features of aggression.

In conclusion, the urge to master deserves a place of its own in the theory of drives. It is not analogous to the two basic drives but is served by both of them. Its roots begin in the dawn of life and it is a derivative of a most elementary feature of living matter, more basic than libido or aggression, namely the ability to obtain in a most effective way the resources indispensable for survival and reproduction.

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