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SIGMUND FREUD, M.D., LL.D.

COLLECTED PAPERS

VOLUME IV

*Authorized Translation  
under the supervision of*

JOAN RIVIERE

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COLLECTED PAPERS

VOLUME IV

*PAPERS ON METAPSYCHOLOGY*

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*PAPERS ON*

*APPLIED PSYCHO-ANALYSIS*





## EDITORIAL PREFACE

WITH the appearance of this volume the task is completed of presenting in English form practically all of Professor Freud's papers which have been published up to the moment of writing, including even some which are not contained in the *Samm-lungen kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre*. Translations of papers yet to be expected from his hand will, it is anticipated, appear in the *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, but we cannot yet say in what form they will be collected.

This volume illustrates again the difficulty of classifying papers which range over such a variety of topics. The first eight constitute a unity in a way in which the others do not. They treat of mental processes from the point of view which Professor Freud has described as metapsychological, a term which is perhaps not too happily chosen. By this he means the consideration of a given mental process in what he regards as the most complete manner possible, that is, when treated topographically, dynamically and economically; he would not be satisfied unless it proved capable of being treated from these three points of view. From this series we might single out the essay on *The Unconscious* for special attention; much ink has been wasted in criticizing the author's conception of the unconscious by writers who have omitted to read this essay. These papers must, however, be read in conjunction with the theoretical chapters of *Die Traumdeutung*, with *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, the *Group Psychology*, *Das Ich und das Es*, and the four recent papers translated in vol. ii. of this Collection, if any complete view of Professor Freud's metapsychology is to be gained.

The papers in the second part of the volume have the common feature that they deal with non-medical aspects or applications of psycho-analysis. The distinction is necessarily not a sharp one, for on the one hand much of direct clinical value will be found in these papers, and on the other hand many indications of the way in which psycho-analysis can be applied to non-medical subjects will be found in the author's other writings on purely psychological and medical subjects. Those unfamiliar with psycho-analytical literature can have but little idea of the extent to which these brief indications have already proved of value in resolving problems in other fields. I refer especially to the work done by Abraham, Rank, Reik, Róheim and others in the fields of anthropology, mythology, folk-lore, literature and the history of culture in general.

To some these aspects of psycho-analysis are the most fascinating, because of the unexpected widening of vision they bring. The vista, through the centuries and beyond, of the tendencies among whose innumerable manifestations that in which they were first elucidated—psycho-neurotic symptoms—is only one, reveals as nothing else can the inherent, far-reaching and perennial part they play in the nature of man.

Before concluding, it would be well to repeat the emphasis laid in the preface to the first volume on the immeasurable importance of studying the *history* of a growing science, that is, of all science. It has been very well said that *l'histoire de la science, c'est la science même*. To confine oneself simply to a cross-section of a given branch of science at any given moment is, in spite of the speciousness of the procedure, to renounce all hope of attaining a just perspective and a balanced judgement. With this thought in mind we have appended, what is not elsewhere accessible, a bibliographical list of Professor Freud's writings in their precise chronological order.

We wish to express our gratitude to Fräulein Anna Freud and Mr. James Strachey for the invaluable help they have rendered in reading through the translation.

## REFERENCES

ALL the references in the footnotes contain only the title, and in some cases the date, of the book or paper referred to ; further details will in all cases be found at the end of this volume in the List of Books and Papers referred to in the Text.

The following abbreviations are used in the footnotes and at the end in the List of Books and Papers referred to :

1. *Imago* = *Imago*, Vienna.
2. *Jahrbuch* = *Jahrbuch für psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Forschungen*, Vienna.
3. *Sammlung* = Freud, *Sammlung kleiner Schriften zur Neurosenlehre*, Vienna.
4. *Zeitschrift* = *Internationale Zeitschrift für ärztliche Psychoanalyse*, later called *Internationale Zeitschrift für Psychoanalyse*, Vienna.
5. *Zentralblatt* = *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse*, Vienna.

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# PAPERS ON METAPSYCHOLOGY



## I

FORMULATIONS REGARDING THE TWO  
PRINCIPLES IN MENTAL FUNCTIONING<sup>1</sup>

(1911)

WE have long observed that every neurosis has the result, and therefore probably the purpose, of forcing the patient out of real life, of alienating him from actuality. Nor could a fact such as this escape the observation of Pierre Janet; he spoke of a loss of '*la fonction du réel*' as being a special characteristic of the neurotic, but without discovering the connection of this disturbance with the fundamental conditions of neurosis.<sup>2</sup> By introducing the concept of repression into the genesis of the neuroses we have been able to gain some insight into this connection. The neurotic turns away from reality because he finds it unbearable—either the whole or parts of it. The most extreme type of this alienation from reality is shown in certain cases of hallucinatory psychosis which aim at denying the existence of the particular event that occasioned the outbreak of insanity (Griesinger). But actually every neurotic does the same with some fragment of reality.<sup>3</sup> And now we are confronted with the task of investigating the development of the relation of the neurotic and of mankind in general to reality, and of so bringing the psychological significance of the real outer world into the structure of our theory.

In the psychology which is founded on psycho-

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Jahrbuch*, Bd. iii., 1911; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Dritte Folge. [Translated by M. N. Searl.]

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Janet, *Les Névroses*, 1909.

<sup>3</sup> A remarkably clear presentiment of this causation has recently been pointed out by Otto Rank in Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Idea* (*Zentralblatt*, 1910).



analysis we have accustomed ourselves to take as our starting-point the unconscious mental processes, with the peculiarities of which we have become acquainted through analysis. These we consider to be the older, primary processes, the residues of a phase of development in which they were the only kind of mental processes. The sovereign tendency obeyed by these primary processes is easy of recognition; it is called the pleasure-pain (*Lust-Unlust*) principle, or more shortly the pleasure-principle. These processes strive towards gaining pleasure; from any operation which might arouse unpleasantness ('pain') mental activity draws back (repression). Our nocturnal dreams, our waking tendency to shut out painful impressions, are remnants of the supremacy of this principle and proofs of its power.

In presupposing that the state of mental equilibrium was originally disturbed by the peremptory demands of inner needs, I am returning to lines of thought which I have developed in another place.<sup>1</sup> In the situation I am considering, whatever was thought of (desired) was simply imagined in an hallucinatory form, as still happens to-day with our dream-thoughts every night.<sup>2</sup> This attempt at satisfaction by means of hallucination was abandoned only in consequence of the absence of the expected gratification, because of the disappointment experienced. Instead, the mental apparatus had to decide to form a conception of the real circumstances in the outer world and to exert itself to alter them. A new principle of mental functioning was thus introduced; what was conceived of was no longer that which was pleasant, but that which was real, even if it should be unpleasant.<sup>3</sup> This institution of the *reality-principle* proved a momentous step.

<sup>1</sup> The General Section of *Die Traumdeutung*.

<sup>2</sup> The state of sleep can recover the likeness of mental life as it was before the recognition of reality, because a prerequisite of sleep is a deliberate rejection of reality (the wish to sleep).

<sup>3</sup> I will attempt to amplify the above schematic presentation with some further details. It will rightly be objected that an organization

1. In the first place the new demands made a succession of adaptations necessary in the mental apparatus, which, on account of insufficient or uncertain knowledge, we can only detail very cursorily.

The increased significance of external reality heightened the significance also of the sense-organs directed towards that outer world, and of the *consciousness* attached to them; the latter now learned to comprehend the qualities of sense in addition to the qualities of pleasure and 'pain' which hitherto had alone been of interest to it. A special function was instituted which had periodically to search the outer world, in order that its data might be already familiar if an urgent inner need should arise; this function was *attention*. Its activity meets the sense-impressions half-way, instead of awaiting their appearance. At the same time there was probably introduced a system of *notation*, whose task was to deposit the results of this periodical activity of consciousness—a part of that which we call *memory*.

In place of repression, which excluded from cathexis as productive of 'pain' some of the emerging ideas,

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which is a slave to the pleasure-principle and neglects the reality of the outer world could not maintain itself alive for the shortest time, so that it could not have come into being at all. The use of a fiction of this kind is, however, vindicated by the consideration that the infant, if one only includes the maternal care, does almost realize such a state of mental life. Probably it hallucinates the fulfilment of its inner needs; it betrays its 'pain' due to increase of stimulation and delay of satisfaction by the motor discharge of crying and struggling and then experiences the hallucinated satisfaction. Later, as a child, it learns to employ intentionally these modes of discharge as means of expression. Since the care of the infant is the prototype of the later care of the child, the supremacy of the pleasure-principle can end in actuality only with complete mental detachment from the parents. A beautiful example of a state of mental life shut off from the stimuli of the outer world, and able to satisfy even its nutritional requirements autistically (to use Bleuler's word), is given by the bird inside the egg together with its food supply; for it, maternal care is limited to the provision of warmth. I shall not look upon it as a correction, but as an amplification of the scheme in question, if anyone demands by what devices the system living according to the pleasure-principle can withdraw itself from the stimuli of reality. These contrivances are only the correlate of 'repression', which treats inner 'painful' stimuli as if they were outer, *i.e.* reckons them as belonging to the outer world.

there developed an impartial *passing of judgement*, which had to decide whether a particular idea was true or false, that is, was in agreement with reality or not; decision was determined by comparison with the memory-traces of reality.

A new function was now entrusted to motor discharge, which under the supremacy of the pleasure-principle had served to unburden the mental apparatus of accretions of stimuli, and in carrying out this task had sent innervations into the interior of the body (mien, expressions of affect); it was now employed in the appropriate alteration of reality. It was converted into *action*.

Restraint of motor discharge (of action) had now become necessary, and was provided by means of the process of *thought*, which was developed from ideation. Thought was endowed with qualities which made it possible for the mental apparatus to support increased tension during a delay in the process of discharge. It is essentially an experimental way of acting, accompanied by displacement of smaller quantities of cathexis together with less expenditure (discharge) of them. For this purpose conversion of free cathexis into 'bound' cathexes was imperative, and this was brought about by means of raising the level of the whole cathectic process. It is probable that thinking was originally unconscious, in so far as it rose above mere ideation and turned to the relations between the object-impressions, and that it became endowed with further qualities which were perceptible to consciousness only through its connection with the memory-traces of words.

2. There is a general tendency of our mental apparatus which we can trace back to the economic principle of saving in expenditure; it seems to find expression in the tenacity with which we hold on to the sources of pleasure at our disposal, and in the difficulty with which we renounce them. With the introduction of the reality-principle one mode of thought-activity was split off; it was kept free from reality-testing and

remained subordinated to the pleasure-principle alone.<sup>1</sup> This is the act of *phantasy-making*, which begins already in the games of children, and later, continued as *day-dreaming*, abandons its dependence on real objects.

3. The supersession of the pleasure-principle by the reality-principle with all the mental consequences of this, which is here schematically condensed in a single sentence, is not in reality accomplished all at once; nor does it take place simultaneously along the whole line. For while this development is going on in the ego-instincts, the sexual instincts become detached from them in very significant ways. The sexual instincts at first behave auto-erotically; they find their satisfaction in the child's own body and therefore do not come into the situation of frustration which enforces the installation of the reality-principle. Then when later on they begin to find an object, this development undergoes a long interruption in the latency period, which postpones sexual development until puberty. These two factors—auto-erotism and latency period—bring about the result that the mental development of the sexual instincts is delayed and remains far longer under the supremacy of the pleasure-principle, from which in many people it is never able to withdraw itself at all.

In consequence of these conditions there arises a closer connection, on the one hand, between the sexual instincts and phantasy and, on the other hand, between the ego-instincts and the activities of consciousness. Both in healthy and in neurotic people this connection strikes us as very intimate, although the considerations of genetic psychology put forward above lead us to recognize it as *secondary*. The perpetuated activity of auto-erotism makes possible a long retention of the easier momentary and phantastic satisfaction in regard to the sexual object, in place of real satisfaction in regard to

<sup>1</sup> Just as a nation whose wealth rests on the exploitation of its land yet reserves certain territory to be preserved in its original state and protected from cultural alterations, e.g. Yellowstone Park.

it, the latter requiring effort and delay. In the realm of phantasy, repression remains all-powerful; it brings about the inhibition of ideas *in statu nascendi* before they can be consciously noticed, should cathexis of them be likely to occasion the release of 'pain'. This is the weak place of our mental organization, which can be utilized to bring back under the supremacy of the pleasure-principle thought-processes which had already become rational. An essential part of the mental predisposition to neurosis thus lies in the delayed training of the sexual instincts in the observance of reality and, further, in the conditions which make this delay possible.

4. Just as the pleasure-ego can do nothing but *wish*, work towards gaining pleasure and avoiding 'pain', so the reality-ego need do nothing but strive for what is *useful* and guard itself against damage.<sup>1</sup> Actually, the substitution of the reality-principle for the pleasure-principle denotes no dethronement of the pleasure-principle, but only a safeguarding of it. A momentary pleasure, uncertain in its results, is given up, but only in order to gain in the new way an assured pleasure coming later. But the endopsychic impression made by this substitution has been so powerful that it is mirrored in a special religious myth. The doctrine of reward in a future life for the—voluntary or enforced—renunciation of earthly lusts is nothing but a mythical projection of this revolution in the mind. In logical pursuit of this prototype, *religions* have been able to effect absolute renunciation of pleasure in this life by means of the promise of compensation in a future life; they have not, however, achieved a conquest of the pleasure-principle in this way. It is *science* which comes nearest to succeeding in this conquest; science, however, also offers intellectual pleasure during its work and promises practical gain at the end.

<sup>1</sup> The superiority of the reality-ego over the pleasure-ego is aptly expressed by Bernard Shaw in these words: 'To be able to choose the line of greatest advantage instead of yielding in the direction of least resistance'. (*Man and Superman: A Comedy and a Philosophy*.)

5. *Education* can without further hesitation be described as an incitement to the conquest of the pleasure-principle, and to its replacement by the reality-principle; it offers its aid, that is, to that process of development which concerns the ego; to this end it makes use of rewards of love from those in charge, and thus it fails if the spoilt child thinks it will possess this love whatever happens and can in no circumstances lose it.

6. *Art* brings about a reconciliation of the two principles in a peculiar way. The artist is originally a man who turns from reality because he cannot come to terms with the demand for the renunciation of instinctual satisfaction as it is first made, and who then in phantasy-life allows full play to his erotic and ambitious wishes. But he finds a way of return from this world of phantasy back to reality; with his special gifts he moulds his phantasies into a new kind of reality, and men concede them a justification as valuable reflections of actual life. Thus by a certain path he actually becomes the hero, king, creator, favourite he desired to be, without pursuing the circuitous path of creating real alterations in the outer world. But this he can only attain because other men feel the same dissatisfaction as he with the renunciation demanded by reality, and because this dissatisfaction, resulting from the displacement of the pleasure-principle by the reality-principle, is itself a part of reality.<sup>1</sup>

7. While the ego goes through its transformation from a *pleasure-ego* into a *reality-ego*, the sexual instincts undergo the changes that lead them from their original auto-erotism through various intermediate phases to object-love in the service of procreation. If it is correct that every step of these two processes of development may become the seat of a predisposition to later neurotic illness, it seems to follow that the decision as regards the form of the subsequent illness

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the similar position taken by Otto Rank in *Der Künstler*, 1907.

(election of neurosis) will depend on the particular phase of ego-development and libido-development in which the inhibition of development has occurred. The chronological characteristics of the two developments, as yet unstudied, their possible variations in speed with respect to each other, thus receive unexpected significance.

8. There is a most surprising characteristic of unconscious (repressed) processes to which every investigator accustoms himself only by exercising great self-control; it results from their entire disregard of the reality-test; thought-reality is placed on an equality with external actuality, wishes with fulfilment and occurrence, just as happens without more ado under the supremacy of the old pleasure-principle. Hence also the difficulty of distinguishing unconscious phantasies from memories which have become unconscious. One must, however, never allow oneself to be misled into applying to the repressed creations of the mind the standards of reality; this might result in undervaluing the importance of phantasies in symptom-formation on the ground that they are not actualities; or in deriving a neurotic sense of guilt from another source because there is no proof of actual committal of any crime. One is bound to employ the currency that prevails in the country one is exploring; in our case it is the neurotic currency. For example, one may try to solve such a dream as the following. A man who had at one time looked after his father through a long and painful illness up to his death, informed me that in the months following his father's decease he had repeatedly dreamt as follows: *his father was again alive and he was talking to him as of old. But as he did so he felt it exceedingly painful that his father was nevertheless dead, only not aware of the fact.* No other way leads to the understanding of this seemingly senseless dream than the addition of 'as the dreamer wished', or 'as a result of his wish', after the words 'that his father was nevertheless dead'; and the further addition of

' that he wished it ' to the last words. The dream-thought then runs : it was a painful memory for him that he must have desired his father's death (as a release) while he still lived, and how terrible it would have been had his father had any suspicion of it. It is thus a matter of the familiar case of self-reproaches after the loss of a loved person, and in this case the reproach goes back to the infantile significance of the death-wish against the father.

The deficiencies of this short paper, which is rather introductory than expository, are perhaps only to a slight extent excused if I acknowledge them to be unavoidable. In the meagre sentences on the mental consequences of adaptation to the reality-principle I was obliged to intimate opinions which I should have preferred to withhold, the vindication of which will certainly require no small exertion. But I hope that benevolent readers will not fail to observe how even in this work the sway of the reality-principle is beginning.



## II

### A NOTE ON THE UNCONSCIOUS IN PSYCHO-ANALYSIS <sup>1</sup>

(1912)

I WISH to expound in a few words and as plainly as possible what the term 'unconscious' has come to mean in psycho-analysis and in psycho-analysis alone.

A conception—or any other mental element—which is now *present* to my consciousness may become *absent* the next moment, and may become *present again*, after an interval, unchanged, and, as we say, from memory, not as a result of a fresh perception by our senses. It is this fact which we are accustomed to account for by the supposition that during the interval the conception has been present in our mind, although *latent* in consciousness. In what shape it may have existed while present in the mind and latent in consciousness we have no means of guessing.

At this very point we may be prepared to meet with the philosophical objection that the latent conception did not exist as an object of psychology, but as a physical disposition for the recurrence of the same psychical phenomenon, *i.e.* of the said conception. But we may reply that this is a theory far overstepping the domain of psychology proper; that it simply begs the question by asserting 'conscious' to be an identical term with 'mental', and that it is clearly at fault in denying psychology the right to account for its most common facts, such as memory, by its own means.

Now let us call 'conscious' the conception which

<sup>1</sup> Written (in English) at the request of the Society for Psychological Research and first published in a Special Medical Supplement of their *Proceedings*, Part lxvi., Vol. xxvi., 1912.

is present to our consciousness and of which we are aware, and let this be the only meaning of the term 'conscious'. As for latent conceptions, if we have any reason to suppose that they exist in the mind—as we had in the case of memory—let them be denoted by the term 'unconscious'.

Thus an unconscious conception is one of which we are not aware, but the existence of which we are nevertheless ready to admit on account of other proofs or signs.

This might be considered an uninteresting piece of descriptive or classificatory work if no experience appealed to our judgement other than the facts of memory, or the cases of association by unconscious links. The well-known experiment, however, of 'post-hypnotic suggestion' teaches us to insist upon the importance of the distinction between *conscious* and *unconscious* and seems to increase its value.

In this experiment, as performed by Bernheim, a person is put into a hypnotic state and is subsequently aroused. While he was in the hypnotic state, under the influence of the physician, he was ordered to execute a certain action at a certain fixed moment after his awakening, say half an hour later. He awakes, and seems fully conscious and in his ordinary condition; he has no recollection of his hypnotic state, and yet at the pre-arranged moment there rushes into his mind the impulse to do such and such a thing, and he does it consciously, though not knowing why. It seems impossible to give any other description of the phenomenon than to say that the order had been present in the mind of the person in a condition of latency, or had been present unconsciously, until the given moment came, and then had become conscious. But not the whole of it emerged into consciousness: only the conception of the act to be executed. All the other ideas associated with this conception—the order, the influence of the physician, the recollection of the hypnotic state—remained unconscious even then.

But we have more to learn from such an experiment. We are led from the purely descriptive to a *dynamic* view of the phenomenon. The idea of the action ordered in hypnosis not only became an object of consciousness at a certain moment, but the more striking aspect of the fact is that this idea grew *active* : it was translated into action as soon as consciousness became aware of its presence. The real stimulus to the action being the order of the physician, it is hard not to concede that the idea of the physician's order became active too. Yet this last idea did not reveal itself to consciousness, as did its outcome, the idea of the action ; it remained unconscious, and so it was *active and unconscious* at the same time.

A post-hypnotic suggestion is a laboratory production, an artificial fact. But if we adopt the theory of hysterical phenomena first put forward by Pierre Janet and elaborated by Breuer and myself, we shall not be at a loss for plenty of natural facts showing the psychological character of the post-hypnotic suggestion even more clearly and distinctly.

The mind of the hysterical patient is full of active yet unconscious ideas ; all her symptoms proceed from such ideas. It is in fact the most striking character of the hysterical mind to be ruled by them. If the hysterical woman vomits, she may do so from the idea of being pregnant. She has, however, no knowledge of this idea, although it can easily be detected in her mind, and made conscious to her, by one of the technical procedures of psycho-analysis. If she is executing the jerks and movements constituting her ' fit ', she does not even consciously represent to herself the intended actions, and she may perceive those actions with the detached feelings of an onlooker. Nevertheless analysis will show that she was acting her part in the dramatic reproduction of some incident in her life, the memory of which was unconsciously active during the attack. The same preponderance of active unconscious ideas is revealed by analysis as the

essential fact in the psychology of all other forms of neurosis.

We learn therefore by the analysis of neurotic phenomena that a latent or unconscious idea is not necessarily a weak one, and that the presence of such an idea in the mind admits of indirect proofs of the most cogent kind, which are equivalent to the direct proof furnished by consciousness. We feel justified in making our classification agree with this addition to our knowledge by introducing a fundamental distinction between different kinds of latent or unconscious ideas. We were accustomed to think that every latent idea was so because it was weak and that it grew conscious as soon as it became strong. We have now gained the conviction that there are some latent ideas which do not penetrate into consciousness, however strong they may have become. Therefore we may call the latent ideas of the first type *preconscious*, while we reserve the term *unconscious* (proper) for the latter type which we came to study in the neuroses. The term *unconscious*, which was used in the purely descriptive sense before, now comes to imply something more. It designates not only latent ideas in general, but especially ideas with a certain dynamic character, ideas keeping apart from consciousness in spite of their intensity and activity.

Before continuing my exposition I will refer to two objections which are likely to be raised at this point. The first of these may be stated thus: instead of subscribing to the hypothesis of unconscious ideas of which we know nothing, we had better assume that consciousness can be split up, so that certain ideas or other psychical acts may constitute a consciousness apart, which has become detached and estranged from the bulk of conscious psychical activity. Well-known pathological cases like that of Dr. Azam seem to go far to show that the splitting up of consciousness is no fanciful imagination.

I venture to urge against this theory that it is a

gratuitous assumption, based on the abuse of the word 'conscious'. We have no right to extend the meaning of this word so far as to make it include a consciousness of which its owner himself is not aware. If philosophers find difficulty in accepting the existence of unconscious ideas, the existence of an unconscious consciousness seems to me even more objectionable. The cases described as splitting of consciousness, like Dr. Azam's, might better be denoted as shifting of consciousness,—that function—or whatever it be—oscillating between two different psychical complexes which become conscious and unconscious in alternation.

The other objection that may probably be raised would be that we apply to normal psychology conclusions which are drawn chiefly from the study of pathological conditions. We are enabled to answer it by another fact, the knowledge of which we owe to psycho-analysis. Certain deficiencies of function of most frequent occurrence among healthy people, *e.g.* *lapsus linguae*, errors in memory and speech, forgetting of names, etc., may easily be shown to depend on the action of strong unconscious ideas in the same way as neurotic symptoms. We shall meet with another still more convincing argument at a later stage of this discussion.

By the differentiation of preconscious and unconscious ideas, we are led on to leave the field of classification and to form an opinion about functional and dynamical relations in the action of the mind. We have found a *preconscious activity* passing into consciousness with no difficulty, and an *unconscious activity* which remains so and seems to be cut off from consciousness.

Now we do not know whether these two modes of psychical activity are identical or essentially divergent from their beginning, but we may ask why they should become different in the course of mental action. To this last question psycho-analysis gives a clear and unhesitating answer. It is by no means impossible for

the product of unconscious activity to pierce into consciousness, but a certain amount of exertion is needed for this task. When we try to do it in ourselves, we become aware of a distinct feeling of *repulsion* which must be overcome, and when we produce it in a patient we get the most unquestionable signs of what we call his *resistance* to it. So we learn that the unconscious idea is excluded from consciousness by living forces which oppose themselves to its reception, while they do not object to other ideas, the preconscious ones. Psycho-analysis leaves no room for doubt that the repulsion from unconscious ideas is only provoked by the tendencies embodied in their contents. The next and most probable theory which can be formulated at this stage of our knowledge is the following. Unconsciousness is a regular and inevitable phase in the processes constituting our mental activity; every mental act begins as an unconscious one, and it may either remain so or go on developing into consciousness, according as it meets with resistance or not. The distinction between preconscious and unconscious activity is not a primary one, but comes to be established after repulsion has sprung up. Only then the difference between preconscious ideas, which can appear in consciousness and reappear at any moment, and unconscious ideas which cannot do so gains a theoretical as well as a practical value. A rough but not inadequate analogy to this supposed relation of conscious to unconscious activity might be drawn from the field of ordinary photography. The first stage of the photograph is the 'negative'; every photographic picture has to pass through the 'negative process', and some of these negatives which have held good in examination are admitted to the 'positive process' ending in the picture.

But the distinction between preconscious and unconscious activity, and the recognition of the barrier which keeps them asunder, is not the last or the most important result of the psycho-analytic investigation of mental life. There is one mental product to be met

with in the most normal persons, which yet presents a very striking analogy to the wildest productions of insanity, and was no more intelligible to philosophers than insanity itself. I refer to dreams. Psycho-analysis is founded upon the analysis of dreams ; the interpretation of dreams is the most complete piece of work the young science has done up to the present. One of the most common types of dream-formation may be described as follows : a train of thoughts has been aroused by the working of the mind in the day-time, and retained some of its activity, escaping from the general inhibition of interests which introduces sleep and constitutes the mental preparation for sleeping. During the night this train of thoughts succeeds in finding connections with one of the unconscious tendencies present ever since his childhood in the mind of the dreamer, but ordinarily *repressed* and excluded from his conscious life. By the borrowed force of this unconscious help, the thoughts, the residue of the day's mental work, now become active again, and emerge into consciousness in the shape of the dream. Now three things have happened :

- (1) The thoughts have undergone a change, a disguise and a distortion, which represents the part of the unconscious helpmate.
- (2) The thoughts have occupied consciousness at a time when they ought not.
- (3) Some part of the unconscious, which could not otherwise have done so, has emerged into consciousness.

We have learnt the art of finding out the ' residual thoughts ', the *latent thoughts of the dream*, and, by comparing them with the *manifest dream*, we are able to form a judgement on the changes they underwent and the manner in which these were brought about.

The latent thoughts of the dream differ in no respect from the products of our regular conscious activity ; they deserve the name of preconscious thoughts, and may indeed have been conscious at some

moment of waking life. But by entering into connection with the unconscious tendencies during the night they have become assimilated to the latter, degraded as it were to the condition of unconscious thoughts, and subjected to the laws by which unconscious activity is governed. And here is the opportunity to learn what we could not have guessed from speculation, or from another source of empirical information—that the laws of unconscious activity differ widely from those of the conscious. We gather in detail what the peculiarities of the *Unconscious* are, and we may hope to learn still more about them by a profounder investigation of the processes of dream-formation.

This inquiry is not yet half finished, and an exposition of the results obtained hitherto is scarcely possible without entering into the most intricate problems of dream-analysis. But I would not break off this discussion without indicating the change and progress in our comprehension of the Unconscious which are due to our psycho-analytic study of dreams.

Unconsciousness seemed to us at first only an enigmatical characteristic of a definite mental act. Now it means more for us. It is a sign that this act partakes of the nature of a certain mental category known to us by other and more important features, and that it belongs to a system of mental activity which is deserving of our fullest attention. The index-value of the unconscious has far outgrown its importance as a property. The system revealed by the sign that the single acts forming parts of it are unconscious we designate by the name 'The Unconscious', for want of a better and less ambiguous term. In German, I propose to denote this system by the letters *Ubw*, an abbreviation of the German word 'Unbewusst'.<sup>1</sup> And this is the third and most significant sense which the term 'unconscious' has acquired in psycho-analysis.

<sup>1</sup> [In English translations this is rendered Ucs; 'consciousness' by Cs; 'preconsciousness' by Pcs; 'perception-consciousness' by Pcpt-Cs.—ED.]



### III

## ON NARCISSISM: AN INTRODUCTION <sup>1</sup>

(1914)

### I

THE word narcissism is taken from clinical terminology and was chosen by P. Näcke <sup>2</sup> in 1899 to denote the attitude of a person who treats his own body in the same way as otherwise the body of a sexual object is treated; that is to say, he experiences sexual pleasure in gazing at, caressing and fondling his body, till complete gratification ensues upon these activities. Developed to this degree, narcissism has the significance of a perversion, which has absorbed the whole sexual life of the subject; consequently, in dealing with it we may expect to meet with phenomena similar to those for which we look in the study of all perversions.

Now those engaged in psycho-analytic observation were struck by the fact that isolated features of the narcissistic attitude are found in many people who are characterized by other aberrations—for instance, as Sadger states, in homosexuals—and at last it seemed that a disposition of the libido which must be described as narcissistic might have to be reckoned with in a much wider field, and that it might claim a place in the regular sexual development of human beings.<sup>3</sup> Difficulties in psycho-analytic work upon neurotics led to the same supposition, for it seemed as though this kind of narcissistic attitude in them was one of the

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Jahrbuch*, Bd. vi., 1914; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Cecil M. Baines.]

<sup>2</sup> [In a later paper Professor Freud has corrected this slip and added the name of Havelock Ellis.—ED.]

<sup>3</sup> Otto Rank, 'Ein Beitrag zum Narzissmus'.

factors limiting their susceptibility to influence. Narcissism in this sense would not be a perversion, but the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation, a measure of which may justifiably be attributed to every living creature.

A pressing motive for occupying ourselves with the conception of a primary and normal narcissism arose when the attempt was made to bring our knowledge of dementia praecox (Kraepelin), or schizophrenia (Bleuler), into line with the hypothesis upon which the libido-theory is based. Such patients, whom I propose to term paraphrenics, display two fundamental characteristics: they suffer from megalomania and they have withdrawn their interest from the external world (people and things). In consequence of this latter change in them, they are inaccessible to the influence of psycho-analysis and cannot be cured by our endeavours. But this turning away of the paraphrenic from the outer world needs to be more precisely characterized. A patient suffering from hysteria or obsessional neurosis has also, as far as the influence of his illness goes, abandoned his relation to reality. But analysis shows that he has by no means broken off his erotic relations to persons and things. He still retains them in phantasy; *i.e.* he has, on the one hand, substituted for actual objects imaginary objects founded on memories, or has blended the two; while, on the other hand, he has ceased to direct his motor activities to the attainment of his aims in connection with real objects. It is only to this condition of the libido that we may legitimately apply the term *introversion* of the libido which is used by Jung indiscriminately. It is otherwise with the paraphrenic. He seems really to have withdrawn his libido from persons and things in the outer world, without replacing them by others in his phantasy. When this does happen, the process seems to be a secondary one, part of an effort towards recovery, designed to lead the libido back towards an object.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare with these propositions my discussion of the 'end of

The question arises: What is the fate of the libido when withdrawn from external objects in schizophrenia? The megalomania characteristic of these conditions affords a clue here. It has doubtless come into being at the expense of the object-libido. The libido withdrawn from the outer world has been directed on to the ego, giving rise to a state which we may call narcissism. But the megalomania itself is no new phenomenon; on the contrary, it is, as we know, an exaggeration and plainer manifestation of a condition which had already existed previously. This leads us to the conclusion that the narcissism which arises when libidinal cathexes are called in away from external objects must be conceived of as a secondary form, superimposed upon a primary one that is obscured by manifold influences.

Let me expressly state that I am not attempting here to explain or penetrate further into the problem of schizophrenia, but am merely putting together what has been said elsewhere, in order that I may justify this introduction of the concept of narcissism.

This development of the libidq-theory—in my opinion, a legitimate development—receives reinforcement from a third quarter, namely, from the observations we make and the conceptions we form of the mental life of primitive peoples and of children. In the former we find characteristics which, if they occurred singly, might be put down to megalomania: an over-estimation of the power of wishes and mental processes, the 'omnipotence of thoughts', a belief in the magical virtue of words, and a method of dealing with the outer world—the art of 'magic'—which appears to be a logical application of these grandiose premises.<sup>1</sup> In the child of our own day, whose development is much more obscure to us, we expect a perfectly

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the world' in the analysis of Senatspräsident Schreber, COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. iii., No. IV. Also Abraham, 'Die psychosexuellen Differenzen der Hysterie und der Dementia Praecox'.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the corresponding sections on this subject in my *Totem und Tabu*, 1913.

analogous attitude towards the external world.<sup>1</sup> Thus we form a conception of an original libidinal cathexis of the ego, part of which cathexis is later yielded up to objects, but which fundamentally persists and is related to the object-cathexes much as the body of a protoplasmic animalcule is related to the pseudopodia which it puts out. In our researches, taking, as they did, neurotic symptoms for their starting-point, this part of the disposition of the libido necessarily remained hidden from us at the outset. We were struck only by the emanations from this libido—the object-cathexes, which can be put forth and drawn back again. We perceive also, broadly speaking, a certain reciprocity between ego-libido and object-libido. The more that is absorbed by the one, the more impoverished does the other become. The highest form of development of which object-libido is capable is seen in the state of being in love, when the subject seems to yield up his whole personality in favour of object-cathexis ; while we have the opposite condition in the paranoiac's phantasy (or self-perception) of the ' end of the world '.<sup>2</sup> Finally, with reference to the differentiation of the energies operating in the mind, we infer that at first in the narcissistic state they exist side by side and that our analysis is not a fine enough instrument to distinguish them ; only where there is object-cathexis is it possible to discriminate a sexual energy—the libido—from an energy pertaining to the ego-instincts.

Before going any further I must touch on two questions which lead us to the heart of the difficulties of our subject. In the first place : what is the relation of the narcissism of which we are now speaking to autoerotism, which we have described as an early state of the libido ? And secondly : if we concede to the ego a primary cathexis of libido, why is there any necessity

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ferenczi, ' Stages in the Development of the Sense of Reality '.

<sup>2</sup> There are two mechanisms in this ' end of the world ' idea : in one case, the whole libidinal cathexis is drained off to the loved object, while, in the other, it all flows back to the ego.

for further distinguishing a sexual libido from a non-sexual energy pertaining to the ego-instincts? Would not the assumption of a uniform mental energy save us all the difficulties of differentiating the energy of the ego-instincts from ego-libido, and ego-libido from object-libido? On the first point I would comment as follows: it is impossible to suppose that a unity comparable to the ego can exist in the individual from the very start; the ego has to develop. But the auto-erotic instincts are primordial; so there must be something added to auto-erotism—some new operation in the mind—in order that narcissism may come into being.

To be required to give a definite answer to the second question must occasion perceptible uneasiness in every psycho-analyst. One dislikes the thought of abandoning observation for barren theoretical discussions, but all the same we must not shirk an attempt at explanation. Conceptions such as that of an ego-libido, an energy pertaining to the ego-instincts, and so on, are certainly neither very easy to grasp nor is their content sufficiently rich; a speculative theory of these relations of which we are speaking would in the first place require as its basis a sharply defined concept. But I am of opinion that that is just the difference between a speculative theory and a science founded upon constructions arrived at empirically. The latter will not begrudge to speculation its privilege of a smooth, logically unassailable structure, but will itself be gladly content with nebulous, scarcely imaginable conceptions, which it hopes to apprehend more clearly in the course of its development, or which it is even prepared to replace by others. For these ideas are not the basis of the science upon which everything rests: that, on the contrary, is observation alone. They are not the foundation-stone, but the coping of the whole structure, and they can be replaced and discarded without damaging it. The same thing is happening in our day in the science of physics, the fundamental notions of which as regards matter, centres of force,

attraction, etc., are scarcely less debatable than the corresponding ideas in psycho-analysis.

The value of the concepts 'ego-libido' and 'object-libido' is that they are derived from the study of the essential characteristics of neurotic and psychotic processes. The differentiation of the libido into that which is proper to the ego and that which attaches itself to objects is a necessary extension of an original hypothesis which discriminated between ego-instincts and sexual instincts. At any rate, analysis of the pure transference neuroses (hysteria and the obsessional neurosis) compelled me so to discriminate, and I only know that all attempts to account for these phenomena by other means have been completely unsuccessful.

In the complete absence of any theory of the instincts which would help us to find our bearings, we may be permitted, or rather, it is incumbent upon us, in the first place to work out any hypothesis to its logical conclusion, until it either fails or becomes confirmed. There are various points in favour of the hypothesis of a primordial differentiation between sexual instincts and other instincts, ego-instincts, besides the usefulness of such an assumption in the analysis of the transference neuroses. I admit that this latter consideration alone would not be decisive, for it might be a question of an indifferent energy operating in the mind which was converted into libido only by the act of object-cathexis. But, in the first place, this differentiation of concepts corresponds to the distinction between hunger and love, so widely current. And, in the second place, there are biological considerations in its favour. The individual does actually carry on a double existence : one designed to serve his own purposes and another as a link in a chain, in which he serves against, or at any rate without, any volition of his own. The individual himself regards sexuality as one of his own ends ; while from another point of view he is only an appendage to his germ-plasm, to which he lends his energies, taking in

return his toll of pleasure—the mortal vehicle of a (possibly) immortal substance—like the inheritor of an entailed property who is only the temporary holder of an estate which survives him. The differentiation of the sexual instincts from the ego-instincts would simply reflect this double function of the individual. Thirdly, we must recollect that all our provisional ideas in psychology will some day be based on an organic sub-structure. This makes it probable that special substances and special chemical processes control the operation of sexuality and provide for the continuation of the individual life in that of the species. We take this probability into account when we substitute special forces in the mind for special chemical substances.

Just because I try in general to keep apart from psychology everything that is not strictly within its scope, even biological thought, I wish at this point expressly to admit that the hypothesis of separate ego-instincts and sexual instincts (that is to say, the libido-theory) rests scarcely at all upon a psychological basis, but is essentially supported upon the facts of biology. So I shall also be consistent enough to drop this hypothesis if psycho-analytic work itself should suggest as more valuable another hypothesis about the instincts. So far, this has not happened. It may then be that—when we penetrate deepest and furthest—sexual energy, the libido, will be found to be only the product of a differentiation in the energy at work generally in the mind. But such a statement is of no importance. It has reference to matters so remote from the problems of our observation and so empty of available knowledge, that to dispute it is as idle as to affirm it ; it is possible that this primordial identity has as little to do with our analytical interests as the primordial kinship of all human races has to do with the proof of kinship with a testator required by the Probate Court. All these speculations lead nowhere ; since we cannot wait for another science to present us with a theory of the instincts ready-made, it is far more to the purpose that

we should try to see what light may be thrown upon this basic problem of biology by a synthesis of psychological phenomena. Let us be fully aware of the possibility of error ; but do not let us be deterred from carrying to its logical conclusion the hypothesis we first adopted of an antithesis between ego-instincts and sexual instincts (an hypothesis to which we were impelled by analysis of the transference neuroses), and so from seeing whether it turns out to be consistent and fruitful, and whether it may be applied to other affections also, *e.g.* to schizophrenia.

Of course, it would be a very different matter if it were proved that the libido-theory had already come to grief in the attempt to explain the last-named disease. That this is so has been maintained by C. G. Jung,<sup>1</sup> and so I have been obliged to enter upon this last disquisition, which I would gladly have been spared. I should have preferred, without any discussion of the premises, to follow out the course embarked upon in the analysis of the Schreber case. But Jung's assertion is, to say the least of it, premature. The grounds he gives for it are scanty. At the outset, he quotes me as saying that I myself have been obliged, owing to the difficulties of the Schreber analysis, to extend the conception of the libido, *i.e.* to give up its sexual content and to identify libido with psychic 'interest' in general. Ferenczi, in an exhaustive criticism of Jung's work, has already said all that is necessary in correction of this erroneous interpretation.<sup>2</sup> I can only corroborate this critic and repeat that I have never thus retracted the libido-theory. Another argument of Jung's, namely, that we must not assume that the loss of the normal function of appreciating reality can be brought about only by the withdrawal of the libido, is no argument but a dictum. It begs the question, it anticipates the decision and waives discussion ; for whether and how this is possible is just what has to be investigated. In

<sup>1</sup> ' Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido.'

<sup>2</sup> *Zeitschrift*, Bd. I., 1913.



his next large work,<sup>1</sup> Jung just misses the solution which I had long since indicated: 'At the same time there is this to be taken into consideration, a point to which Freud refers in his work on the Schreber case, that the introversion of the *libido sexualis* leads to a cathexis of the "ego", and that possibly it is this that produces the effect of a loss of reality. It is indeed a tempting possibility to explain the psychology of the loss of reality in this fashion.' But Jung discusses this possibility very little further. A few pages later he dismisses it with the remark that from this conditioning factor 'would result, not dementia praecox, but the psychology of an ascetic anchorite'. How little this inept comparison can help us to a conclusion may be learnt from the reflection that an anchorite who 'tries to erase every trace of sexual interest' (but only in the popular sense of the word 'sexual') does not even necessarily display any pathogenic disposition of the libido. He may have turned away his interest from human beings entirely, and yet may have sublimated it to a heightened interest in the divine, in nature, or in the animal kingdom, without his libido having undergone introversion to his phantasies or retrogression to his ego. This comparison would seem to rule out in advance the possibility of differentiating between interest emanating from erotic or that from other sources. Further, when we remember that the researches of the Swiss school, however meritorious, have elucidated only two features in the picture of dementia praecox—the existence of complexes common to healthy and neurotic persons alike, and the similarity of the phantasy-formations of that disease to popular myths—but have not been able to throw any further light on the pathogenic mechanism, we may repudiate Jung's assertion that the libido-theory has broken down in the attempt to understand dementia praecox, and is therefore rendered invalid for the other neuroses also.

<sup>1</sup> 'Versuch einer Darstellung der psychoanalytischen Theorie.'

## II

It seems to me that certain peculiar difficulties lie in the way of a direct study of narcissism. Our chief means of access to an understanding of this condition will probably remain the analysis of paraphrenics. As the transference neuroses have enabled us to trace the libidinal instinctual impulses, so dementia praecox and paranoia will give us insight into the psychology of the ego. Once more, in order to arrive at what is normal and apparently so simple, we shall have to study the pathological with its distortions and exaggerations. At the same time, there are other sources from which we may derive a knowledge of narcissism, which I will now mention in their order—namely, the study of organic disease, of hypochondria, and of love between the sexes.

In estimating the influence of organic disease upon the distribution of the libido, I follow a suggestion of S. Ferenczi's, which he made to me in conversation. It is universally known, and seems to us a matter of course, that a person suffering organic pain and discomfort relinquishes his interest in the things of the outside world, in so far as they do not concern his suffering. Closer observation teaches us that at the same time he withdraws libidinal interest from his love-objects: so long as he suffers, he ceases to love. The banality of this fact is no reason why we should be deterred from translating it into terms of the libido-theory. We should then say: the sick man withdraws his libidinal cathexes back upon his own ego, and sends them forth again when he recovers. 'Concentrated is his soul', says W. Busch, of the poet suffering from toothache, 'in his jaw-tooth's aching hole'. Here libido and ego-interest share the same fate and have once more become indistinguishable from each other. The familiar egoism of the sick person covers them both. We find it so natural because we are certain that in the same situation we should behave in just the same way. The way in which the readiness to love, however

great, is banished by bodily ailments, and suddenly replaced by complete indifference, is a theme which has been sufficiently exploited by comic writers.

The condition of sleep, like illness, implies a narcissistic withdrawal of the libido away from its attachments back to the subject's own person, or, more precisely, to the single desire for sleep. The egoism of dreams fits in very well in this connection. In both states we have, if nothing else, examples of changes in the distribution of the libido which are consequent upon a change in the ego.

Hypochondria, like organic disease, manifests itself in distressing and painful bodily sensations and also concurs with organic disease in its effect upon the distribution of the libido. The hypochondriac withdraws both interest and libido—the latter specially markedly—from the objects of the outer world and concentrates both upon the organ which engages his attention. A difference between hypochondria and organic disease now becomes evident: in the latter, the distressing sensations are based upon demonstrable organic changes; in the former, this is not so. But it would be entirely in keeping with our general conception of the processes of neurosis if we decided to say that hypochondria must be right; organic changes cannot be absent in it either. Now in what could such changes consist?

Here we may fall back upon our experience, which shows that bodily sensations of a painful nature, comparable to those of hypochondria, are not lacking in the other neuroses. I have said once before that I am inclined to class hypochondria with neurasthenia and anxiety-neurosis as a third 'actual neurosis'. Probably it would not be going too far to put it in this way: that in the other neuroses too there is regularly present some small admixture of hypochondria. Perhaps we have the best example of this in the anxiety-neurosis and in the hysteria superimposed upon it. Now the familiar prototype of an organ sensitive to pain, in

some way changed and yet not diseased in the ordinary sense, is that of the genital organ in a state of excitation. It becomes congested with blood, swollen, moist, and is the seat of manifold sensations. If we apply to that activity of a given bodily area which consists in conveying sexually exciting stimuli to the mind the term *erotogenicity*, and if we reflect that the conclusions of our theory of sexuality have long accustomed us to the notion that certain other areas of the body—the *erotogenic zones*—may act as substitutes for the genitals and behave analogously to them, we then have only one step further to venture here. We can make up our minds to regard erotogenicity as a property common to all organs and are then justified in speaking of an increase or decrease in the degree of it in any given part of the body. It is possible that for every such change in the erotogenicity of the organs there is a parallel change in the libidinal cathexis in the ego. In such factors may lie the explanation of what is at the bottom of hypochondria and what it is that can have upon the distribution of the libido the same effect as actual organic disease.

We see that, if we follow out this line of thought, we encounter the problem not only of hypochondria, but of the other 'actual neuroses'—neurasthenia and anxiety-neurosis. Let us therefore stop at this point. It is not within the scope of a purely psychological inquiry to penetrate so far behind the frontiers of physiological research. Let us only mention that from this point of view we may surmise that the relation of hypochondria to paraphrenia is similar to that of the other actual neuroses to hysteria and the obsessional neurosis: which is as much as to say that it is dependent on the ego-libido as the others are on the object-libido, and that hypochondriacal anxiety, emanating from the ego-libido, is the counterpart to neurotic anxiety. Further: since we are already familiar with the idea that the mechanism of disease and symptom-formation in the transference neuroses, the passage from intro-

version to regression, is to be connected with a damming-up of the object-libido,<sup>1</sup> we may come to closer quarters with the conception of a damming-up of the ego-libido also and may bring this conception into relation with the phenomena of hypochondria and paraphrenia.

Of course curiosity will here suggest the question why such a damming-up of libido in the ego should be experienced as 'painful'. There I shall content myself with the answer that 'pain' is in general the expression of increased tension, and thus a *quantity* of the material event is, here as elsewhere, transformed into the *quality* of 'pain' in the mind; nevertheless, it may be not the absolute amount of the physical process which is decisive for the development of pain, but rather a certain function of this absolute amount. At this point we may even venture to touch on the question: whence does that necessity arise that urges our mental life to pass on beyond the limits of narcissism and to attach the libido to objects? The answer which would follow from our line of thought would once more be that we are so impelled when the cathexis of the ego with libido exceeds a certain degree. A strong egoism is a protection against disease, but in the last resort we must begin to love in order that we may not fall ill, and must fall ill if, in consequence of frustration, we cannot love. Somewhat after this fashion does Heine conceive of the psychogenesis of the Creation:

*Krankheit ist wohl der letzte Grund  
Des ganzen Schöpferdrangs gewesen;  
Erschaffend konnte ich genesen,  
Erschaffend wurde ich gesund.<sup>2</sup>*

We have recognized our mental apparatus above all as a device for mastering excitations which would otherwise be felt as unpleasant or would have patho-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Types of Neurotic Nosogenesis', COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Disease at bottom brought about  
Creative urgency—for, creating,  
I soon could feel the pain abating,  
Creating, I could work it out.

genic effects. The 'working-over' of stimuli in the mind accomplishes wonders for the internal discharge of excitations which are incapable of direct discharge outwards, or for which such a discharge is, for the moment, undesirable. Now it is in the first instance a matter of indifference whether the objects of this internal process of 'working-over' are real or imaginary. The difference does not appear till later, when the turning of the libido towards unreal objects (introversion) has led to a damming-up. The megalomania of paraphrenics permits a similar internal working-over of the libido which has returned to the ego to be made ; perhaps it is only when this process fails that the damming-up of the libido in the ego becomes pathogenic and starts the process of recovery which impresses us as being the disease itself.

I shall try here to penetrate a little further into the mechanism of paraphrenia and to put together those conceptions which to-day seem to me worthy of consideration. The difference between paraphrenic affections and the transference neuroses appears to me to lie in the circumstance that, in the former, the libido that is liberated by frustration does not remain attached to objects in phantasy, but returns to the ego ; the megalomania then represents the mastery of this volume of libido, and thus corresponds with the introversion on to the phantasy-creations that is found in the transference neuroses ; the hypochondria of paraphrenia, which is homologous to the anxiety of the transference neuroses, arises from a failure of this effort in the mental apparatus. We know that the anxiety of the neuroses can be relieved by further mental 'working-over', *e.g.* by conversion, reaction-formation or defence-formation (phobia). The corresponding process in paraphrenics is the effort towards recovery, to which the striking phenomena of the disease are due. Since frequently, if not usually, an only partial detachment of the libido from objects accompanies paraphrenia, we can distinguish in the clinical picture three

groups of phenomena: (1) those representing such remains as there may be of a normal state or of neurosis (phenomena of a residual nature); (2) those representing the morbid process (the detachment of the libido from its objects and, further, megalomania, hypochondria, affective disturbance and every kind of regression); (3) those representing an attempt at recovery. In (3) the libido is once more attached to objects, after the manner of an hysteria (in dementia praecox or paraphrenia proper), or of an obsessional neurosis (in paranoia). This fresh libidinal cathexis takes place from another level and under other conditions than the primary one. The difference between the transference neuroses arising in this way and the corresponding formations where the ego is normal would afford us the deepest insight into the structure of our mental apparatus.

A third way in which we may study narcissism is by observing the behaviour of human beings in love, with its manifold differentiation in man and woman. In much the same way as the object-libido at first concealed from us the ego-libido, so in considering the object-choice of the child (and the adolescent) we first noticed that the sources from which he takes his sexual objects are his experiences of gratification. The first auto-erotic sexual gratifications are experienced in connection with vital functions in the service of self-preservation. The sexual instincts are at the outset supported upon the ego-instincts; only later do they become independent of these, and even then we have an indication of that original dependence in the fact that those persons who have to do with the feeding, care, and protection of the child become his earliest sexual objects: that is to say, in the first instance the mother or her substitute. Side by side with this type and source of object-choice, which may be called the *anaclitic* type,<sup>1</sup> a second type, the existence of which

<sup>1</sup> [*Anlehnungstypus*. Literally, 'leaning-up-against' type. In the

we had not suspected, has been revealed by psycho-analytic investigation. We have found, especially in persons whose libidinal development has suffered some disturbance, as in perverts and homosexuals, that in the choice of their love-object they have taken as their model not the mother but their own selves. They are plainly seeking themselves as a love-object and their type of object-choice may be termed *narcissistic*. This observation provides us with our strongest motive for regarding the hypothesis of narcissism as a necessary one.

Now this does not mean that human beings are to be divided into two sharply differentiated groups, according as their object-choice conforms to the anaclitic or to the narcissistic type ; we rather assume that both kinds of object-choice are open to each individual, though he may show a preference for one or the other. We say that the human being has originally two sexual objects : himself and the woman who tends him, and thereby we postulate a primary narcissism in everyone, which may in the long run manifest itself as dominating his object-choice.

Further, the comparison of man and woman shows that there are fundamental differences between the two in respect of the type of object-choice, although these differences are of course not universal. Complete object-love of the anaclitic type is, properly speaking, characteristic of the man. It displays the marked sexual over-estimation which is doubtless derived from the original narcissism of the child, now transferred to the sexual object. This sexual over-estimation is the origin of the peculiar state of being in love, a state suggestive of a neurotic compulsion, which is thus traceable to an impoverishment of the ego in respect of libido in favour of the love-object. A different course is followed in the type most frequently met with in

first phase of their development the sexual instincts find their satisfaction through propping themselves upon or 'leaning up against' the self-preservative instincts.—ED.]



women, which is probably the purest and truest feminine type. With the development of puberty the maturing of the female sexual organs, which up till then have been in a condition of latency, seems to bring about an intensification of the original narcissism, and this is unfavourable to the development of a true object-love with its accompanying sexual over-estimation ; there arises in the woman a certain self-sufficiency (especially when there is a ripening into beauty) which compensates her for the social restrictions upon her object-choice. Strictly speaking, such women love only themselves with an intensity comparable to that of the man's love for them. Nor does their need lie in the direction of loving, but of being loved ; and that man finds favour with them who fulfils this condition. The importance of this type of woman for the erotic life of mankind must be recognized as very great. Such women have the greatest fascination for men, not only for aesthetic reasons, since as a rule they are the most beautiful, but also because of certain interesting psychological constellations. It seems very evident that one person's narcissism has a great attraction for those others who have renounced part of their own narcissism and are seeking after object-love ; the charm of a child lies to a great extent in his narcissism, his self-sufficiency and inaccessibility, just as does the charm of certain animals which seem not to concern themselves about us, such as cats and the large beasts of prey. In literature, indeed, even the great criminal and the humorist compel our interest by the narcissistic self-importance with which they manage to keep at arm's length everything which would diminish the importance of their ego. It is as if we envied them their power of retaining a blissful state of mind—an unassailable libido-position which we ourselves have since abandoned. The great charm of the narcissistic woman has, however, its reverse side ; a large part of the dissatisfaction of the lover, of his doubts of the woman's love, of his complaints of her enigmatic

nature, have their root in this incongruity between the types of object-choice.

Perhaps it is not superfluous to give an assurance that, in this description of the feminine form of erotic life, no tendency to depreciate woman has any part. Apart from the fact that tendentiousness is alien to me, I also know that these different lines of development correspond to the differentiation of functions in a highly complicated biological connection ; further, I am ready to admit that there are countless women who love according to the masculine type and who develop the over-estimation of the sexual object so characteristic of that type.

Even for women whose attitude towards the man remains cool and narcissistic there is a way which leads to complete object-love. In the child to whom they give birth, a part of their own body comes to them as an object other than themselves, upon which they can lavish out of their narcissism complete object-love. Other women again do not need to wait for a child in order to take the step in development from (secondary) narcissism to object-love. Before puberty they have had feelings of a likeness to men and have developed to some extent on masculine lines ; after this tendency has been cut short when feminine maturity is reached, they still retain the capacity of longing for a masculine ideal which is really a survival of the boyish nature that they themselves once owned.

We may conclude these suggestions with a short survey of the paths leading to object-choice.

A person may love :

- (1) According to the narcissistic type :
  - (a) What he is himself (actually himself).
  - (b) What he once was.
  - (c) What he would like to be.
  - (d) Someone who was once part of himself.
- (2) According to the anaclitic type :
  - (a) The woman who tends.
  - (b) The man who protects ;

and those substitutes which succeed them one after another. The justification for inserting case (c) of the first type has yet to be demonstrated later on in our discussion.

The significance of narcissistic object-choice for homosexuality in men must be appraised in another connection.

The primary narcissism of the child assumed by us, which forms one of the hypotheses in our theories of the libido, is less easy to grasp by direct observation than to confirm by deduction from another consideration. If we look at the attitude of fond parents towards their children, we cannot but perceive it as a revival and reproduction of their own, long since abandoned narcissism. Their feeling, as is well known, is characterized by over-estimation, that sure indication of a narcissistic feature in object-choice which we have already appreciated. Thus they are impelled to ascribe to the child all manner of perfections which sober observation would not confirm, to gloss over and forget all his shortcomings—a tendency with which, indeed, the denial of childish sexuality is connected. Moreover, they are inclined to suspend in the child's favour the operation of all those cultural acquirements which their own narcissism has been forced to respect, and to renew in his person the claims for privileges which were long ago given up by themselves. The child shall have things better than his parents; he shall not be subject to the necessities which they have recognized as dominating life. Illness, death, renunciation of enjoyment, restrictions on his own will, are not to touch him; the laws of nature, like those of society, are to be abrogated in his favour; he is really to be the centre and heart of creation, 'His Majesty the Baby', as once we fancied ourselves to be. He is to fulfil those dreams and wishes of his parents which they never carried out, to become a great man and a hero in his father's stead, or to marry a prince as a tardy compensation to the mother. At the weakest point of

all in the narcissistic position, the immortality of the ego, which is so relentlessly assailed by reality, security is achieved by fleeing to the child. Parental love, which is so touching and at bottom so childish, is nothing but parental narcissism born again and, transformed though it be into object-love, it reveals its former character infallibly.

### III

The disturbances to which the original narcissism of the child is exposed, the reactions with which he seeks to protect himself from them, the paths into which he is thereby forced—these are themes which I shall leave on one side, as an important field for work which still awaits exploration ; the most important of these matters, however, can be isolated from the rest and, as the ‘castration complex’ (in the boy, anxiety concerning the penis ; in the girl, envy of the penis), be treated in connection with the effect of early sexual intimidation. Elsewhere, psycho-analytic research leads us to vicissitudes undergone by the libidinal instincts in which they are isolated from, and in opposition to, the ego-instincts ; but where the castration complex is in question, our researches permit us to infer the existence of an epoch and a mental state in which the two groups of instincts are acting in harmony with each other, inseparably blent, as narcissistic interests. It is from this state of things that A. Adler has derived his conception of the ‘masculine protest’, which he has exalted almost to the position of the sole motive power concerned in the formation of neurosis and also of character, and which he conceives of as having its origin, not in a narcissistic, and therefore still libidinal, trend, but in a social valuation. Psycho-analytic research has, from the very beginning, recognized the existence and significance of the ‘masculine protest’, but has always regarded it, in opposition to Adler, as narcissistic in nature and derived from the

castration complex. It appertains to the formation of character, into the genesis of which it enters along with many other factors, and it is completely inadequate to explain the problems of the neuroses, in which Adler will take account of nothing but the manner in which they serve the interests of the ego. I find it quite impossible to base the genesis of neurosis upon so narrow a foundation as the castration complex, however pre-eminent a part this may play in men amongst the resistances to the cure of a neurosis. Lastly, I know also of cases of neurosis in which the 'masculine protest', or in our sense the castration complex, plays no pathogenic part, or does not appear at all.

Observation of normal adults shows that their former megalomania has been subdued and that the mental characteristics from which we inferred their infantile narcissism have vanished. What has become of their ego-libido? Are we to assume that the whole of it has passed over into object-cathexes? Such a possibility is plainly contrary to the whole trend of our argument; but in the psychology of repression we may find a clue to another answer to the question.

We have learnt that libidinal impulses are fated to undergo pathogenic repression if they come into conflict with the subject's cultural and ethical ideas. By this we do not ever mean: if the individual in question has a merely intellectual knowledge of the existence of these ideas; we always mean: if he recognizes them as constituting a standard for himself and acknowledges the claims they make on him. Repression, as we have said, proceeds from the ego; we might say with greater precision: from the self-respect of the ego. The very impressions, experiences, impulses and desires that one man indulges or at least consciously elaborates in his mind will be rejected with the utmost indignation by another, or stifled at once even before they enter consciousness. The difference between the two, however—and here we have the conditioning factor in repression—can easily be expressed in terms

of the libido-theory. We may say that the one man has set up an *ideal* in himself by which he measures his actual ego, while the other is without this formation of an ideal. From the point of view of the ego this formation of an ideal would be the condition of repression.

To this ideal ego is now directed the self-love which the real ego enjoyed in childhood. The narcissism seems to be now displaced on to this new ideal ego, which, like the infantile ego, deems itself the possessor of all perfections. As always where the libido is concerned, here again man has shown himself incapable of giving up a gratification he has once enjoyed. He is not willing to forgo his narcissistic perfection in his childhood ; and if, as he develops, he is disturbed by the admonitions of others and his own critical judgement is awakened, he seeks to recover the early perfection, thus wrested from him, in the new form of an ego-ideal. That which he projects ahead of him as his ideal is merely his substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood—the time when he was his own ideal.

This suggests that we should examine the relation between this forming of ideals and sublimation. Sublimation is a process that concerns the object-libido and consists in the instinct's directing itself towards an aim other than, and remote from, that of sexual gratification ; in this process the accent falls upon the deflection from the sexual aim. Idealization is a process that concerns the *object* ; by it that object, without any alteration in its nature, is aggrandized and exalted in the mind. Idealization is possible in the sphere of the ego-libido as well as in that of the object-libido. For example, the sexual over-estimation of an object is an idealization of it. In so far as sublimation is a process that concerns the instinct and idealization one that concerns the object, the two concepts are to be distinguished one from the other.

The formation of the ego-ideal is often confounded with sublimation, to the detriment of clear comprehension. A man who has exchanged his narcissism for

the worship of a high ego-ideal has not necessarily on that account succeeded in sublimating his libidinal instincts. It is true that the ego-ideal requires such sublimation, but it cannot enforce it; sublimation remains a special process which may be prompted by the ideal but the execution of which is entirely independent of any such incitement. It is just in neurotics that we find the highest degrees of tension between the development of their ego-ideal and the measure of their sublimation of primitive libidinal instincts, and in general it is far harder to convince the idealist of the inexpediency of the hiding-place found by his libido than the plain man whose demands in this respect are only moderate. Further, the formation of an ego-ideal and sublimation are quite differently related to the causation of neurosis. As we have learnt, the formation of the ideal increases the demands of the ego and is the most powerful factor favouring repression; sublimation is a way out, a way by which the claims of the ego can be met without involving repression.

It would not surprise us if we were to find a special institution in the mind which performs the task of seeing that narcissistic gratification is secured from the ego-ideal and that, with this end in view, it constantly watches the real ego and measures it by that ideal. If such an institution does exist, it cannot possibly be something which we have not yet discovered; we only need to recognize it, and we may say that what we call our *conscience* has the required characteristics. Recognition of this institution enables us to understand the so-called 'delusions of observation' or, more correctly, of *being watched*, which are such striking symptoms in the paranoid diseases and may perhaps also occur as an isolated form of illness, or intercalated in a transference neurosis. Patients of this sort complain that all their thoughts are known and their actions watched and overlooked; they are informed of the functioning of this mental institution by voices which characteristically speak to them in the third

person (' Now she is thinking of that again ' . . . ' now he is going out ' ). This complaint is justified—it describes the truth ; a power of this kind, watching, discovering and criticizing all our intentions, does really exist ; indeed, it exists with every one of us in normal life. The delusion of being watched presents it in a regressive form, thereby revealing the genesis of this function and the reason why the patient is in revolt against it.

For that which prompted the person to form an ego-ideal, over which his conscience keeps guard, was the influence of parental criticism (conveyed to him by the medium of the voice), reinforced, as time went on, by those who trained and taught the child and by all the other persons of his environment—an indefinite host, too numerous to reckon (fellow-men, public opinion).

Large quantities of libido which is essentially homosexual are in this way drawn into the formation of the narcissistic ego-ideal and find outlet and gratification in maintaining it. The institution of conscience was at bottom an embodiment, first of parental criticism, and subsequently of that of society ; a similar process takes place when a tendency towards repression develops out of a command or prohibition imposed in the first instance from without. The voices, as well as the indefinite number of speakers, are brought into the foreground again by the disease, and so the evolution of conscience is regressively reproduced. But the revolt against this *ensorial institution* springs from the person's desire (in accordance with the fundamental character of his illness) to liberate himself from all these influences, beginning with that of his parents, and from his withdrawal of homosexual libido from those influences. His conscience then encounters him in a regressive form as a hostile influence from without.

The lament of the paranoiac shows also that at bottom the self-criticism of conscience is identical with, and based upon, self-observation. That activity of the



mind which took over the function of conscience has also enlisted itself in the service of introspection, which furnishes philosophy with the material for its intellectual operations. This must have something to do with the characteristic tendency of paranoiacs to form speculative systems.<sup>1</sup>

It will certainly be of importance to us if we can see in other fields evidence of the activity of this critically watching faculty, which becomes heightened into conscience and philosophic introspection. I would refer here to what Herbert Silberer has called the 'functional phenomenon', one of the few indisputably valuable additions to the theory of dreams. Silberer, as is well known, has shown that in the states between sleeping and waking we can directly observe the translation of thoughts into visual images, but that in these circumstances we frequently have a presentation, not of a thought-content, but of the actual state of the mind (readiness, fatigue, etc.) of the person who is struggling with sleep. Similarly, Silberer has shown that often the end of a dream or some section of the dream-content signifies merely the dreamer's own perception of his sleeping and waking. He has thus demonstrated that self-observation—in the sense of the paranoiac's delusion of being watched—plays a part in dream-formation. This part is not invariable; probably I overlooked it because it does not appear in my own dreams to any great extent; in persons who are gifted philosophically and therefore accustomed to introspection it may become very clear.

We may here recall our discovery that dream-formation takes place under the sway of a censorship which compels distortion of the dream-thoughts. We did not picture this censorship as a special force, an entity, but we chose the term to designate a particular

<sup>1</sup> I should like to add, merely by way of suggestion, that the process of development and strengthening of this watching institution might contain within it the genesis later on of (subjective) memory and of the time-factor, the latter of which has no application to unconscious processes.

aspect of the repressive tendencies which control the ego: namely, their attitude towards the dream-thoughts. Penetrating further into the structure of the ego, we may recognize the *dream-censor* again in the ego-ideal and in the dynamic utterances of conscience. If this censor is to some extent on the alert even during sleep, we can understand that the necessary condition of its activity—self-observation and self-criticism—should contribute to the dream-content some such thoughts as these: 'Now he is too sleepy to think . . . now he is waking up'.<sup>1</sup>

At this point we may enter upon a discussion of the self-regarding attitude in normal persons and in neurotics.

First of all, the feeling of self-regard appears to us a measure of the ego; what various components go to make up that measure is irrelevant. Everything we possess or achieve, every remnant of the primitive feeling of omnipotence that experience has corroborated, helps to exalt the self-regard.

Applying our distinction between sexual and ego-instincts, we must recognize that the self-regard has a very intimate connection with the narcissistic libido. Here we are supported by two fundamental facts: that in paraphrenics the self-regard is exalted, while in the transference neuroses it is abased, and that where the erotic life is concerned not being loved lowers the self-regarding feelings, while being loved raises them. We have stated that to be loved is the aim and the satisfaction in a narcissistic object-choice.

Further, it is easy to observe that libidinal object-cathexis does not raise the self-regard. The effect of the dependence upon the loved object is to lower that feeling: the lover is humble. He who loves has, so to speak, forfeited a part of his narcissism, which can only be replaced by his being loved. In all these

<sup>1</sup> I cannot here determine whether the differentiation of the censorial function from the rest of the ego is capable of forming the basis of the philosophic distinction between consciousness and self-consciousness.

respects the self-regarding feelings seem to remain in a relation to the narcissistic element in the erotic life.

The realization of impotence, of one's own inability to love in consequence of mental or physical disorder, has an exceedingly lowering effect upon the self-regard. Here, as I judge, we shall find one of the sources of the feelings of inferiority of which patients suffering from the transference neuroses so readily complain to us. The main source of these feelings is, however, the impoverishment of the ego, due to the withdrawal from it of extraordinarily large libidinal cathexes—due, that is to say, to the injury sustained by the ego through the sexual trends which are no longer subject to control.

A. Adler is right in maintaining that a person's realization of organic inferiorities in himself acts as a spur upon an active mental life, and produces by way of over-compensation a higher degree of ability. But it would be altogether an exaggeration if, following this lead of Adler's, we tried to prove that every fine achievement was conditioned by an original organic inferiority. Not all artists are handicapped with bad eyesight, nor did all orators originally stammer. And there are plenty of instances of excellent achievements springing from superior organic endowment. In the aetiology of neurosis organic inferiority and imperfect development play an insignificant part, much the same as that played by actual perceptual material in the formation of dreams. The neurosis makes use of such inferiorities as a pretext, just as it does of all other suitable factors. So surely as we credit the assertion of one neurotic patient that it was inevitable that she should fall ill, since she is ugly, deformed or lacking in charm and so no one could love her, the very next neurotic will convince us of our error; for she remains the victim of her neurosis and her aversion to sexuality, although she seems to be desirable, and indeed more desired than the average woman. The majority of hysterical women are among the attractive and even beautiful representatives of their sex, while, on the other hand,

the frequency of ugliness, organic infirmities and defects in the lower classes of society does not increase the incidence of neurotic illness amongst them.

The relations existing between self-regard and erotism (libidinal object-cathexes) may be expressed in the following formula : two cases must be distinguished—in the first, the erotic cathexes are 'ego-syntonic', *in accordance with the ego-tendencies* ; in the second, on the contrary, those cathexes have suffered repression. In the former case (where the path taken by the libido is acceptable to the ego), love takes its place among all the other activities of the ego. Love in itself, in the form of longing and deprivation, lowers the self-regard ; whereas to be loved, to have love returned, and to possess the beloved object, exalts it again. When the libido is repressed the erotic cathexis is felt as a severe depletion of the ego, the satisfaction of love is impossible, and the re-enrichment of the ego can be effected only by a withdrawal of the libido from its objects. The return of the libido from the object to the ego and its transformation into narcissism represents, as it were, the restoration of a happy love, and, conversely, an actual happy love corresponds to the primal condition in which object-libido and ego-libido cannot be distinguished.

Perhaps the importance of the subject, and the difficulty in surveying it, may be my excuse for adding a few remarks that are rather loosely strung together.

The development of the ego consists in a departure from the primary narcissism and results in a vigorous attempt to recover it. This departure is brought about by means of the displacement of libido to an ego-ideal imposed from without, while gratification is derived from the attainment of this ideal.

At the same time the ego has put forth its libidinal object-cathexes. It becomes impoverished in consequence both of these cathexes and of the formation of the ego-ideal, and it enriches itself again both by gratification of its object-love and by fulfilling its ideal.

Part of the self-regard is primary—the residue of childish narcissism ; another part arises out of such omnipotence as experience corroborates (the fulfilment of the ego-ideal), whilst a third part proceeds from gratification of object-libido.

The ego-ideal has imposed severe conditions upon the gratification of libido through objects, for, by means of its censorship, it rejects some of them as incompatible with itself. Where no such ideal has been formed, the sexual trend in question makes its appearance unchanged in the personality in the form of a perversion. As in childhood, to be his own ideal once more, also where sexual tendencies are concerned, is the happiness that man strives to attain.

The state of being in love consists in a flowing-over of ego-libido to the object. This state has the power to remove repressions and to restore perversions. It exalts the sexual object to the position of sexual ideal. Since, in cases where the love is of the anaclitic or object type, this state results from the fulfilment of infantile conditions of love, we may say that whatever fulfils this condition of love becomes idealized.

The sexual ideal may enter into an interesting auxiliary relation to the ego-ideal. Where narcissistic gratification encounters actual hindrances, the sexual ideal may be used as a substitutive gratification. In such a case a person loves (in conformity with the narcissistic type of object-choice) someone whom he once was and no longer is, or else someone who possesses excellences which he never had at all (cf. *supra*, (c)). The parallel formula to that given above runs thus : whoever possesses an excellence which the ego lacks for the attainment of its ideal, becomes loved. This expedient is of special importance for the neurotic, whose ego is depleted by his excessive object-cathexes and who on that account is unable to attain to his ego-ideal. He then seeks a way back to narcissism from his prodigal expenditure of libido upon objects, by choosing a sexual ideal after the narcissistic

type which shall possess the excellences to which he cannot attain. This is the cure by love, which he generally prefers to cure by analysis. Indeed, he cannot believe in any other curative mechanism; he usually brings expectations of this sort with him to the treatment and then directs them towards the person of the physician. The patient's incapacity for love, an incapacity resulting from his extensive repressions, naturally stands in the way of such a method of cure. When, by means of the treatment, he has been partially freed from his repressions, we are frequently met by the unintended result that he withdraws from further treatment in order to choose a love-object, hoping that life with the beloved person will complete his recovery. We might be satisfied with this result, if it did not bring with it all the dangers of an overwhelming dependence upon this helper in his need.

The ego-ideal is of great importance for the understanding of group psychology. Besides its individual side, this ideal has a social side; it is also the common ideal of a family, a class or a nation. It not only binds the narcissistic libido, but also a considerable amount of the person's homosexual libido, which in this way becomes turned back into the ego. The dissatisfaction due to the non-fulfilment of this ideal liberates homosexual libido, which is transformed into sense of guilt (dread of the community). Originally this was a fear of punishment by the parents, or, more correctly, the dread of losing their love; later the parents are replaced by an indefinite number of fellow-men. This helps us to understand why it is that paranoia is frequently caused by a wounding of the ego, by a frustration of the gratification desired within the sphere of the ego-ideal, and also to understand the coincidence of ideal-formation and sublimation in the ego-ideal, as well as the demolition of sublimations and possible transformation of ideals in paraphrenic disorders.

## IV

### INSTINCTS AND THEIR VICISSITUDES <sup>1</sup>

(1915)

**T**HE view is often defended that sciences should be built up on clear and sharply defined basal concepts. In actual fact no science, not even the most exact, begins with such definitions. The true beginning of scientific activity consists rather in describing phenomena and then in proceeding to group, classify and correlate them. Even at the stage of description it is not possible to avoid applying certain abstract ideas to the material in hand, ideas derived from various sources and certainly not the fruit of the new experience only. Still more indispensable are such ideas—which will later become the basal concepts of the science—as the material is further elaborated. They must at first necessarily possess some measure of uncertainty; there can be no question of any clear delimitation of their content. So long as they remain in this condition, we come to an understanding about their meaning by repeated references to the material of observation, from which we seem to have deduced our abstract ideas, but which is in point of fact subject to them. Thus, strictly speaking, they are in the nature of conventions; although everything depends on their being chosen in no arbitrary manner, but determined by the important relations they have to the empirical material—relations that we seem to divine before we can clearly recognize and demonstrate them. It is only after more searching investigation of the field in question that we are able to formulate with increased clarity the scientific concepts underlying it, and pro-

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. iii., 1915; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Cecil M. Baines.]

gressively so to modify these concepts that they become widely applicable and at the same time consistent logically. Then, indeed, it may be time to immure them in definitions. The progress of science, however, demands a certain elasticity even in these definitions. The science of physics furnishes an excellent illustration of the way in which even those 'basal concepts' that are firmly established in the form of definitions are constantly being altered in their content.

A conventional but still rather obscure basal concept of this kind, which is nevertheless indispensable to us in psychology, is that of an *instinct*. Let us try to ascertain what is comprised in this conception by approaching it from different angles.

First, from the side of physiology. This has given us the concept of *stimuli* and the scheme of the reflex arc, according to which a stimulus applied *from the outer world* to living tissue (nervous substance) is discharged by action *towards the outer world*. The action answers the purpose of withdrawing the substance affected from the operation of the stimulus, removing it out of range of the stimulus.

Now what is the relation between 'instinct' and 'stimulus'? There is nothing to prevent our including the concept of 'instinct' under that of 'stimulus' and saying that an instinct is a stimulus to the mind. But we are immediately set on our guard against treating instinct and mental stimulus as one and the same thing. Obviously, besides those of instinctual origin, there are other stimuli to the mind which behave far more like physiological stimuli. For example, a strong light striking upon the eye is not a stimulus of instinctual origin; it is one, however, when the mucous membrane of the œsophagus becomes parched or when a gnawing makes itself felt in the stomach.<sup>1</sup>

We have now obtained material necessary for discriminating between stimuli of instinctual origin and

<sup>1</sup> Assuming, of course, that these internal processes constitute the organic basis of the needs described as thirst and hunger.



the other (physiological) stimuli which operate on our minds. First, a stimulus of instinctual origin does not arise in the outside world but from within the organism itself. For this reason it has a different mental effect and different actions are necessary in order to remove it. Further, all that is essential in an external stimulus is contained in the assumption that it acts as a single impact, so that it can be discharged by a single appropriate action—a typical instance being that of motor flight from the source of stimulation. Of course these impacts may be repeated and their force may be cumulative, but that makes no difference to our notion of the process and to the conditions necessary in order that the stimulus may be dispelled. An instinct, on the other hand, never acts as a momentary impact but always as a constant force. As it makes its attack not from without but from within the organism, it follows that no flight can avail against it. A better term for a stimulus of instinctual origin is a 'need'; that which does away with this need is 'satisfaction'. This can be attained only by a suitable (adequate) alteration of the inner source of stimulation.

Let us imagine ourselves in the position of an almost entirely helpless living organism, as yet unorientated in the world and with stimuli impinging on its nervous tissue. This organism will soon become capable of making a first discrimination and a first orientation. On the one hand, it will detect certain stimuli which can be avoided by an action of the muscles (flight)—these it ascribes to an outside world; on the other hand, it will also be aware of stimuli against which such action is of no avail and whose urgency is in no way diminished by it—these stimuli are the tokens of an inner world, the proof of instinctual needs. The apperceptive substance of the living organism will thus have found in the efficacy of its muscular activity a means for discriminating between 'outer' and 'inner'.

We thus find our first conception of the essential nature of an instinct by considering its main char-

acteristics, its origin in sources of stimulation within the organism and its appearance as a constant force, and thence we deduce one of its further distinguishing features, namely, that no actions of flight avail against it. Now, in making these remarks, we cannot fail to be struck by a fact which compels us to a further admission. We do not merely accept as basal concepts certain conventions which we apply to the material we have acquired empirically, but we also make use of various complicated postulates to guide us in dealing with psychological phenomena. We have already cited the most important of these postulates ; it remains for us expressly to lay stress upon it. It is of a biological nature, and makes use of the concept of ' purpose ' (one might say, of adaptation of the means to the end) and runs as follows : the nervous system is an apparatus having the function of abolishing stimuli which reach it, or of reducing excitation to the lowest possible level : an apparatus which would even, if this were feasible, maintain itself in an altogether unstimulated condition. Let us for the present not take exception to the indefiniteness of this idea and let us grant that the task of the nervous system is—broadly speaking—to *master stimuli*. We see then how greatly the simple physiological reflex scheme is complicated by the introduction of instincts. External stimuli impose upon the organism the single task of withdrawing itself from their action : this is accomplished by muscular movements, one of which reaches the goal aimed at and, being the most appropriate to the end in view, is thenceforward transmitted as an hereditary disposition. Those instinctual stimuli which emanate from within the organism cannot be dealt with by this mechanism. Consequently, they make far higher demands upon the nervous system and compel it to complicated and interdependent activities, which effect such changes in the outer world as enable it to offer satisfaction to the internal source of stimulation ; above all, instinctual stimuli oblige the nervous system to renounce its ideal

intention of warding off stimuli, for they maintain an incessant and unavoidable afflux of stimulation. So we may probably conclude that instincts and not external stimuli are the true motive forces in the progress that has raised the nervous system, with all its incomparable efficiency, to its present high level of development. Of course there is nothing to prevent our assuming that the instincts themselves are, at least in part, the precipitates of different forms of external stimulation, which in the course of phylogenesis have effected modifications in the organism.

Then when we find further that the activity of even the most highly developed mental apparatus is subject to the pleasure-principle, *i.e.* is automatically regulated by feelings belonging to the pleasure-‘pain’ series, we can hardly reject the further postulate that these feelings reflect the manner in which the process of mastering stimuli takes place. This is certainly so in the sense that ‘painful’ feelings are connected with an increase and pleasurable feelings with a decrease in stimulation. Let us, however, be careful to preserve this assumption in its present highly indefinite form, until we succeed, if that is possible, in discovering what sort of relation exists between pleasure and ‘pain’, on the one hand, and fluctuations in the quantities of stimuli affecting mental life, on the other. It is certain that many kinds of these relations are possible, some of them by no means simple.

If now we apply ourselves to considering mental life from a biological point of view, an ‘instinct’ appears to us as a borderland concept between the mental and the physical, being both the mental representative of the stimuli emanating from within the organism and penetrating to the mind, and at the same time a measure of the demand made upon the energy of the latter in consequence of its connection with the body.

We are now in a position to discuss certain terms used in reference to the concept of an instinct, for

example, its impetus, its aim, its object and its source.

By the *impetus* of an instinct we understand its motor element, the amount of force or the measure of the demand upon energy which it represents. The characteristic of impulsion is common to all instincts, is in fact the very essence of them. Every instinct is a form of activity; if we speak loosely of passive instincts, we can only mean those whose aim is passive.

The *aim* of an instinct is in every instance satisfaction, which can only be obtained by abolishing the condition of stimulation in the source of the instinct. But although this remains invariably the final goal of every instinct, there may yet be different ways leading to the same goal, so that an instinct may be found to have various nearer or intermediate aims, capable of combination or interchange. Experience permits us also to speak of instincts which are *inhibited in respect of their aim*, in cases where a certain advance has been permitted in the direction of satisfaction and then an inhibition or deflection has occurred. We may suppose that even in such cases a partial satisfaction is achieved.

The *object* of an instinct is that in or through which it can achieve its aim. It is the most variable thing about an instinct and is not originally connected with it, but becomes attached to it only in consequence of being peculiarly fitted to provide satisfaction. The object is not necessarily an extraneous one: it may be part of the subject's own body. It may be changed any number of times in the course of the vicissitudes the instinct undergoes during life; a highly important part is played by this capacity for displacement in the instinct. It may happen that the same object may serve for the satisfaction of several instincts simultaneously, a phenomenon which Adler calls a 'confluence' of instincts. A particularly close attachment of the instinct to its object is distinguished by the term *fixation*: this frequently occurs in very early stages of

the instinct's development and so puts an end to its mobility, through the vigorous resistance it sets up against detachment.

By the *source* of an instinct is meant that somatic process in an organ or part of the body from which there results a stimulus represented in mental life by an instinct. We do not know whether this process is regularly of a chemical nature or whether it may also correspond with the release of other, *e.g.* mechanical, forces. The study of the sources of instinct is outside the scope of psychology; although its source in the body is what gives the instinct its distinct and essential character, yet in mental life we know it merely by its aims. A more exact knowledge of the sources of instincts is not strictly necessary for purposes of psychological investigation; often the source may be, with certainty inferred from the aims.

Are we to suppose that the different instincts which operate upon the mind but of which the origin is somatic are also distinguished by different qualities and act in the mental life in a manner qualitatively different? This supposition does not seem to be justified; we are much more likely to find the simpler assumption sufficient—namely, that the instincts are all qualitatively alike and owe the effect they produce only to the quantities of excitation accompanying them, or perhaps further to certain functions of this quantity. The difference in the mental effects produced by the different instincts may be traced to the difference in their sources. In any event, it is only in a later connection that we shall be able to make plain what the problem of the quality of instincts signifies.

Now what instincts and how many should be postulated? There is obviously a great opportunity here for arbitrary choice. No objection can be made to anyone's employing the concept of an instinct of play or of destruction, or that of a social instinct, when the subject demands it and the limitations of psychological analysis allow of it. Nevertheless, we

should not neglect to ask whether such instinctual motives, which are in one direction so highly specialized, do not admit of further analysis in respect of their sources, so that only those primal instincts which are not to be resolved further could really lay claim to the name.

I have proposed that two groups of such primal instincts should be distinguished: the *self-preservative* or *ego*-instincts and the *sexual* instincts. But this proposition has not the weight of a necessary postulate, such as, for instance, our assumption about the biological 'purpose' in the mental apparatus (*v. supra*); it is merely an auxiliary construction, to be retained only so long as it proves useful, and it will make little difference to the results of our work of description and classification if we replace it by another. The occasion for it arose in the course of the evolution of psychoanalysis, which was first employed upon the psychoneuroses, actually upon the group designated transference neuroses (hysteria and obsessional neurosis); through them it became plain that at the root of all such affections there lies a conflict between the claims of sexuality and those of the ego. It is always possible that an exhaustive study of the other neurotic affections (especially of the narcissistic psychoneuroses, the schizophrenias) may oblige us to alter this formula and therewith to make a different classification of the primal instincts. But for the present we do not know what this new formula may be, nor have we met with any argument which seems likely to be prejudicial to the contrast between sexual and ego-instincts.

I am altogether doubtful whether work upon psychological material will afford any decisive indication for the distinction and classification of instincts. Rather it would seem necessary to apply to this material certain definite assumptions in order to work upon it, and we could wish that these assumptions might be taken from some other branch of knowledge and transferred to psychology. The contribution of biology on this point certainly does not run counter to the distinc-

tion between sexual and ego-instincts. Biology teaches that sexuality is not on a level with the other functions of the individual, for its 'purposes' go beyond the individual, their content being the production of new individuals and the preservation of the species. It shows, further, that the relation existing between the ego and sexuality may be conceived of in two ways, apparently equally well justified: in the one, the individual is regarded as of prime importance, sexuality as one of his activities and sexual satisfaction as one of his needs; while in the other the individual organism is looked upon as a transitory and perishable appendage to the quasi-immortal germ-plasm bequeathed to him by the race. The assumption that the sexual function differs from other bodily processes in virtue of special chemical processes is, I understand, also a postulate of the Ehrlich school of biological research.

Since a study of the instincts from the side of consciousness presents almost insuperable difficulties, psycho-analytic investigation of mental disturbances remains the principal source of our knowledge. The development of this line of investigation, however, has necessarily produced hitherto information of a more or less definite nature only in regard to the sexual instincts, for it is this group in particular which can be observed in isolation, as it were, in the psychoneuroses. With the extension of psycho-analysis to other neurotic affections we may be sure that we shall find a basis for our knowledge of the ego-instincts also, though it would be optimistic to expect equally favourable conditions for observation in this further field of research.

An attempt to formulate the general characteristics of the sexual instincts would run as follows: they are numerous, emanate from manifold organic sources, act in the first instance independently of one another and only at a late stage achieve a more or less complete synthesis. The aim which each strives to attain is 'organ-pleasure'; only when the synthesis is complete do they enter the service of the function of reproduc-

tion, becoming thereby generally recognizable as sexual instincts. At their first appearance they support themselves upon the instincts of self-preservation, from which they only gradually detach themselves; in their choice of object also they follow paths indicated by the ego-instincts. Some of them remain throughout life associated with these latter and furnish them with libidinal components, which with normal functioning easily escape notice and are clearly recognizable only when disease is present. They have this distinctive characteristic—that they have in a high degree the capacity to act vicariously for one another and that they can readily change their objects. In consequence of the last-mentioned properties they are capable of activities widely removed from their original modes of attaining their aims (sublimation).

Our inquiry into the various vicissitudes which instincts undergo in the process of development and in the course of life must be confined to the sexual instincts, for these are the more familiar to us. Observation shows us that an instinct may undergo the following vicissitudes :

Reversal into its opposite,  
Turning round upon the subject,  
Repression,  
Sublimation.

Since I do not intend to treat of sublimation here and since repression requires a special chapter to itself, it only remains for us to describe and discuss the two first points. Bearing in mind that there are tendencies which are opposed to the instincts pursuing a straightforward course, we may regard these vicissitudes as modes of defence against the instincts.

The *reversal* of an instinct *into its opposite* may on closer scrutiny be resolved into two different processes: a change from active to passive, and a reversal of the content. The two processes, being essentially distinct, must be treated separately.

Examples of the first process are met with in the



two pairs of opposites : sadism-masochism and scopophilia-exhibitionism. The reversal here concerns only the aims of the instincts. The passive aim (to be tortured, or looked at) has been substituted for the active aim (to torture, to look at). Reversal of content is found in the single instance of the change of love into hate.

The *turning round* of an instinct *upon the subject* is suggested to us by the reflection that masochism is actually sadism turned round upon the subject's own ego, and that exhibitionism includes the love of gazing at the subject's own body. Further, analytic observation leaves us in no doubt that the masochist also enjoys the *act* of torturing when this is being applied to himself, and the exhibitionist the exposing of someone in being exposed himself. So the essence of the process is the change of the object, while the aim remains unchanged.

We cannot fail to note, however, that in these examples turning round upon the subject's self and transformation from active to passive coincide or occur in one process. To elucidate the relation between the two processes, a more thorough investigation must be undertaken.

With the pair of opposites sadism-masochism, the process may be represented as follows :

(a) Sadism consists in the exercise of violence or power upon some other person as its object.

(b) This object is abandoned and replaced by the subject's self. Together with the turning round upon the self the change from an active to a passive aim in the instinct is also brought about.

(c) Again another person is sought as object ; this person, in consequence of the alteration which has taken place in the aim of the instinct, has to take over the original rôle of the subject.

Case (c) is the condition commonly termed masochism. Satisfaction follows in this case also by way of the original sadism, the passive ego placing itself in phan-

tasy back in its former situation, which, however, has now been given up to another subject outside the self. Whether there is, besides this, a more direct masochistic satisfaction is highly doubtful. A primary masochism not derived in the manner I have described from sadism, does not appear to be met with.<sup>1</sup> That it is not superfluous to make the assumption of stage (b) is quite clear when we observe the behaviour of the sadistic impulse in cases of obsessional neurosis. In these we have the turning upon the subject's self, without the attitude of passivity towards another: the reversal has only reached the second stage. Self-torment and self-punishment have arisen from the desire to torture, but not masochism. The active voice is changed, not into the passive, but into the reflexive middle voice.

The conception of sadism is made more complicated by the circumstance that this instinct, side by side with its general aim (or perhaps rather, within it), seems to press towards a quite special aim:—the infliction of pain, in addition to subjection and mastery of the object. Now psycho-analysis would seem to show that the infliction of pain plays no part in the original aims sought by the instinct: the sadistic child takes no notice of whether or not it inflicts pain, nor is it part of its purpose to do so. But when once the transformation into masochism has taken place, the experience of pain is very well adapted to serve as a passive masochistic aim, for we have every reason to believe that sensations of pain, like other unpleasant sensations, extend into sexual excitation and produce a condition which is pleasurable, for the sake of which the subject will even willingly experience the unpleasantness of pain. Where once the suffering of pain has been experienced as a masochistic aim, it can be carried back into the sadistic situation and result in a

<sup>1</sup> *Additional Note*, 1924. In later works (cf. 'The Economic Problem of Masochism', 1924, COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. ii.) relating to problems of instinctual life, I have expressed the opposite view.

sadistic aim of *inflicting pain*, which will then be masochistically enjoyed by the subject while inflicting pain upon others, through his identification of himself with the suffering object. Of course, in either case it is not the pain itself which is enjoyed, but the accompanying sexual excitement, and this is especially easy for the sadist. The enjoyment of pain would thus be a primary masochistic aim, which, however, can then also become the aim of the originally sadistic instinct.

In order to complete my exposition I would add that pity cannot be described as a result of the reversal of the sadistic instinct, but necessitates the conception of a *reaction-formation* against that instinct (for the difference, *v. infra*).

Rather different and simpler results are afforded by the investigation of another pair of opposites, namely, those instincts whose aim is sexual gazing (scoptophilia) and self-display (the 'voyeur' and exhibitionist tendencies as they are called in the language of the perversions). Here again we may postulate the same stages as in the previous instance: (a) scoptophilia as an activity directed towards an extraneous object; (b) abandonment of the object and a turning of the scoptophilic instinct towards a part of the subject's own person; therewith a transformation to passivity and the setting up of a new aim—that of being looked at; (c) the institution of a new subject to whom one displays oneself in order to be looked at. Here too, it is hardly possible to doubt that the active aim appears before the passive, that scoptophilia precedes exhibitionism. But there is an important divergence from what happens in the case of sadism, in that we can recognize in the scoptophilic instinct a yet earlier stage than that described as (a). That is to say, that at the beginning of its activity the scoptophilic instinct is auto-erotic: it has indeed an object, but that object is the subject's own body. It is only later that the instinct comes (by the way of comparison) to exchange this object for the analogous one of the body of another

(stage (a)). Now this preliminary stage is interesting because it is the source of both the situations represented in the resulting pair of opposites, according to which element in the original situation is reversed. The following might serve as a scheme for the scopophilic instinct :

<p>α Subject's looking at his <u>own sexual organ</u> =</p>	<p>Subject's own sexual organ being looked at by <u>himself</u></p>
<p>β Subject's looking at an <u>extraneous object</u> (active scopophilia)</p>	<p>γ Subject's own sexual organ being looked at by <u>another person</u> (exhibitionism)</p>

A preliminary stage of this kind is absent in sadism, which from the outset is directed upon an extraneous object, although it might not be altogether unreasonable to regard as such a stage the child's efforts to gain control of his own limbs.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to both these instincts just examined as examples, it must be said that transformation of them by a reversal from active to passive and by a turning round upon the subject never in fact concerns the whole amount of impelling force pertaining to the instinct. To some extent its earlier active direction always persists side by side with the later passive direction, even when the transformation is very extensive. The only correct description of the scopophilic instinct would be that all phases of its development, the auto-erotic, preliminary phase as well as its final active or passive form, co-exist alongside one another ; and the truth of this statement becomes manifest if we base our opinion, not upon the actions which are prompted by the instinct, but upon the mechanism of its satisfaction. Perhaps yet another way of conceiving and representing the matter may be justified. We may split up the life of each instinct into a series of ' thrusts ', distinct from one another in the time of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. preceding footnote, p. 71.

their occurrence but each homogeneous within its own period, whose relation to one another is comparable to that of successive eruptions of lava. We can then perhaps picture to ourselves that the earliest and most primitive instinct-eruption persists in an unchanged form and undergoes no development at all. The next 'thrust' would then from the outset have undergone a change of form, being turned, for instance, from active to passive, and it would then, with this new characteristic, be superimposed upon the earlier layer, and so on. So that, if we take a survey of the instinctual tendency from its beginning up to any given stopping-point, the succession of 'thrusts' which we have described would present the picture of a definite development of the instinct.

The fact that, at that later period of development, the instinct in its primary form may be observed side by side with its (passive) opposite deserves to be distinguished by the highly appropriate name introduced by Bleuler: *ambivalence*.

These considerations regarding the developmental history of an instinct and the permanent character of the intermediate stages in it should make instinct-development more comprehensible to us. Experience shows that the degree of demonstrable ambivalence varies greatly in individuals, groups and races. Marked ambivalence of an instinct in a human being at the present day may be regarded as an archaic inheritance, for we have reason to suppose that the part played in the life of the instincts by the active impulses in their original form was greater in primitive times than it is on an average to-day.

We have become accustomed to call the early phase of the development of the ego, during which its sexual instincts find auto-erotic satisfaction, *narcissism*, without having so far entered into any discussion of the relation between auto-erotism and narcissism. It follows that, in considering the preliminary phase of the scopophilic instinct, when the subject's own body

is the object of the scoptophilia, we must place it under the heading of narcissism ; it is a narcissistic formation. From this phase the active scoptophilic instinct, which has left narcissism behind, is developed, while the passive scoptophilic instinct, on the contrary, holds fast to the narcissistic object. Similarly, the transformation from sadism to masochism betokens a reversion to the narcissistic object, while in both cases the narcissistic (active) subject is exchanged by identification for another, extraneous ego. Taking into consideration the preliminary narcissistic stage of sadism constructed by us, we approach the more general view that those vicissitudes which consist in the instinct being turned round upon the subject's own ego and undergoing reversal from activity to passivity are dependent upon the narcissistic organization of the ego and bear the stamp of that phase. Perhaps they represent attempts at defence which at higher stages of the development of the ego are effected by other means.

At this point we may remember that so far we have discussed only two pairs of instincts and their opposites : sadism-masochism and scoptophilia-exhibitionism. These are the best-known sexual instincts which appear in ambivalent forms. The other components of the later sexual function are at present too inaccessible to analysis for us to be able to discuss them in a similar way. In general we can assert of them that their activities are auto-erotic, *i.e.* their object becomes negligible in comparison with the organ which is their source, and as a rule the two coincide. The object of the scoptophilic instinct, although it also in the first instance is a part of the subject's own body, nevertheless is not the eye itself ; and with sadism the organic source, probably the musculature with its capacity for action, directly presupposes an object other than itself, even though that object be part of the subject's own body. In the auto-erotic instincts, the part played by the organic source is so decisive that, according to a plausible supposition of P. Federn

and L. Jekels,<sup>1</sup> the form and function of the organ determine the activity or passivity of the instinct's aim.

The transformation of the 'content' of an instinct into its opposite is observed in a single instance only—the changing of *love into hate*. It is particularly common to find both these directed simultaneously towards the same object, and this phenomenon of their co-existence furnishes the most important example of ambivalence of feeling.

The case of love and hate acquires a special interest from the circumstance that it resists classification in our scheme of the instincts. It is impossible to doubt the existence of a most intimate relation between these two contrary feelings and sexual life, but one is naturally unwilling to conceive of love as being a kind of special component-instinct of sexuality in the same way as are the others just discussed. One would prefer to regard loving rather as the expression of the whole sexual current of feeling, but this idea does not clear up our difficulties and we are at a loss how to conceive of an essential opposite to this striving.

Loving admits of not merely one, but of three antitheses. First there is the antithesis of loving—hating; secondly, there is loving—being loved; and, in addition to these, loving and hating together are the opposite of the condition of neutrality or indifference. The second of these two antitheses, loving—being loved, corresponds exactly to the transformation from active to passive and may be traced to a primal situation in the same way as the scopophilic instinct. This situation is that of *loving oneself*, which for us is the characteristic of narcissism. Then, according to whether the self as object or subject is exchanged for an extraneous one, there results the active aim of loving or the passive one of being loved, the latter remaining nearly related to narcissism.

Perhaps we shall come to a better understanding of the manifold opposites of loving if we reflect that our

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschrift*, Bd. I., 1913.

mental life as a whole is governed by *three polarities*, namely, the following antitheses :

Subject (ego)—Object (external world),  
Pleasure—Pain,  
Active—Passive.

The antithesis of ego—non-ego (outer), *i.e.* subject—object, is, as we have already said, thrust upon the individual being at an early stage, by the experience that it can abolish external stimuli by means of muscular action but is defenceless against those stimuli that originate in instinct. This antithesis remains sovereign above all in our intellectual activity and provides research with a fundamental situation which no amount of effort can alter. The polarity of pleasure—pain depends upon a feeling-series, the significance of which in determining our actions (will) is paramount and has already been emphasized. The antithesis of active and passive must not be confounded with that of ego-subject—external object. The relation of the ego to the outer world is passive in so far as it receives stimuli from it, active when it reacts to these. Its instincts compel it to a quite special degree of activity towards the outside world, so that, if we wished to emphasize the essence of the matter, we might say that the ego-subject is passive in respect of external stimuli, active in virtue of its own instincts. The antithesis of active—passive coalesces later with that of masculine—feminine, which, until this has taken place, has no psychological significance. The fusion of activity with masculinity and passivity with femininity confronts us, indeed, as a biological fact, but it is by no means so invariably complete and exclusive as we are inclined to assume.

The three polarities within the mind are connected with one another in various highly significant ways. There is a certain primal psychic situation in which two of them coincide. Originally, at the very beginning of mental life, the ego's instincts are directed to itself and it is to some extent capable of deriving satisfaction



for them on itself. This condition is known as narcissism and this potentiality for satisfaction is termed auto-erotic.<sup>1</sup> The outside world is at this time, generally speaking, not cathected with any interest and is indifferent for purposes of satisfaction. At this period, therefore, the ego-subject coincides with what is pleasurable and the outside world with what is indifferent (or even painful as being a source of stimulation). Let us for the moment define loving as the relation of the ego to its sources of pleasure: then the situation in which the ego loves itself only and is indifferent to the outside world illustrates the first of the polarities in which 'loving' appeared.

In so far as it is auto-erotic, the ego has no need of the outside world, but, in consequence of experiences undergone by the instincts of self-preservation, it tends to find objects there and doubtless it cannot but for a time perceive inner instinctual stimuli as painful. Under the sway of the pleasure-principle there now takes place a further development. The objects presenting themselves, in so far as they are sources of pleasure, are absorbed by the ego into itself, 'introjected' (according to an expression coined by Ferenczi); while, on the other hand, the ego thrusts forth upon the external world whatever within itself gives rise to pain (*v. infra*: the mechanism of projection).

Thus the original *reality-ego*, which distinguished outer and inner by means of a sound objective criterion, changes into a purified *pleasure-ego*, which prizes above all else the quality of pleasure. For this pleasure-ego

<sup>1</sup> Some of the sexual instincts are, as we know, capable of this auto-erotic satisfaction and so are adapted to be the channel for that development under the sway of the pleasure-principle which we shall describe later. The sexual instincts which from the outset require an object and the needs of the ego-instincts, which are never capable of auto-erotic satisfaction, interfere, of course, with this condition and prepare the way for progress. More, the primal narcissistic condition would not have been able to attain such a development were it not that every individual goes through a period of helplessness and dependence on fostering care, during which his urgent needs are satisfied by agencies outside himself and thereby withheld from developing along their own line.

the outside world is divided into a part that is pleasurable, which it has incorporated into itself, and a remainder that is alien to it. A part of itself it has separated off, and this it projects into the external world and regards as hostile. According to this new arrangement the congruence of the two polarities,

ego-subject with pleasure,  
outside world with pain (or earlier with neutrality),  
is once more established.

When the stage of primary narcissism is invaded by the object, the second contrary attitude to that of love, namely, hate, attains to development.

As we have heard, the ego's objects are presented to it from the outside world in the first instance by the instincts of self-preservation, and it is undeniable also that hate originally betokens the relation of the ego to the alien external world with its afflux of stimuli. Neutrality may be classified as a special case of hate or rejection, after having made its appearance first as the forerunner of hate. Thus at the very beginning, the external world, objects and that which was hated were one and the same thing. When later on an object manifests itself as a source of pleasure, it becomes loved, but also incorporated into the ego, so that for the purified pleasure-ego the object once again coincides with what is extraneous and hated.

Now, however, we note that just as the antithesis love—indifference reflects the polarity ego—external world, so the second antithesis, love—hate, reproduces the polarity pleasure—pain, which is bound up with the former. When the purely narcissistic stage gives place to the object-stage, pleasure and pain denote the relations of the ego to the object. When the object becomes a source of pleasurable feelings, a motor tendency is set up which strives to bring the object near to and incorporate it into the ego; we then speak of the 'attraction' exercised by the pleasure-giving object, and say that we 'love' that object. Conversely, when the object is the source of painful

feelings, there is a tendency which endeavours to increase the distance between object and ego and to repeat in relation to the former the primordial attempt at flight from the external world with its flow of stimuli. We feel a 'repulsion' from the object, and hate it; this hate can then be intensified to the point of an aggressive tendency towards the object, with the intention of destroying it.

We might at a pinch say of an instinct that it 'loves' the objects after which it strives for purposes of satisfaction, but to say that it 'hates' an object strikes us as odd; so we become aware that the attitudes of love and hate cannot be said to characterize the relations of instincts to their objects, but are reserved for the relations of the ego as a whole to objects. But, if we consider a colloquial usage which is certainly full of meaning, we see that there is yet another limitation to the significance of love and hate. We do not say of those objects which serve the interests of self-preservation that we love them; rather we emphasize the fact that we need them, and perhaps add an element of a different kind in our relation to them by words which denote a much lesser degree of love—for example, to be fond of, to like, to find agreeable.

So the word 'to love' becomes shifted ever further into the sphere of the pure pleasure-relation existing between the ego and its object and finally attaches itself to sexual objects in the narrower sense and to those which satisfy the needs of sublimated sexual instincts. The discrimination of the ego-instincts from the sexual, a discrimination which we have imposed upon our psychology, is seen, therefore, to be in conformity with the spirit of our speech. Since we do not customarily say that the single sexual component-instinct loves its object, but see the most appropriate case in which to apply the word 'love' in the relation of the ego to its sexual object, we learn from this fact that the applicability of the word in this relation begins

only with the synthesis of all the component-instincts under the primacy of the genitals and in the service of the function of reproduction.

It is noteworthy that in the use of the word 'hate' no such intimate relation to sexual pleasure and the sexual function appears: on the contrary, the painful character of the relation seems to be the sole decisive feature. The ego hates, abhors and pursues with intent to destroy all objects which are for it a source of painful feelings, without taking into account whether they mean to it frustration of sexual satisfaction or of gratification of the needs of self-preservation. Indeed, it may be asserted that the true prototypes of the hate-relation are derived not from sexual life, but from the struggle of the ego for self-preservation and self-maintenance.

So we see that love and hate, which present themselves to us as essentially antithetical, stand in no simple relation to each other. They did not originate in a cleavage of any common primal element, but sprang from different sources and underwent each its own development before the influence of the pleasure-pain relation constituted them antitheses to each other. At this point we are confronted with the task of putting together what we know of the genesis of love and hate.

Love originates in the capacity of the ego to satisfy some of its instincts auto-erotically through the obtaining of 'organ-pleasure'. It is primarily narcissistic, is then transferred to those objects which have been incorporated in the ego, now much extended, and expresses the motor striving of the ego after these objects as sources of pleasure. It is intimately connected with the activity of the later sexual instincts and, when these have been completely synthetized, coincides with the sexual trend as a whole. The preliminary stages of love reveal themselves as temporary sexual aims, while the sexual instincts are passing through their complicated development. First amongst these we recognize the phase of incorporating or

devouring, a type of love which is compatible with abolition of any separate existence on the part of the object, and which may therefore be designated ambivalent. At the higher stage of the pregenital sadistic-anal organization, the striving after the object appears in the form of an impulsion to mastery, in which injury or annihilation of the object is a matter of indifference. This form and preliminary stage of love is hardly to be distinguished from hate in its behaviour towards the object. Only when the genital organization is established does love become the antithesis of hate.

The relation of hate to objects is older than that of love. It is derived from the primal repudiation by the narcissistic ego of the external world whence flows the stream of stimuli. As an expression of the pain-reaction induced by objects, it remains in constant intimate relation with the instincts of self-preservation, so that sexual and ego-instincts readily develop an antithesis which repeats that of love and hate. When the sexual function is governed by the ego-instincts, as at the stage of the sadistic-anal organization, they impart the qualities of hate to the instinct's aim as well.

The history of the origin and relations of love makes us understand how it is that love so constantly manifests itself as 'ambivalent', *i.e.* accompanied by feelings of hate against the same object. This admixture of hate in love is to be traced in part to those preliminary stages of love which have not been wholly outgrown, and in part is based upon reactions of aversion and repudiation on the part of the ego-instincts which, in the frequent conflicts between the interests of the ego and those of love, can claim to be supported by real and actual motives. In both cases, therefore, the admixture of hate may be traced to the source of the self-preservative instincts. When a love-relationship with a given object is broken off, it is not infrequently succeeded by hate, so that we receive the impression of a transformation of love into hate. This descriptive characterization is amplified by the

view that, when this happens, the hate which is motivated by considerations of reality is reinforced by a regression of the love to the sadistic preliminary stage, so that the hate acquires an erotic character and the continuity of a love-relation is ensured.

The third antithesis of love, the transformation of loving into being loved, represents the operation of the polarity of active and passive, and is to be judged in the same way as in scopophilia and sadism. We may sum up by saying that the essential feature in the vicissitudes undergone by instincts is *their subjection to the influences of the three great polarities that govern mental life*. Of these three polarities we might describe that of activity—passivity as the *biological*, that of ego—external world as the *real*, and finally that of pleasure—pain as the *economic* respectively.

That possible vicissitude undergone by an instinct which we call *repression* will form the subject of a further inquiry.

## V

### REPRESSION <sup>1</sup>

(1915)

ONE of the vicissitudes an instinctual impulse may undergo is to meet with resistances the aim of which is to make the impulse inoperative. Under certain conditions, which we shall presently investigate more closely, the impulse then passes into the state of *repression*. If it were a question of the operation of an external stimulus, obviously flight would be the appropriate remedy ; with an instinct, flight is of no avail, for the ego cannot escape from itself. Later on, rejection based on judgement (*condemnation*) will be found to be a good weapon against the impulse. Repression is a preliminary phase of condemnation, something between flight and condemnation ; it is a concept which could not have been formulated before the time of psycho-analytic research.

It is not easy in theory to deduce the possibility of such a thing as repression. Why should an instinctual impulse suffer such a fate? For this to happen, obviously a necessary condition must be that attainment of its aim by the instinct should produce 'pain' instead of pleasure. But we cannot well imagine such a contingency. There are no such instincts ; satisfaction of an instinct is always pleasurable. We should have to assume certain peculiar circumstances, some sort of process which changes the pleasure of satisfaction into 'pain'.

In order the better to define repression we may discuss some other situations in which instincts are concerned. It may happen that an external stimulus

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. III., 1915 ; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Cecil M. Baines.]

becomes internal, for example, by eating into and destroying a bodily organ, so that a new source of constant excitation and increase of tension is formed. The stimulus thereby acquires a far-reaching similarity to an instinct. We know that a case of this sort is experienced by us as *physical pain*. The aim of this pseudo-instinct, however, is simply the cessation of the change in the organ and of the pain accompanying it. There is no other direct pleasure to be attained by cessation of the pain. Further, pain is imperative; the only things which can subdue it are the effect of some toxic agent in removing it and the influence of some mental distraction.

The case of physical pain is too obscure to help us much in our purpose. Let us suppose that an instinctual stimulus such as hunger remains unsatisfied. It then becomes imperative and can be allayed by nothing but the appropriate action for satisfying it; it keeps up a constant tension of need. Anything like a repression seems in this case to be utterly out of the question.

So repression is certainly not an essential result of the tension produced by lack of satisfaction of an impulse being raised to an unbearable degree. The weapons of defence of which the organism avails itself to guard against that situation must be discussed in another connection.

Let us instead confine ourselves to the clinical experience we meet with in the practice of psycho-analysis. We then see that the satisfaction of an instinct under repression is quite possible; further, that in every instance such a satisfaction is pleasurable in itself, but is irreconcilable with other claims and purposes; it therefore causes pleasure in one part of the mind and 'pain' in another. We see then that it is a condition of repression that the element of avoiding 'pain' shall have acquired more strength than the pleasure of gratification. Psycho-analytic experience of the transference neuroses, moreover, forces us to the



conclusion that repression is not a defence-mechanism present from the very beginning, and that it cannot occur until a sharp distinction has been established between what is conscious and what is unconscious : that *the essence of repression lies simply in the function of rejecting and keeping something out of consciousness*. This conception of repression would be supplemented by assuming that, before the mental organization reaches this phase, the other vicissitudes which may befall instincts, *e.g.* reversal into the opposite or turning round upon the subject, deal with the task of mastering the instinctual impulses.

It seems to us now that in view of the very great extent to which repression and the unconscious are correlated, we must defer probing more deeply into the nature of repression until we have learnt more about the structure of the various institutions in the mind—and about what differentiates consciousness from the unconscious. Till we have done this, all we can do is to put together in purely descriptive fashion some characteristics of repression noted in clinical practice, even though we run the risk of having to repeat unchanged much that has been said elsewhere.

Now we have reason for assuming a *primal repression*, a first phase of repression, which consists in a denial of entry into consciousness to the mental (ideational) presentation of the instinct. This is accompanied by a *fixation* ; the ideational presentation in question persists unaltered from then onwards and the instinct remains attached to it. This is due to certain properties of unconscious processes of which we shall speak later.

The second phase of repression, *repression proper*, concerns mental derivatives of the repressed instinct-presentation, or such trains of thought as, originating elsewhere, have come into associative connection with it. On account of this association, these ideas experience the same fate as that which underwent primal repression. Repression proper, therefore, is actually

an after-expulsion. Moreover, it is a mistake to emphasize only the rejection which operates from the side of consciousness upon what is to be repressed. We have to consider just as much the attraction exercised by what was originally repressed upon everything with which it can establish a connection. Probably the tendency to repression would fail of its purpose if these forces did not co-operate, if there were not something previously repressed ready to assimilate that which is rejected from consciousness.

Under the influence of study of the psychoneuroses, which brings before us the important effects of repression, we are inclined to overestimate their psychological content and to forget too readily that repression does not hinder the instinct-presentation from continuing to exist in the unconscious and from organizing itself further, putting forth derivatives and instituting connections. Really, repression interferes only with the relation of the instinct-presentation to one system of the mind, namely, to consciousness.

Psycho-analysis is able to show us something else which is important for understanding the effects of repression in the psychoneuroses. It shows us, for instance, that the instinct-presentation develops in a more unchecked and luxuriant fashion if it is withdrawn by repression from conscious influence. It ramifies like a fungus, so to speak, in the dark and takes on extreme forms of expression, which when translated and revealed to the neurotic are bound not merely to seem alien to him, but to terrify him by the way in which they reflect an extraordinary and dangerous strength of instinct. This illusory strength of instinct is the result of an uninhibited development of it in phantasy and of the damming-up consequent on lack of real satisfaction. The fact that this last result is bound up with repression points the direction in which we have to look for the true significance of the latter.

In reverting to the contrary aspect, however, let us

state definitely that it is not even correct to suppose that repression withholds from consciousness all the derivatives of what was primally repressed. If these derivatives are sufficiently far removed from the repressed instinct-presentation, whether owing to the process of distortion or by reason of the number of intermediate associations, they have free access to consciousness. It is as though the resistance of consciousness against them was in inverse proportion to their remoteness from what was originally repressed. During the practice of the psycho-analytic method, we continually require the patient to produce such derivatives of what has been repressed as, in consequence either of their remoteness or of distortion, can pass the censorship of consciousness. Indeed, the associations which we require him to give, while refraining from any consciously directed train of thought or any criticism, and from which we reconstruct a conscious interpretation of the repressed instinct-presentation, are precisely derivatives of this kind. We then observe that the patient can go on spinning a whole chain of such associations, till he is brought up in the midst of them against some thought-formation, the relation of which to what is repressed acts so intensely that he is compelled to repeat his attempt at repression. Neurotic symptoms, too, must have fulfilled the condition referred to, for they are derivatives of the repressed, which has finally by means of these formations wrested from consciousness the right of way previously denied it.

We can lay down no general rule concerning the degree of distortion and remoteness necessary before the resistance of consciousness is abrogated. In this matter a delicate balancing takes place, the play of which is hidden from us ; its mode of operation, however, leads us to infer that it is a question of a definite degree of intensity in the cathexis of the unconscious—beyond which it would break through for satisfaction. Repression acts, therefore, in a *highly specific* manner in each instance ; every single derivative of the

repressed may have its peculiar fate—a little more or a little less distortion alters the whole issue. In this connection it becomes comprehensible that those objects to which men give their preference, that is, their ideals, originate in the same perceptions and experiences as those objects of which they have most abhorrence, and that the two originally differed from one another only by slight modifications. Indeed, as we found in the origin of the fetish, it is possible for the original instinct-presentation to be split into two, one part undergoing repression, while the remainder, just on account of its intimate association with the other, undergoes idealization.

The same result as ensues from an increase or a decrease in the degree of distortion may also be achieved at the other end of the apparatus, so to speak, by a modification in the conditions producing pleasure and 'pain'. Special devices have been evolved, with the object of bringing about such changes in the play of mental forces that what usually gives rise to 'pain' may on this occasion result in pleasure, and whenever such a device comes into operation the repression of an instinct-presentation that is ordinarily repudiated is abrogated. The only one of these devices which has till now been studied in any detail is that of joking. Generally the lifting of the repression is only transitory; the repression is immediately re-established.

Observations of this sort, however, suffice to draw our attention to some further characteristics of repression. Not only is it, as we have just explained, *variable* and *specific*, but it is also exceedingly *mobile*. The process of repression is not to be regarded as something which takes place once for all, the results of which are permanent, as when some living thing has been killed and from that time onward is dead; on the contrary, repression demands a constant expenditure of energy, and if this were discontinued the success of the repression would be jeopardized, so that a fresh act of repression would be necessary. We may imagine

that what is repressed exercises a continuous straining in the direction of consciousness, so that the balance has to be kept by means of a steady counter-pressure. A constant expenditure of energy, therefore, is entailed in maintaining a repression, and economically its abrogation denotes a saving. The mobility of the repression, incidentally, finds expression also in the mental characteristics of the condition of sleep which alone renders dream-formation possible. With a return to waking life the repressive cathexes which have been called in are once more put forth.

Finally, we must not forget that after all we have said very little about an instinctual impulse when we state it to be repressed. Without prejudice to the repression such an impulse may find itself in widely different conditions; it may be inactive, *i.e.* cathected with only a low degree of mental energy, or its degree of cathexis (and consequently its capacity for activity) may vary. True, its activity will not result in a direct abrogation of the repression, but it will certainly set in motion all the processes which terminate in a breaking through into consciousness by circuitous routes. With unrepressed derivatives of the unconscious the fate of a particular idea is often decided by the degree of its activity or cathexis. It is an everyday occurrence that such a derivative can remain unrepressed so long as it represents only a small amount of energy, although its content is of such a nature as to give rise to a conflict with conscious control. But the quantitative factor is manifestly decisive for this conflict; as soon as an idea which is fundamentally offensive exceeds a certain degree of strength, the conflict takes on actuality, and it is precisely activation of the idea that leads to its repression. So that, where repression is concerned, an increase in energetic cathexis operates in the same way as an approach to the unconscious, while a decrease in that energy operates like distance from the unconscious or like distortion. We understand that the repressing tendencies can find a

substitute for repression in a weakening or lessening of whatever is distasteful to them.

In our discussion hitherto we have dealt with the repression of an instinct-presentation, and by that we understood an idea or group of ideas which is cathected with a definite amount of the mental energy (libido, interest) pertaining to an instinct. Now clinical observation forces us further to dissect something that hitherto we have conceived of as a single entity, for it shows us that beside the idea there is something else, another presentation of the instinct to be considered, and that this other element undergoes a repression which may be quite different from that of the idea. We have adopted the term *charge of affect* for this other element in the mental presentation ; it represents that part of the instinct which has become detached from the idea, and finds proportionate expression, according to its quantity, in processes which become observable to perception as affects. From this point on, in describing a case of repression, we must follow up the fate of the idea which undergoes repression separately from that of the instinctual energy attached to the idea.

We should be glad enough to be able to give some general account of the outcome of both of these, and when we have taken our bearings a little we shall actually be able to do so. In general, repression of the ideational presentation of an instinct can surely only have the effect of causing it to vanish from consciousness if it had previously been in consciousness, or of holding it back if it is about to enter it. The difference, after all, is not important ; it amounts to much the same thing as the difference between ordering an undesirable guest out of my drawing-room or out of my front hall, and refusing to let him cross my threshold once I have recognized him.<sup>1</sup> The fate of the quantita-

<sup>1</sup> This metaphor, applicable to the process of repression, may also be extended to include one of the characteristics of repression mentioned earlier. I need only add that I have to place a sentinel to keep constant guard over the door which I have forbidden this guest to pass, lest he should burst it open (*v. supra*).

tive factor in the instinct-presentation may be one of three, as we see by a cursory survey of the observations made through psycho-analysis : either the instinct is altogether suppressed, so that no trace of it is found, or it appears in the guise of an affect of a particular qualitative tone, or it is transformed into anxiety. With the two last possibilities we are obliged to focus our attention upon the *transformation* into *affects*, and especially into *anxiety*, of the mental energy belonging to the *instincts*, this being a new possible vicissitude undergone by an instinct.

We recall the fact that the motive and purpose of repression was simply the avoidance of 'pain'. It follows that the fate of the charge of affect belonging to the presentation is far more important than that of the ideational content of it and is decisive for the opinion we form of the process of repression. If a repression does not succeed in preventing feelings of 'pain' or anxiety from arising, we may say that it has failed, even though it may have achieved its aim as far as the ideational element is concerned. Naturally, the case of unsuccessful repression will have more claim on our interest than that of repression which is eventually successful ; the latter will for the most part elude our study.

We now wish to gain some insight into the mechanism of the process of repression, and especially we want to know whether it has a single mechanism only, or more than one, and whether perhaps each of the psychoneuroses may be distinguished by a characteristic repression-mechanism peculiar to itself. At the outset of this inquiry, however, we encounter complications. The mechanism of a repression becomes accessible to us only when we deduce it from its final results. If we confine our observations to the results of its effect on the ideational part of the instinct-presentation, we discover that as a rule repression creates a *substitute-formation*. What then is the mechanism of such a substitute-formation, or must we distinguish

several mechanisms here also? Further, we know that repression leaves *symptoms* in its train. May we then regard substitute-formation and symptom-formation as coincident processes, and, if this is on the whole possible, does the mechanism of substitute-formation coincide with that of repression? So far as we know at present, it seems probable that the two are widely divergent, that it is not the repression itself which produces substitute-formations and symptoms, but that these latter constitute indications of a *return of the repressed* and owe their existence to quite other processes. It would also seem advisable to examine the mechanisms of substitute- and symptom-formation before those of repression.

Obviously there is no ground here for speculation to explore: on the contrary, the solution of the problem must be found by careful analysis of the results of repression observable in the individual neuroses. I must, however, suggest that we should postpone this task, too, until we have formed reliable conceptions of the relation of consciousness to the unconscious. Only, in order that the present discussion may not be quite unfruitful, I will anticipate by saying: (1) that the mechanism of repression does not in fact coincide with the mechanism or mechanisms of substitute-formation, (2) that there are many different mechanisms of substitute-formation, and (3) that the different mechanisms of repression have at least this one thing in common: *a withdrawal of energetic cathexis* (or of *libido*, if it is a question of sexual instincts).

Further, confining myself to the three best-known forms of psychoneurosis, I will show by means of some examples how the conceptions here introduced find application to the study of repression. From *anxiety-hysteria* I will choose an instance which has been subjected to thorough analysis—that of an animal-phobia. The instinctual impulse subjected to repression here is a libidinal attitude towards the father, coupled with dread of him. After repression, this



impulse vanishes out of consciousness : the father does not appear in consciousness as an object for the libido. As a substitute for him we find in a corresponding situation some animal which is more or less suited to be an object of dread. The substitute-formation of the ideational element has established itself by way of a displacement along the line of a series of associated ideas which is determined in some particular way. The quantitative element has not vanished, but has been transformed into anxiety. The result is a fear of a wolf, instead of a claim for love from the father. Of course the categories here employed are not enough to supply a complete explanation even of the simplest case of psychoneurosis : there are always other points of view to be taken into account.

Such a repression as that which takes place in an animal-phobia must be described as radically unsuccessful. All that it has done is to remove the idea and set another in its place ; it has not succeeded at all in its aim of avoiding 'pain'. On this account, too, the work of the neurosis, far from ceasing, proceeds into a 'second movement', so to speak, which is designed to attain its immediate and more important aim. There follows an attempt at flight, the formation of the *phobia proper*—a number of things have to be *avoided* in order to prevent an outbreak of anxiety. A more particular investigation would enable us to understand the mechanism by which the phobia achieves its aim.

We are led to quite another view of the process of repression when we consider the picture of a true *conversion-hysteria*. Here the salient point is that it is possible to bring about a total disappearance of the charge of affect. The patient then displays towards his symptoms what Charcot called '*la belle indifférence des hystériques*'. At other times this suppression is not so completely successful : a part of the sensations of distress attaches to the symptoms themselves, or it has proved impossible entirely to prevent outbreaks of anxiety, and this in its turn sets the mechanism of

phobia-formation working. The ideational content of the instinct-presentation is completely withdrawn from consciousness; as a substitute-formation—and concurrently, as a symptom—we have an excessive innervation (in typical cases, a somatic innervation), sometimes of a sensory, sometimes of a motor character, either as an excitation or as an inhibition. The area of over-innervation proves on closer observation to belong to the repressed instinct-presentation itself, and, as if by a process of *condensation*, to have absorbed the whole cathexis. Of course these remarks do not cover the whole mechanism of a conversion-hysteria; the element of *regression* especially, which will be appraised in another connection, has to be taken into account.

In so far as it is rendered possible only by means of extensive substitute-formations, the repression which takes place in hysteria may be pronounced entirely unsuccessful; with reference to mastering the charge of affect, however, which is the real task of repression, it generally betokens a complete success. Again, in conversion-hysteria the process of repression terminates with the formation of the symptom and does not, as in anxiety-hysteria, need to proceed to a 'second movement'—or, strictly speaking, an unlimited number of 'movements'.

A totally different aspect of repression is shown in the third affection to which we are referring for purposes of this comparison: in the *obsessional neurosis*. Here we are at first in doubt what it is that we have to regard as the repressed instinct-presentation—a libidinal or a hostile trend. This uncertainty arises because the obsessional neurosis rests on the premise of a regression by means of which a sadistic trend has been substituted for a tender one. It is this hostile impulse against a loved person which has undergone repression. The effect at an early phase of the work of repression is quite different from that produced later. At first the repression is completely successful, the ideational content is rejected and the affect made to

disappear. As a substitute-formation there arises an alteration in the ego, an increased sensitiveness of conscience, which can hardly be called a symptom. Substitute- and symptom-formation do not coincide here. Here, too, we learn something about the mechanism of repression. Repression, as it invariably does, has brought about a withdrawal of libido, but for this purpose it has made use of a *reaction-formation*, by intensifying an antithesis. So here the substitute-formation has the same mechanism as the repression and at bottom coincides with it, while yet chronologically, as well as in its content, it is distinct from the symptom-formation. It is very probable that the whole process is made possible by the ambivalent relation into which the sadistic impulse destined for repression has been introduced.

But the repression, at first successful, does not hold ; in the further course of things its failure becomes increasingly obvious. The ambivalence which has allowed repression to come into being by means of reaction-formation also constitutes the point at which the repressed succeeds in breaking through again. The vanished affect is transformed, without any diminution, into dread of the community, pangs of conscience, or self-reproaches ; the rejected idea is replaced by a *displacement-substitute*, often by displacement on to something utterly trivial or indifferent. For the most part there is an unmistakable tendency to complete re-establishment of the repressed idea. Failure of repression of the quantitative factor brings into play, by means of various taboos and prohibitions, the same mechanism of flight as we have seen at work in the formation of hysterical phobias. The rejection of the idea from consciousness is, however, obstinately maintained, because it ensures abstention from action, preclusion of the motor expression of an impulse. So the final form of the work of repression in the obsessional neurosis is a sterile and never-ending struggle.

The short series of comparisons which have been

presented here may easily convince us that more comprehensive investigations are necessary before we can hope to understand thoroughly the processes connected with repression and the formation of neurotic symptoms. The extraordinary intricacy of all the factors to be taken into consideration leaves us only one way open by which to present them. We must select first one and then another point of view, and follow it up through the material at our disposal as long as application of it seems to prove fruitful. Each separate point so treated will be incomplete in itself and there cannot fail to be obscurities where we touch upon material not previously dealt with ; but we may hope that the final synthesis of them all will lead to a good understanding of the subject.

## VI

### THE UNCONSCIOUS<sup>1</sup>

(1915)

**P**SYCHO-ANALYSIS has taught us that the essence of the process of repression lies, not in abrogating or annihilating the ideational presentation of an instinct, but in withholding it from becoming conscious. We then say of the idea that it is in a state of 'unconsciousness', of being not apprehended by the conscious mind, and we can produce convincing proofs to show that unconsciously it can also produce effects, even of a kind that finally penetrate to consciousness. Everything that is repressed must remain unconscious, but at the very outset let us state that the repressed does not comprise the whole unconscious. The unconscious has the greater compass: the repressed is a part of the unconscious.

How are we to arrive at a knowledge of the unconscious? It is of course only as something conscious that we know anything of it, after it has undergone transformation or translation into something conscious. The possibility of such translation is a matter of everyday experience in psycho-analytic work. In order to achieve this, it is necessary that the person analysed should overcome certain resistances, the very same as those which at some earlier time placed the material in question under repression by rejecting it from consciousness.

#### *I. Justification for the Conception of the Unconscious*

In many quarters our justification is disputed for assuming the existence of an unconscious system in the

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. III., 1915; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Cecil M. Baines.]

mind and for employing such an assumption for purposes of scientific work. To this we can reply that our assumption of the existence of the unconscious is *necessary* and *legitimate*, and that we possess manifold *proofs* of the existence of the unconscious. It is necessary because the data of consciousness are exceedingly defective; both in healthy and in sick persons mental acts are often in process which can be explained only by presupposing other acts, of which consciousness yields no evidence. These include not only the parapraxes<sup>1</sup> and dreams of healthy persons, and everything designated a mental symptom or an obsession in the sick; our most intimate daily experience introduces us to sudden ideas of the source of which we are ignorant, and to results of mentation arrived at we know not how. All these conscious acts remain disconnected and unintelligible if we are determined to hold fast to the claim that every single mental act performed within us must be consciously experienced; on the other hand, they fall into a demonstrable connection if we interpolate the unconscious acts that we infer. A gain in meaning and connection, however, is a perfectly justifiable motive, one which may well carry us beyond the limitations of direct experience. When, after this, it appears that the assumption of the unconscious helps us to construct a highly successful practical method, by which we are enabled to exert a useful influence upon the course of conscious processes, this success will have won us an incontrovertible proof of the existence of that which we assumed. We become obliged then to take up the position that it is both untenable and presumptuous to claim that whatever goes on in the mind must be known to consciousness.

We can go further and in support of an unconscious mental state allege that only a small content is embraced by consciousness at any given moment, so that the greater part of what we call conscious knowledge must in any case exist for very considerable periods of

<sup>1</sup> [E.g. slips of the tongue, mislaying of objects, etc.—TRANS.]

time in a condition of latency, that is to say, of unconsciousness, of not being apprehended by the mind. When all our latent memories are taken into consideration it becomes totally incomprehensible how the existence of the unconscious can be gainsaid. We then encounter the objection that these latent recollections can no longer be described as mental processes, but that they correspond to residues of somatic processes from which something mental can once more proceed. The obvious answer to this should be that a latent memory is, on the contrary, indubitably a residuum of a mental process. But it is more important to make clear to our own minds that this objection is based on the identification—not, it is true, explicitly stated but regarded as axiomatic—of conscious and mental. This identification is either a *petitio principii* and begs the question whether all that is mental is also necessarily conscious, or else it is a matter of convention, of nomenclature. In this latter case it is of course no more open to refutation than any other convention. The only question that remains is whether it proves so useful that we must needs adopt it. To this we may reply that the conventional identification of the mental with the conscious is thoroughly unpractical. It breaks up all mental continuity, plunges us into the insoluble difficulties of psychophysical parallelism, is open to the reproach that without any manifest grounds it overestimates the part played by consciousness, and finally it forces us prematurely to retire from the territory of psychological research without being able to offer us any compensation elsewhere.

At any rate it is clear that the question—whether the latent states of mental life, whose existence is undeniable, are to be conceived of as unconscious mental states or as physical ones—threatens to resolve itself into a war of words. We shall therefore be better advised to give prominence to what we know with certainty of the nature of these debatable states. Now, as far as their physical characteristics are con-

cerned, they are totally inaccessible to us : no physiological conception nor chemical process can give us any notion of their nature. On the other hand, we know for certain that they have abundant points of contact with conscious mental processes ; on being submitted to a certain method of operation they may be transformed into or replaced by conscious processes, and all the categories which we employ to describe conscious mental acts, such as ideas, purposes, resolutions and so forth, can be applied to them. Indeed, of many of these latent states we have to assert that the only point in which they differ from states which are conscious is just in the lack of consciousness of them. So we shall not hesitate to treat them as objects of psychological research, and that in the most intimate connection with conscious mental acts.

The stubborn denial of a mental quality to latent mental processes may be accounted for by the circumstance that most of the phenomena in question have not been objects of study outside psycho-analysis. Anyone who is ignorant of the facts of pathology, who regards the blunders of normal persons as accidental, and who is content with the old saw that dreams are froth<sup>1</sup> need only ignore a few more problems of the psychology of consciousness in order to dispense with the assumption of an unconscious mental activity. As it happens, hypnotic experiments, and especially post-hypnotic suggestion, had demonstrated tangibly even before the time of psycho-analysis the existence and mode of operation of the unconscious in the mind.

The assumption of an unconscious is, moreover, in a further respect a perfectly *legitimate* one, inasmuch as in postulating it we do not depart a single step from our customary and accepted mode of thinking. By the medium of consciousness each one of us becomes aware only of his own states of mind ; that another man possesses consciousness is a conclusion drawn by analogy from the utterances and actions we perceive

<sup>1</sup> ['*Träume sind Schäume.*']



him to make, and it is drawn in order that this behaviour of his may become intelligible to us. (It would probably be psychologically more correct to put it thus: that without any special reflection we impute to everyone else our own constitution and therefore also our consciousness, and that this identification is a necessary condition of understanding in us.) This conclusion—or identification—was formerly extended by the ego to other human beings, to animals, plants, inanimate matter and to the world at large, and proved useful as long as the correspondence with the individual ego was overwhelmingly great; but it became more untrustworthy in proportion as the gulf between the ego and the non-ego widened. To-day, our judgement is already in doubt on the question of consciousness in animals; we refuse to admit it in plants and we relegate to mysticism the assumption of its existence in inanimate matter. But even where the original tendency to identification has withstood criticism—that is, when the non-ego is our fellow-man—the assumption of a consciousness in him rests upon an inference and cannot share the direct certainty we have of our own consciousness.

Now psycho-analysis demands nothing more than that we should apply this method of inference to ourselves also—a proceeding to which, it is true, we are not constitutionally disposed. If we do this, we must say that all the acts and manifestations which I notice in myself and do not know how to link up with the rest of my mental life must be judged as if they belonged to someone else and are to be explained by the mental life ascribed to that person. Further, experience shows that we understand very well how to interpret in others (*i.e.* how to fit into their mental context) those same acts which we refuse to acknowledge as mentally conditioned in ourselves. Some special hindrance evidently deflects our investigations from ourselves and interferes with our obtaining true knowledge of ourselves.

Now this method of inference, applied to oneself in spite of inner opposition, does not lead to the discovery of an unconscious, but leads logically to the assumption of another, second consciousness which is united in myself with the consciousness I know. But at this point criticism may fairly make certain comments. In the first place, a consciousness of which its own possessor knows nothing is something very different from that of another person and it is questionable whether such a consciousness, lacking, as it does, its most important characteristic, is worthy of any further discussion at all. Those who have contested the assumption of an unconscious system in the mind will not be content to accept in its place an unconscious consciousness. Secondly, analysis shows that the individual latent mental processes inferred by us enjoy a high degree of independence, as though each had no connection with another, and knew nothing about any other. We must be prepared, it would appear, to assume the existence not only of a second consciousness in us, but of a third and fourth also, perhaps of an infinite series of states of consciousness, each and all unknown to us and to one another. In the third place—and this is the most weighty argument of all—we have to take into account that analytic investigation reveals some of these latent processes as having characteristics and peculiarities which seem alien to us, or even incredible, and running directly counter to the well-known attributes of consciousness. This justifies us in modifying our inference about ourselves and saying that what is proved is not a second consciousness in us, but the existence of certain mental operations lacking in the quality of consciousness. We shall also, moreover, be right in rejecting the term 'subconsciousness' as incorrect and misleading. The known cases of '*double conscience*' (splitting of consciousness) prove nothing against our view. They may most accurately be described as cases of a splitting of the mental activities into two groups, whereby a single

consciousness takes up its position alternately with either the one or the other of these groups.

In psycho-analysis there is no choice for us but to declare mental processes to be in themselves unconscious, and to compare the perception of them by consciousness with the perception of the outside world through the sense-organs; we even hope to extract some fresh knowledge from the comparison. The psycho-analytic assumption of unconscious mental activity appears to us, on the one hand, a further development of that primitive animism which caused our own consciousness to be reflected in all around us, and, on the other hand, it seems to be an extension of the corrections begun by Kant in regard to our views on external perception. Just as Kant warned us not to overlook the fact that our perception is subjectively conditioned and must not be regarded as identical with the phenomena perceived but never really discerned, so psycho-analysis bids us not to set conscious perception in the place of the unconscious mental process which is its object. The mental, like the physical, is not necessarily in reality just what it appears to us to be. It is, however, satisfactory to find that the correction of inner perception does not present difficulties so great as that of outer perception—that the inner object is less hard to discern truly than is the outside world.

## II. *Different Significations of the Term 'Unconscious'; the Topographical Aspect*

Before going any further, let us note the important, though inconvenient, fact that unconsciousness is only one attribute of the mental and by no means suffices to describe its character. There are mental acts of very varying values which yet have in common the characteristic of being unconscious. The unconscious comprises, on the one hand, processes which are merely latent, temporarily unconscious, but which differ in no other respect from conscious ones and, on the other

hand, processes such as those which have undergone repression, which if they came into consciousness must stand out in the crudest contrast to the rest of the conscious mind. It would put an end to all misunderstandings if, from now on, in describing the various kinds of mental acts we were to pay no attention to whether they were conscious or unconscious, but, when classifying and correlating them, inquired only to which instincts and aims they were related, how they were composed and to which of the systems in the mind that are superimposed one upon another they belonged. This, however, is for various reasons impracticable, and it follows that we cannot escape the imputation of ambiguity in that we use the words conscious and unconscious sometimes in a descriptive and sometimes in a systematic sense, in which latter they signify inclusion in some particular system and possession of certain characteristics. We might still attempt to avoid confusion by employing for the recognized mental systems certain arbitrarily chosen names which have no reference to consciousness. Only we should first have to justify the principles on which we distinguish the systems and we should not be able to ignore the question of consciousness, seeing that it forms the point of departure for all our investigations. Perhaps we may look for some assistance from the proposal to employ, at any rate in writing, the abbreviation Cs for consciousness and the Ucs for the unconscious when we are using the two words in the systematic sense.

To deal with the positive aspects, we now assert on the findings of psycho-analysis that a mental act commonly goes through two phases, between which is interposed a kind of testing process (censorship). In the first phase the mental act is unconscious and belongs to the system Ucs ; if upon the scrutiny of the censorship it is rejected, it is not allowed to pass into the second phase ; it is then said to be ' repressed ' and must remain unconscious. If, however, it passes this scrutiny, it enters upon the second phase and

thenceforth belongs to the second system, which we will call the Cs. But the fact that it so belongs does not unequivocally determine its relation to consciousness. It is not yet conscious, but it is certainly *capable of entering consciousness*, according to J. Breuer's expression, that is, it can now, without any special resistance and given certain conditions, become the object of consciousness. In consideration of this capacity to become conscious we also call the system Cs the '*preconscious*'. If it should turn out that a certain censorship also determines whether the preconscious becomes conscious, we shall discriminate more sharply between the systems Pcs and Cs. For the present let it suffice us to bear in mind that the system Pcs shares the characteristics of the Cs and that the rigorous censorship exercises its office at the point of transition from the Ucs to the Pcs (or Cs).

By accepting the existence of these (two or three) mental systems, psycho-analysis has departed a step further from the descriptive psychology of consciousness and has taken to itself a new problem and a new content. Up till now, it differed from academic (descriptive) psychology mainly by reason of its dynamic conception of mental processes; now we have to add that it professes to consider mental topography also, and to indicate in respect of any given mental operation within what system or between what systems it runs its course. This attempt, too, has won it the name of '*depth-psychology*'. We shall hear that it may be further amplified by yet another aspect of the subject.

If we wish to treat seriously the notion of a topography of mental acts, we must direct our interest to a doubt which arises at this point. When a mental act (let us confine ourselves here to an act of ideation) is transferred from the system Ucs into the system Cs (or Pcs), are we to suppose that this transposition involves a fresh registration comparable to a second record of the idea in question, situated, moreover, in a

fresh locality in the mind and side by side with which the original unconscious record continues to exist? Or are we rather to believe that the transformation consists in a change in the state of the idea, involving the same material and occurring in the same locality? This question may appear abstruse, but it must be put if we wish to form a more definite conception of mental topography, of the depth-dimension in the mind. It is a difficult one because it goes beyond pure psychology and touches on the relations of the mental apparatus to anatomy. We know that a rough correlation of this sort exists. Research has afforded irrefutable proof that mental activity is bound up with the function of the brain as with that of no other organ. The discovery of the unequal importance of the different parts of the brain and their individual relations to particular parts of the body and to intellectual activities takes us a step further—we do not know how big a step. But every attempt to deduce from these facts a localization of mental processes, every endeavour to think of ideas as stored up in nerve-cells and of excitations as passing along nerve-fibres, has completely miscarried. The same fate would await any doctrine which attempted to recognize, let us say, the anatomical position of the system Cs—conscious mental activity—in the cortex and to localize the unconscious processes in the subcortical parts of the brain. Here there is an hiatus which at present cannot be filled, nor is it one of the tasks of psychology to fill it. Our mental topography has for the present nothing to do with anatomy; it is concerned not with anatomical locations, but with regions in the mental apparatus, irrespective of their possible situation in the body.

In this respect then our work is untrammelled and may proceed according to its own requirements. It will, moreover, be useful for us to remind ourselves that our hypotheses can in the first instance lay claim only to the value of illustrations. The former of the two possibilities which we considered—namely, that the

conscious phase of an idea implies a fresh record of it, which must be localized elsewhere—is doubtless the cruder but also the more convenient. The second assumption—that of a merely functional change of state—is *a priori* more probable, but it is less plastic, less easy to handle. With the first, or topographical, assumption is bound up that of a topographical separation of the systems Cs and Ucs and also the possibility that an idea may exist simultaneously in two parts of the mental apparatus—indeed, that if it is not inhibited by the censorship, it regularly advances from the one position to the other, possibly without its first location or record being abandoned. This may seem odd, but it can be supported by observations from psycho-analytic practice.

If we communicate to a patient some idea which he has at one time repressed but which we have discovered in him, our telling him makes at first no change in his mental condition. Above all, it does not remove the repression nor undo its effects, as might perhaps be expected from the fact that the previously unconscious idea has now become conscious. On the contrary, all that we shall achieve at first will be a fresh rejection of the repressed idea. At this point, however, the patient has in actual fact the same idea in two forms in two separate localities in his mental apparatus: first, he has the conscious memory of the auditory impression of the idea conveyed in what we told him, and, secondly and side by side with this, he has—as we know for certain—the unconscious memory of his actual experience existing in him in its earlier form. Now in reality there is no lifting of the repression until the conscious idea, after overcoming the resistances, has united with the unconscious memory-trace. Only through bringing the latter itself into consciousness is the effect achieved. On superficial consideration this would seem to show that conscious and unconscious ideas are different and topographically separated records of the same content. But a moment's reflec-

tion shows that the identity of the information given to the patient with his own repressed memory is only apparent. To have listened to something and to have experienced something are psychologically two different things, even though the content of each be the same.

So for the moment we are not able to decide between the two possibilities that we have discussed. Perhaps later on we shall come upon certain factors which may turn the balance in favour of one or the other. Perhaps we shall discover that our question, as we formulated it, was not sufficiently comprehensive and that the difference between a conscious and an unconscious idea has to be defined quite otherwise.

### III. *Unconscious Emotions*

We limited the foregoing discussion to ideas and may now raise a new question, the answer to which must contribute to the elucidation of our theoretical position. We said that there were conscious and unconscious ideas; but are there also unconscious instinctual impulses, emotions and feelings, or are such constructions in this instance devoid of any meaning?

I am indeed of opinion that the antithesis of conscious and unconscious does not hold for instincts. An instinct can never be an object of consciousness—only the idea that represents the instinct. Even in the unconscious, moreover, it can only be represented by the idea. If the instinct did not attach itself to an idea or manifest itself as an affective state, we could know nothing about it. Though we do speak of an unconscious or a repressed instinctual impulse, this is a looseness of phraseology which is quite harmless. We can only mean an instinctual impulse the ideational presentation of which is unconscious, for nothing else comes into consideration.

We should expect the answer to the question about unconscious feelings, emotions and affects to be just as easily given. It is surely of the essence of an emotion



that we should feel it, *i.e.* that it should enter consciousness. So for emotions, feelings and affects to be unconscious would be quite out of the question. But in psycho-analytic practice we are accustomed to speak of unconscious love, hate, anger, etc., and find it impossible to avoid even the strange conjunction, 'unconscious consciousness of guilt', or a paradoxical 'unconscious anxiety'. Is there more meaning in the use of these terms than there is in speaking of 'unconscious instincts'?

The two cases are really not on all fours. To begin with it may happen that an affect or an emotion is perceived, but misconstrued. By the repression of its proper presentation it is forced to become connected with another idea, and is now interpreted by consciousness as the expression of this other idea. If we restore the true connection, we call the original affect 'unconscious', although the affect was never unconscious but its ideational presentation had undergone repression. In any event, the use of such terms as 'unconscious affect and emotion' has reference to the fate undergone, in consequence of repression, by the quantitative factor in the instinctual impulse.<sup>1</sup> We know that an affect may be subjected to three different vicissitudes: either it remains, wholly or in part, as it is; or it is transformed into a qualitatively different charge of affect, above all into anxiety; or it is suppressed, *i.e.* its development is hindered altogether. (These possibilities may perhaps be studied even more easily in the technique of the dream-work than in the neuroses.) We know, too, that to suppress the development of affect is the true aim of repression and that its work does not terminate if this aim is not achieved. In every instance where repression has succeeded in inhibiting the development of an affect we apply the term 'unconscious' to those affects that are restored when we undo the work of repression. So it cannot be denied that the use of the terms in question is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the preceding paper on 'Repression'.

logical; but a comparison of the unconscious affect with the unconscious idea reveals the significant difference that the unconscious idea continues, after repression, as an actual formation in the system Ucs, whilst to the unconscious affect there corresponds in the same system only a potential disposition which is prevented from developing further. So that, strictly speaking, although no fault be found with the mode of expression in question, there are no unconscious affects in the sense in which there are unconscious ideas. But there may very well be in the system Ucs affect-formations which, like others, come into consciousness. The whole difference arises from the fact that ideas are cathexes—ultimately of memory-traces—whilst affects and emotions correspond with processes of discharge, the final expression of which is perceived as feeling. In the present state of our knowledge of affects and emotions we cannot express this difference more clearly.

It is of especial interest to us to have established the fact that repression can succeed in inhibiting the transformation of an instinctual impulse into affective expression. This shows us that the system Cs normally controls affectivity as well as access to motility; and this enhances the importance of repression, since it shows us that the latter is responsible, not merely when something is withheld from consciousness, but also when affective development and the inauguration of muscular activity is prevented. Conversely, too, we may say that as long as the system Cs controls activity and motility, the mental condition of the person in question may be called normal. Nevertheless, there is an unmistakable difference in the relation of the controlling system to the two allied processes of discharge.<sup>1</sup> Whereas the control of the system Cs over voluntary motility is firmly rooted, regularly withstands the on-

<sup>1</sup> Affectivity manifests itself essentially in motor (*i.e.* secretory and circulatory) discharge resulting in an (internal) alteration of the subject's own body without reference to the outer world; motility, in actions designed to effect changes in the outer world.

slaught of neurosis and only breaks down in psychosis, the control of the Cs over affective development is less firmly established. Even in normal life we can recognize that a constant struggle for primacy over affectivity goes on between the two systems Cs and Pcs, that certain spheres of influence are marked off one from another and that the forces at work tend to mingle.

The importance of the system Cs (Pcs) for the avenues of affective and motor discharge enables us to understand also the rôle which falls to substitutive ideas in determining the form of a disease. It is possible for affective development to proceed directly from the system Ucs; in this case it always has the character of anxiety, the substitute for all 'repressed' affects. Often, however, the instinctual impulse has to wait until it has found a substitutive idea in the system Cs. Affective development can then proceed from this conscious substitute, the nature of which determines the qualitative character of the affect. We have asserted that, under repression, a severance takes place between the affect and the idea to which it belongs, and that each then fulfils its separate destiny. For purposes of description this is incontrovertible; in actuality, however, the affect does not as a rule arise until it has succeeded in penetrating into the Cs in attachment to some new substitutive idea.

#### IV. *Topography and Dynamics of Repression*

So far we have gathered from our discussion that repression is essentially a process affecting ideas, on the border between the systems Ucs and Pcs (Cs), and we can now make a fresh attempt to describe this process more minutely. It must be a matter of withdrawal of cathexis; but the question is, in what system does the withdrawal take place and to which system does the cathexis withdrawn belong?

In the Ucs the repressed idea remains capable of action and must therefore have retained its cathexis. So it

must be something else which has been withdrawn. Let us take the case of repression proper ('after-expulsion'), as it affects an idea which is preconscious or even has already entered consciousness. Repression can consist here only in the withdrawal from the idea of the (pre)conscious cathexis which belongs to the system Pcs. The idea then remains without cathexis, or receives cathexis from the Ucs, or retains the unconscious cathexis which it previously had. We have, therefore, withdrawal of the preconscious, retention of the unconscious, or substitution of an unconscious for a preconscious, cathexis. We notice, moreover, that we have unintentionally, as it were, based these reflections upon the assumption that the transition from the system Ucs to the system nearest to it is not effected through the making of a new record but through a change in its state, an alteration in its cathexis. The functional hypothesis has here easily routed the topographical.

But this process of withdrawal of libido does not suffice to make comprehensible to us another characteristic of repression. It is not clear why the idea which has retained its cathexis or has received cathexis from the Ucs should not, in virtue of its cathexis, renew the attempt to penetrate into the system Pcs. The withdrawal of libido would then have to be repeated, and the same performance would recur interminably, but the result would not be repression. In the same way the mechanism just discussed of withdrawal of preconscious cathexis would fail to explain the process of primal repression; for here we have to consider an unconscious idea which as yet has received no cathexis from the Pcs and therefore cannot be deprived of it.

What we are looking for, therefore, is another process which maintains the repression in the first case and, in the second, ensures its being established and continued; and this other process we can only find in the assumption of an *anti-cathexis*, by means of which the system Pcs guards itself against the intrusion of the

unconscious idea. We shall see from clinical examples how such an anti-cathexis established in the system Pcs manifests itself. This it is which represents the continuous effort demanded by a primal repression but also guarantees its persistence. The anti-cathexis is the sole mechanism of primal repression ; in the case of repression proper ('after-expulsion') there is in addition withdrawal of the preconscious cathexis. It is quite possible that the cathexis withdrawn from the idea is the very one used for anti-cathexis.

We see how we have gradually been led to introduce a third point of view into the scheme of mental phenomena—beside the dynamic and the topographical, we take the *economic* standpoint, one from which we try to follow out the fate of given volumes of excitation and to achieve, at least relatively, some assessment of it. It will be only right to give a special name to the way of regarding things which is the final result of psycho-analytic research. I propose that, when we succeed in describing a mental process in all its aspects, dynamic, topographic and economic, we shall call this a *metapsychological* presentation. We must say beforehand that in the present state of our knowledge we shall succeed in this only at isolated points.

Let us make a tentative effort to give a metapsychological description of the process of repression in the three transference neuroses, which are familiar to us. Here we may substitute for the term 'cathexis' that of 'libido', because, as we know, in this case it is the fates of sexual impulses with which we are dealing.

In anxiety-hysteria a preliminary phase of the process is frequently overlooked, perhaps indeed is really omitted ; on careful observation, however, it can be clearly discerned. It consists in anxiety appearing without the subject knowing what he is afraid of. We must suppose that there was present in the Ucs some love-impulse which demanded to be translated into the system Pcs ; the preconscious cathexis, however, recoiled from it in the manner of an attempt at flight,

and the unconscious libidinal cathexis of the rejected idea was discharged in the form of anxiety. Then at some repetition of this process a first step was taken in the direction of mastering this distressing development of anxiety. The fugitive cathexis attached itself to a substitutive idea which, on the one hand, was connected by association with the rejected idea, and, on the other, escaped repression by reason of its remoteness from that idea (displacement-substitute), and which permitted of a rationalization of the still uncontrollable outbreak of anxiety. The substitutive idea now plays the part of an anti-cathexis for the system Cs (Pcs) by securing that system against an emergence into consciousness of the repressed idea ; on the other hand, it is, or acts as if it were, the point at which the anxiety-affect, which is now all the more uncontrollable, may break out and be discharged. Clinical observation shows, for instance, that when a child suffers from an animal-phobia he experiences anxiety under two kinds of conditions : in the first place, when the repressed love-impulse becomes intensified, and, in the second, when the child perceives the animal it is afraid of. The substitutive idea acts in the one instance as a conductor from the system Ucs to the system Cs ; in the other instance, as an independent source for the release of anxiety. The extending control on the part of the system Cs usually manifests itself by a tendency for the substitutive idea to be aroused more easily as time goes on in the second rather than the first way. Perhaps the child ends by behaving as though he had no liking at all for his father but had become quite free from him, and as though the fear of the animal were the real fear. Only that this fear of the animal, fed as such a fear is from the springs of unconscious instinct, proves obdurate and extravagant in the face of all influences brought to bear from the system Cs, and thereby betrays its origin in the system Ucs.

In the second phase of anxiety-hysteria, therefore, the anti-cathexis from the system Cs has led to

substitute-formation. Soon the same mechanism is applied in a fresh direction. The process of repression, as we know, is not yet terminated, and finds a further aim in the task of inhibiting the outbreak of anxiety started by the substitute. This happens in the following manner: all the associations in the neighbourhood of the substitutive idea become endowed with a peculiar intensity of cathexis, so that they may display a high degree of sensibility to excitation. Excitation at any point of this protective structure must, on account of its connection with the substitutive idea, give rise to a slight degree of development of anxiety, which is then used as a signal to inhibit, by means of a fresh flight on the part of the cathexis, any further development of anxiety. The further the sensitive and vigilant anti-cathexis becomes extended round the substitute which is feared, the more exactly can the mechanism function which is designed to isolate the substitutive idea and to protect it from fresh excitation. Naturally these precautions guard only against excitations approaching the substitutive idea from without through perception, never against instinctual excitation which encounters the substitutive idea from the direction of its connection with the repressed idea. So they begin to operate only when the substitute has successfully taken over representation of what has been repressed, and they can never operate with complete security. With each increase of instinctual excitation the protecting rampart round the substitutive idea must be shifted a little further outwards. The whole construction, which is produced in analogous fashion in the other neuroses, is termed a phobia. The avoidances, renunciations and prohibitions by which we recognize anxiety-hysteria are the manifestations of flight from conscious cathexis of the substitutive idea. Surveying the whole process, we may say that the third phase has repeated and amplified the work of the second. The system Cs now protects itself by an anti-cathexis of its surrounding associations against the activation of the

substitutive idea, just as previously that system secured itself by cathexis of the substitutive idea against the emergence of the repressed idea. Substitute-formation by the way of displacement has thus proceeded in its course. We must also add that the system Cs had formerly only one little point at which the repressed instinctual impulse could break through, namely, the substitutive idea; but that ultimately the whole protective structure of the phobia corresponds to a 'salient' of unconscious influence of this kind. Further, we may lay stress on the interesting point of view that by the whole defence-mechanism thus set in action a projection outwards of the menace from the instinct has been achieved. The ego behaves as if the danger of an outbreak of anxiety threatened it not from the direction of an instinct but from the direction of perception: this enables the ego to react against this external danger with the attempts at flight consisting of the avoidances characteristic of a phobia. In this process repression succeeds in one particular: the discharge of anxiety may be to some extent dammed up, but only at a heavy sacrifice of personal freedom. Attempts at flight from the claims of instinct are, however, in general useless, and the result of the flight by means of a phobia remains still unsatisfactory.

A great deal of what we have recognized as true of anxiety-hysteria holds good for the two other neuroses also, so that we can confine our discussion to the points of difference and the part played by the anti-cathexis. In conversion-hysteria the instinctual cathexis of the repressed idea is transformed into the innervation necessary for the symptom. How far and in what circumstances the unconscious idea discharges its cathexis through this outlet towards innervation, so that it can relinquish its pressure towards the system Cs—these and similar questions had better be reserved for a special investigation of hysteria. In conversion-hysteria the part played by the anti-cathexis proceeding from the system Cs (Pcs) is clear and becomes manifest



in the symptom-formation. It is the anti-cathexis that decides upon what part of the instinct-presentation the whole cathexis may be concentrated. The part thus selected to form a symptom fulfils the condition of expressing the aim of the instinctual impulse no less than the defensive or punishing endeavour of the system Cs ; so it achieves hyper-cathexis and is maintained from both directions like the substitutive idea in anxiety-hysteria. From this circumstance we may conclude without much more ado that the degree of expenditure in repression put forth by the system Cs need not be commensurate with the energetic cathexis of the symptom ; for the strength of the repression is measured by the anti-cathexis put forth, and the symptom is supported not only by this anti-cathexis but also by the instinctual cathexis from the system Ucs which is interwoven with it.

With reference to the obsessional neurosis, we need only add to the observations brought forward in the preceding paper<sup>1</sup> that here the anti-cathexis of the system Cs comes most noticeably into the foreground. It is this that brings about the first repression, in the shape of a reaction-formation, and later it is the point at which the repressed idea breaks through. We may find room for the supposition that, if the work of repression seems far less successful in anxiety-hysteria and in the obsessional neurosis than in conversion-hysteria, it is because the anti-cathexis is so prominent and all outlet is lacking.

#### V. *Special Characteristics of the System Ucs*

The differentiation we have drawn between the two systems within the mind receives fresh significance when we observe that processes in the one system, Ucs, show characteristics which are not again met with in the system immediately above it.

The kernel of the system Ucs consists of instinct-

<sup>1</sup> P. 95.

presentations whose aim is to discharge their cathexis ; that is to say, they are wish-impulses. These instinctual impulses are co-ordinate with one another, exist independently side by side, and are exempt from mutual contradiction. When two wishes whose aims must appear to us incompatible become simultaneously active, the two impulses do not detract one from the other or cancel each other, but combine to form an intermediate aim, a compromise.

There is in this system no negation, no dubiety, no varying degree of certainty : all this is only imported by the work of the censorship which exists between the Ucs and the Pcs. Negation is, at a higher level, a substitute for repression. In the Ucs there are only contents more or less strongly cathected.

Intensity of cathexis is mobile in a far greater degree in this than in the other systems. By the process of displacement one idea may surrender to another the whole volume of its cathexis ; by that of condensation it may appropriate the whole cathexis of several other ideas. I have proposed to regard these two processes as distinguishing marks of the so-called *primary process* in the mind. In the system Pcs the *secondary process*<sup>1</sup> holds sway ; where a primary process is allowed to take its course in connection with elements belonging to the system Pcs, it appears ' comic ' and excites laughter.

The processes of the system Ucs are timeless ; *i.e.* they are not ordered temporally, are not altered by the passage of time, in fact bear no relation to time at all. The time-relation also is bound up with the work of the system Cs.

The processes of the Ucs are just as little related to reality. They are subject to the pleasure-principle ; their fate depends only upon the degree of their strength and upon their conformity to regulation by pleasure and pain.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Section VII. of *Die Traumdeutung*, which is based upon ideas developed by J. Breuer in *Studien über Hysterie*.

Let us sum up : *exemption from mutual contradiction, primary process* (motility of cathexis), *timelessness*, and *substitution of psychic for external reality*—these are the characteristics which we may expect to find in processes belonging to the system Ucs.<sup>1</sup>

Unconscious processes can only be observed by us under the conditions of dreaming and of neurosis ; that is to say, when the processes of the higher system Pcs revert to an earlier level by a certain process of degradation (regression). Independently they are unrecognizable, indeed cannot exist, for the system Ucs is at a very early stage overlaid by the system Pcs which has captured the means of access to consciousness and to motility. The means of discharge for the system Ucs is by means of physical innervation leading to development of affect, but even this outlet is, as we have seen, contested by the system Pcs. Left to itself, the system Ucs would not in normal conditions be able to bring about any purposive muscular acts, with the exception of those already organized as reflexes.

In order to grasp the full significance of the characteristics of the system Ucs described above, we should have to contrast and compare them with those of the system Pcs. But this would take us so far afield that I propose that we should once more call a halt and not undertake the comparison of the two till we can do so in connection with our discussion of the higher system : only the most pressing points of all shall be mentioned at this stage.

The processes of the system Pcs display, no matter whether they are already conscious or only capable of becoming conscious, an inhibition of the tendency of cathected ideas towards discharge. When a process moves over from one idea to another, the first retains a part of its cathexis and only a small part undergoes displacement. Displacement and condensation after the mode of the primary process are excluded or very

<sup>1</sup> We are reserving for a different context the mention of another notable privilege of the system Ucs.

much restricted. This circumstance caused Breuer to assume the existence of two different stages of cathectic energy in mental life: one in which that energy is tonically 'bound' and the other in which it moves freely and presses towards discharge. I think that this discrimination represents the deepest insight we have gained up to the present into the nature of nervous energy, and I do not see how we are to evade such a conclusion. A metapsychological presentation most urgently calls for further discussion at this point, though perhaps that would still be too daring an undertaking.

Further, it devolves upon the system Pcs to make communication possible between the different ideational contents so that they can influence one another, to give them a relation to time, to set up the censorship or censorships, and to establish the institution of 'testing reality' and the reality-principle. Conscious memory, too, seems to depend wholly on the Pcs and should be clearly distinguished from the memory-traces in which the experiences of the Ucs become fixed; it probably corresponds with the making of a special record—a conception which we tried to employ as explaining the relation of conscious to unconscious ideas, but which we have already discarded. In this connection also we shall find the means to put an end to our uncertainty regarding the name of the higher system which at present we vaguely call sometimes the Pcs and sometimes the Cs.

Here, too, it will be as well to utter a warning against over-hasty generalizations about what we have brought to light in regard to apportioning the various mental activities to one or other of the two systems. We are describing the state of affairs as it appears in the adult human being, in whom the system Ucs in the strict sense functions only as a stage preliminary to the higher organization. The content and connections of this system as the individual develops, the significance it possesses in the case of animals—these are points on

which no conclusion can be deduced from our description : they must be investigated independently. Moreover, in the human being we must be prepared to find possible pathological conditions under which the two systems alter, or even exchange, both their content and their characteristics.

### VI. *Communication between the Two Systems*

It would certainly be wrong to imagine that the Ucs remains at rest while the whole work of the mind is performed by the Pcs; that the Ucs is something finished with, a vestigial organ, a residuum from the process of evolution ; wrong also to assume that communication between the two systems is confined to the act of repression, the Pcs casting everything which disturbs it into the abyss of the Ucs. On the contrary, the Ucs is living and capable of development and maintains a number of other relations to the Pcs, amongst them that of co-operation. To sum up, we must say that the Ucs is continued into its so-called derivatives, is accessible to the influence of life, perpetually acts upon the Pcs, and even is, on its part, capable of influence by the latter system.

Study of the derivatives of the Ucs will altogether disappoint our expectations of a schematically clear division of the one mental system from the other. This circumstance will certainly give rise to dissatisfaction with our results and will probably be used to cast doubts upon the value of our way of distinguishing the two groups of mental processes. Our answer is, however, that we have no other aim but that of translating into theory the results of observation, and we shall deny that there is any obligation on us to achieve at our very first attempt a theory that commends itself by its simplicity, in which all is plain sailing. We defend its complexities so long as we find that they fit in with the results of observation, and we do not abandon our expectation of being guided in the end by those very complexities to recognition of a state of

affairs that is at once simple in itself and at the same time answers to all the complications of reality.

Amongst the derivatives of the unconscious instinctual impulses, the character of which we have just described, there are some which unite in themselves opposite features. On the one hand, they are highly organized, exempt from self-contradictoriness, have made use of every acquisition of the system Cs, and would hardly be distinguished by our ordinary judgement from the formations of that system. On the other hand, they are unconscious and are incapable of becoming conscious. Thus they belong according to their qualities to the system Pcs, but in actual fact to the Ucs. Their origin remains decisive for the fate they will undergo. We may compare them with those human half-breeds who, taken all round, resemble white men, but betray their coloured descent by some striking feature or other, on account of which they are excluded from society and enjoy none of the privileges of white people. Of such a nature are the *phantasy-formations* of normal persons as well as of neurotics, which we have recognized as preliminary phases in the formation both of dreams and of symptoms, and which, in spite of their high degree of organization, remain repressed and therefore cannot become conscious. They draw near to consciousness and remain undisturbed so long as they do not become strongly cathected, but as soon as a certain degree of this is exceeded they are thrust back. Substitute-formations are similar, more highly organized derivatives of the Ucs; but these succeed in breaking through into consciousness, thanks to some favourable relation, as, for example, when they coincide with a preconscious anti-cathexis.

When, on another occasion, we examine more closely the way in which entry into consciousness is conditioned, we shall be able to find a solution for some of the difficulties arising here. At this point it seems a good plan to contrast with the foregoing points of view, which take their rise in consideration of the Ucs,

one which presents itself from the direction of consciousness. Consciousness regards the whole sum of mental processes as belonging to the realm of the pre-conscious. A very great part of this preconscious material originates in the unconscious, has the characteristics of derivatives of the unconscious, and is subject to a censorship before it can pass into consciousness. Another part of the Pcs can become conscious without any censorship. Here we light upon a contradiction of an earlier assumption: from the point of view of repression we were obliged to place the censorship which is decisive for consciousness between the systems Ucs and Pcs. Now it becomes probable to us that there is a censorship between the Pcs and the Cs. But we shall do well not to regard this complication as a difficulty, but to assume that to every transition from one system to that immediately above it (that is, every advance to a higher stage of mental organization) there corresponds a new censorship. As a corollary, we shall have, it is true, to discard the assumption of a continuous laying down of new records.

The reason for all these difficulties is that consciousness, the only characteristic of mental processes directly available to us, is in no wise suited to serve as a criterion for the erection of systems. Apart from the circumstance that what belongs to consciousness is not always in consciousness but can also be temporarily latent, observation has shown that much which shares the attributes of the system Pcs does not become conscious; and, further, we shall find that the entry into consciousness is circumscribed by certain dispositions of attention. Hence consciousness stands in no simple relation either to the different systems or to the process of repression. The truth is that it is not only what is repressed that remains alien to consciousness, but also some of the impulses which dominate our ego and which therefore form the strongest functional antithesis to what is repressed. In proportion as we try to win our way to a metapsychological view of

mental life, we must learn to emancipate ourselves from our sense of the importance of that symptom which consists in 'being conscious'.

So long as we still cling to this we see our generalizations regularly invaded by exceptions. We see that derivatives of the Pcs enter consciousness as substitute-formations and as symptoms, generally after undergoing great distortion in contrast to the Ucs, although often many characteristics inviting repression have been retained. We find that many preconscious formations remain unconscious, though, to judge by their nature, we should suppose that they might very well become conscious. Probably in their case the stronger attraction of the Ucs asserts itself. We are led to look for the more important difference, not between the conscious and the preconscious, but between the preconscious and the unconscious. On the border of the Pcs the censorship thrusts back the Ucs, but its derivatives can circumvent this censorship, achieve a high degree of organization, and in the Pcs reach a certain intensity of cathexis; when, however, this is exceeded and they try to force themselves into consciousness, they are recognized as derivatives of the Ucs, and are repressed afresh at the new frontier by the censorship between the Cs and the Pcs. Thus the former censorship is exercised against the Ucs itself, and the latter against its preconscious derivatives. We might suppose that in the course of individual development the censorship had been advanced a step.

In psycho-analytic treatment the existence of the second censorship, located between the systems Pcs and Cs, is proved beyond question. We require the patient to produce freely derivatives of the Ucs, we pledge him to overcome the objections of the censorship against these preconscious formations becoming conscious, and, by overthrowing this censorship, we open up the way to abrogating the repression accomplished by the earlier one. To this let us add that the existence of the censorship between the Pcs and the Cs teaches us that



becoming conscious is no mere act of perception, but is probably also a *hyper-cathexis*, a further advance in the mental organization.

Let us turn our attention to the communications existing between the unconscious and the other systems, not so much with a view to establishing any fresh fact as in order to avoid omitting the most prominent features. At the roots of instinctual activity the systems communicate with one another in the freest possible way : some of the processes here set in motion pass through the Ucs, as through a preparatory stage, and reach the highest mental development in the Cs, whilst some are retained as the Ucs. But the Ucs is also affected by experiences originating in outer perception. Normally all the paths from perception to the Ucs remain open ; only those leading out from the Ucs are barred by repression.

It is very remarkable that the Ucs of one human being can react upon that of another, without the Cs being implicated at all. This deserves closer investigation, especially with a view to finding out whether pre-conscious activity can be excluded as a factor in bringing this about ; but for purposes of description the fact is incontestable.

The content of the system Pcs (or Cs) is derived partly from the instinctual life (through the medium of the Ucs), and partly from perception. It is doubtful how far the processes of this system can exert a direct influence on the Ucs ; examination of pathological cases often reveals an almost incredible independence and lack of susceptibility to influence on the part of the Ucs. A complete divergence of their tendencies, a total dissociation of the two systems, is a general characteristic of disease. Yet psycho-analytic treatment is based upon influence by the Cs on the Ucs, and shows at any rate that, though laborious, this is not impossible. The derivatives of the Ucs which act as intermediaries between the two systems open the way, as we have already said, towards accomplishing this. But we may well suppose

that a spontaneously effected alteration in the Ucs from the side of the Cs is a difficult and slow process.

Co-operation between a preconscious and an unconscious impulse, even when the latter is subject to very strong repression, may be established if the situation permits of the unconscious impulse operating in harmony with one of the controlling tendencies. The repression is removed for the occasion, the repressed activity being admitted as a reinforcement of the one intended by the ego. In respect of this single constellation the unconscious becomes ego-syntonic, falls into line with the ego, without any change taking place in the repression otherwise. The effect of the Ucs in this co-operation is unmistakable; the reinforced tendencies reveal themselves as, in spite of all, different from the normal—they make possible achievements of special perfection, and they manifest a resistance in the face of opposition similar to that of obsessional symptoms.

The content of the Ucs may be compared with a primitive population in the mental kingdom. If inherited mental formations exist in the human being—something analogous to instinct in animals—these constitute the nucleus of the Ucs. Later there is added all that is discarded as useless during childhood development, and this need not differ in its nature from what is inherited. A sharp and final division between the content of the two systems, as a rule, takes place only at puberty.

### VII. *Recognition of the Unconscious*

So long as we derive our ideas of the Ucs only from our knowledge of dream-life and the transference neuroses, all that we can predicate of that system is probably represented in the foregoing remarks. It is certainly not much, and at some points it gives an impression of obscurity and confusion; especially do we look in vain for the possibility of bringing the Ucs into any connection, or classifying it under any heading,

with which we are already familiar. Analysis of one of those affections called narcissistic psychoneuroses alone promises to furnish us with conceptions through which the enigmatic Ucs will be brought within our reach in a tangible fashion.

Since the publication of a work by Abraham (1908)—attributed by its conscientious author to my instigation—we have been trying to define Kraepelin's dementia praecox (Bleuler's schizophrenia) on the basis of its relation to that pair of opposites consisting of the ego and its object. In the transference neuroses (anxiety- and conversion-hysteria and the obsessional neurosis) there was nothing to give special prominence to these opposites. We knew, indeed, that frustration from the side of the object occasioned the outbreak of neurosis and that neurosis involved abandonment of the real object; also that the libido withdrawn from the real object reverted first to an object in phantasy and then to one that had been repressed (introversion). But object-cathexis in general is in such cases retained with great energy, and more minute examination of the processes of repression has forced us to assume that object-cathexis persists in the system Ucs in spite of—or rather in consequence of—the repression. Indeed the capacity for transference, of which we make use for therapeutic purposes in these affections, presupposes unimpaired object-cathexis.

In schizophrenia, on the other hand, we have been obliged to assume that after the process of repression the withdrawn libido does not seek a new object, but retreats into the ego; that is to say, that here the object-cathexes are given up and a primitive objectless condition of narcissism is re-established. The incapacity of these patients for transference—so far as the process of disease extends—their consequent inaccessibility to therapeutic efforts, the repudiation of the outer world characteristic of them, the manifestations of hyper-cathexis of their ego, the final outcome in complete apathy—all these clinical features seem to

accord excellently with the assumption that object-cathexes are relinquished. As regards the relation of the two psychical systems to each other, all observers have been struck by the fact that in schizophrenia a great deal is consciously expressed which in the transference neuroses can be demonstrated to exist in the Ucs only by means of psycho-analysis. But at the beginning we were not able to establish any intelligible connection between the ego-object relation and the relationships of consciousness.

In the following unexpected way we seem to arrive at what we are seeking. In schizophrenics we observe—especially in the earlier stages which are so instructive—a number of changes in *speech*, some of which deserve to be regarded from a particular point of view. The patient often devotes peculiar care to his way of expressing himself, which becomes 'precious' and 'elaborate'. The construction of the sentences undergoes a peculiar disorganization, making them so incomprehensible to us that the patient's remarks seem nonsensical. Often some relation to bodily organs or innervations is prominent in the content of these utterances. This may be correlated with another observation, namely, that, in such symptoms of schizophrenia as are comparable with the substitute-formations of hysteria or the obsessional neurosis, the relation between the substitute and the repressed material nevertheless displays peculiarities which would surprise us in these two forms of neurosis.

Dr. Viktor Tausk of Vienna has placed at my disposal some observations that he has made in the initial stages of schizophrenia, which are particularly valuable in that the patient herself was anxious to explain her utterances further. I will take two of his examples to illustrate the thesis I wish to defend, and I have no doubt that every observer could easily produce plenty of such material.

One of Tausk's patients, a girl who was brought to the clinic after a quarrel with her lover, complained that

*her eyes were not right, they were twisted.* This she herself explained by uttering in properly constructed sentences a series of reproaches against her lover. 'She could not understand him at all, he looked different every time; he was a shammer, an eye-twister,<sup>1</sup> he had twisted her eyes; now they were not her eyes any more; now she saw the world with different eyes.'

The patient's remarks about her first incomprehensible utterance have the value of an analysis, for they contain the equivalent of the original words expressed in a generally comprehensible form; at the same time they explain the meaning and the genesis of speech-formation in schizophrenia. In agreement with Tausk, I would here lay stress on the point that the relation to the bodily organ (the eye) has usurped the place of the whole content of the thought. The schizophrenic speech displays a hypochondriac trait: it has become 'organ-speech'.

A second remark of the same patient's runs: 'She was standing in church, suddenly she felt a jerk, she had to *change her position*, as though somebody put her into a position, as though she were *placed in a certain position*'.

There follows the analysis by means of a fresh series of reproaches against her lover: 'he was common, he had made her common, too, though she was naturally refined; he had made her like himself by leading her to think that he was superior to her; now she had become like him, because she thought she would be better if she were like him; he had *given a false impression of his own position*<sup>2</sup>; now she was just like him (identification!), he had *changed her position*'.<sup>3</sup>

The movement by which she 'changed her position', Tausk remarks, stood for the idea of 'misrepresenting her position' and for the identification with the lover. Again I would call attention to the manner in which

<sup>1</sup> [*Augenverdreher*, used in German to mean a *deceiver*.—Trans.]

<sup>2</sup> *Sich verstellen* = to feign, disguise oneself.

<sup>3</sup> *Verstellen* = to change the place of. [As with *Augenverdreher*, there is again a play on words, the concrete meaning of the word replacing its metaphorical sense.—Trans.]

the whole train of thought is dominated by that element which has for its content a bodily innervation (or, rather, the sensation of it). An hysteric would, in the first case, have convulsively rolled her eyes, and, in the second, have given actual jerks, instead of having the impulse to jerk or the sensation of being jerked ; and in neither case would this have been accompanied by any conscious thoughts, nor would she afterwards have been able to express any such thoughts.

So far these two observations illustrate what we have called hypochondriac language or ' organ-speech '. But they also point to something which seems to us more important, namely, to another state of things of which we have innumerable instances (for example, in the cases quoted in Bleuler's monograph) and which may be reduced to a definite formula. In schizophrenia *words* are subject to the same process as that which makes dream-images out of dream-thoughts, the one we have called the primary mental process. They undergo condensation, and by means of displacement transfer their cathexes to one another without remainder ; the process may extend so far that a single word, which on account of its manifold relations is specially suitable, can come to represent a whole train of thought. The works of Bleuler, Jung and their pupils have yielded abundant material precisely in support of this very proposition.<sup>1</sup>

Before we draw any conclusion from impressions such as these, let us consider further the distinctions between the substitutive idea in schizophrenia and in hysteria and the obsessional neurosis—nice distinctions, it is true, yet producing a very strange effect. A patient whom I have at present under observation has let himself withdraw from all the interests of life on account of the unhealthy condition of the skin of his face. He declares that he has blackheads and that there are deep holes in his face which everyone notices.

<sup>1</sup> The dream-work, too, occasionally treats words like things, and then creates very similar ' schizophrenic ' utterances or neologisms.

Analysis shows that he is working out his castration complex upon his skin. At first he busied himself with these blackheads without any misgivings; and it gave him great pleasure to squeeze them out, because, as he said, something spurted out when he did so. Then he began to think that there was a deep cavity wherever he had got rid of a blackhead and he reproached himself most vehemently with having ruined his skin for ever by 'constantly fiddling at it with his hand'. Pressing out the content of the blackheads is clearly to him a substitute for onanism. The cavity which then appears in consequence of his guilty act is the female genital, *i.e.* stands for the fulfilment of the threat of castration (or the phantasy representing it) called forth by onanism. This substitute-formation has, in spite of its hypochondriacal character, considerable resemblance to an hysterical conversion; and yet we have the feeling that there must be something different in it, that we cannot believe such a substitute-formation possible in a case of hysteria, even before we can say in what the difference consists. A tiny little hole such as a pore of the skin will hardly be used by an hysteric as a symbol for the vagina, which otherwise he will compare with every imaginable object capable of enclosing a space. Besides, we should think that the multiplicity of these little cavities would prevent him from using them as a substitute for the female genital. The same applies to the case of a young patient reported by Tausk some years ago to the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society. This patient behaved in other respects exactly as though suffering from an obsessional neurosis; he took hours to dress, and so on. The striking feature of the case, however, was that he was able to tell the meaning of his inhibitions without any resistance. For example, in pulling on his stockings he was disturbed by the idea that he must draw apart the knitted stitches, *i.e.* the holes, and every hole was for him a symbol of the female genital aperture. This again is a thing with which we cannot credit a patient

suffering from obsessional neurosis ; a patient of this kind observed by R. Reitler (one who suffered from the same lingering over putting on his stockings), after overcoming the resistances, found the explanation that his foot symbolised the penis, putting on the stocking stood for an onanistic act, and that he had constantly to pull the stocking off and on, partly in order to complete the representation of onanism, and partly in order to undo the act.

If we ask ourselves what it is that gives the character of strangeness to the substitute-formation and the symptom in schizophrenia, we come at last to understand that it is the predominance of the word-relation over that of the thing. There is only a very slight similarity between the squeezing out of a black-head and an ejaculation from the penis, still less similarity between the countless little pores of the skin and the vagina ; but in the former case there *is*, in both instances, a spurting out, while in the latter the cynical saying, ' a hole is a hole ', is *literally* true. The identity of the two when expressed in *words*, not the resemblance of the objects designated, has dictated the substitution. Where the two—word and thing—do not coincide, the substitute-formation in schizophrenia deviates from that in the transference neuroses.

Let us bring these considerations into connection with the conclusion that in schizophrenia the object-cathexes are relinquished. We must then modify this assumption and say : the cathexis of the ideas of the words corresponding to the objects is retained. What we could permissibly call the conscious idea of the object can now be split up into the *idea of the word* (verbal idea) and the *idea of the thing* (concrete idea) ; the latter consists in the cathexis, if not of the direct memory-images of the thing, at least of remoter memory-traces derived from these. It strikes us all at once that now we know what is the difference between a conscious and an unconscious idea. The two are not, as we supposed, different records of the same content



situate in different parts of the mind, nor yet different functional states of cathexis in the same part ; but the conscious idea comprises the concrete idea plus the verbal idea corresponding to it, whilst the unconscious idea is that of the thing alone. The system Ucs contains the thing-cathexes of the objects, the first and true object-cathexes ; the system Pcs originates in a hyper-cathexis of this concrete idea by a linking up of it with the verbal ideas of the words corresponding to it. It is such hyper-cathexes, we may suppose, that bring about higher organization in the mind and make it possible for the primary process to be succeeded by the secondary process which dominates Pcs. Now, too, we are in a position to state precisely what it is that repression denies to the rejected idea in the transference neuroses—namely, translation of the idea into words which are to remain attached to the object. The idea which is not put into words or the mental act which has not received hyper-cathexis then remains in the unconscious in a state of repression.

I may call attention to the fact that already very early we possessed the insight which to-day enables us to understand one of the most striking characteristics of schizophrenia. The last pages of *Die Traumdeutung*, published in 1900, expound the thesis that thought-processes, *i.e.* those cathected mental acts which are more remote from perception, are in themselves devoid of quality and are unconscious, deriving their capacity to enter consciousness only from association with the residues of word-perceptions. The verbal ideas, for their part, are derived from sense-perceptions in the same way as concrete ideas are ; so that the question might be raised why ideas of objects cannot become conscious through the agency of their own residues of perceptions. But possibly thought proceeds in systems that are so far remote from the original residues of perception that they have no longer retained anything of the qualities of these residues, so that in order to become conscious the content of the thought-systems

needs to be reinforced by new qualities. Besides, linking them up with words may impart quality even to cathexes to which, representing as they do only relations between the ideas of objects, no quality could accrue from the perceptions themselves. Such relations, comprehensible only through words, form one of the most important parts of our thought-processes. We understand that linking them up with verbal ideas is still not identical with actually becoming conscious, but only with the potentiality of this ; it is therefore characteristic of the system Pcs and of that only. Now, however, we note that with these discussions we have departed from our real theme and find ourselves in the midst of problems concerning the preconscious and the conscious, which for good reasons we are reserving for separate treatment.

In considering schizophrenia, which, to be sure, we only touch on here so far as seems indispensable for general knowledge of the Ucs, the doubt must occur to us whether the process here termed repression has anything at all in common with the repression which takes place in the transference neuroses. The formula that repression is a process which occurs between the systems Ucs and Pcs (or Cs), and results in withholding the repressed material from consciousness, must in any event be modified, in order to embrace the case of dementia praecox and other narcissistic affections. But the ego's attempt at flight, expressing itself in withdrawal of conscious cathexis, nevertheless remains a common factor. The most superficial reflection shows us how much more radically and thoroughly this attempt at flight, this flight of the ego, is carried out in the narcissistic neuroses.

If, in schizophrenia, this flight consists in withdrawal of instinctual cathexis from those points which represent the unconscious idea of the object, it may seem strange that that part of the same idea which belongs to the system Pcs—the verbal ideas corresponding to it—should, on the contrary, undergo a

more intense cathexis. We might rather expect that the verbal idea, being the preconscious part, would have to sustain the first impact of the repression and that it would be wholly insusceptible of cathexis after the repression had proceeded as far as the unconscious concrete ideas. This is certainly difficult to understand. The solution suggests itself that the cathexis of the verbal idea is not part of the act of repression, but represents the first of the attempts at recovery or cure which so conspicuously dominate the clinical picture of schizophrenia. These endeavours are directed towards regaining the lost objects, and it may well be that to achieve this purpose their path to the object must be by way of the word belonging to it; they then have, however, to content themselves with words in the place of things. Our mental activity moves, generally speaking, in one of two opposite directions: either it starts from the instincts and passes through the system Ucs to conscious mentation, or, on excitation from without, it passes through the systems Cs and Pcs till it reaches the unconscious cathexes of the ego and of its objects. This second way must, in spite of the repression which has taken place, have remained clear, and for some distance there is nothing to block the endeavours of the neurosis to regain its objects. When we think in abstractions there is a danger that we may neglect the relations of words to unconscious concrete ideas, and it must be confessed that the expression and content of our philosophizing begins to acquire an unwelcome resemblance to the schizophrenic's way of thinking. We may, on the other hand, attempt a characterization of the schizophrenic's mode of thought by saying that he treats concrete things as though they were abstract.

If we have really recognized the nature of the Ucs and have correctly defined the difference between an unconscious and a preconscious idea, then researches starting from many other points may be expected to bring us back to the same conclusions.

## VII

### METAPSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE THEORY OF DREAMS <sup>1</sup>

(1916)

WE are able to learn in various ways how advantageous it is for our researches to institute comparisons with certain states and phenomena which may be conceived of as *normal prototypes* of morbid affections. Among these we may include such affective conditions as grief or mourning and the state of being in love, but also the state of sleep and the phenomenon of dreaming.

We are not accustomed to expend much thought on the fact that every night human beings lay aside the garments they pull over their skin, and even also other objects which they use to supplement their bodily organs (so far as they have succeeded in making good their deficiencies by substitutes)—for instance, their spectacles, false hair or teeth, and so on. In addition to this, when they go to sleep they perform a perfectly analogous dismantling of their minds—they lay aside most of their mental acquisitions; thus both physically and mentally approaching remarkably close to the situation in which they began life. Somatically, sleep is an act which reproduces intra-uterine existence, fulfilling the conditions of repose,

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. IV., 1916–1918; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Cecil M. Baines.]

This and the following paper are taken from a collection which I originally intended to publish in book form, under the title 'Preliminary Material for a Metapsychological Theory'. They follow on certain papers which appeared in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. III.: 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes', 'Repression', and 'The Unconscious'. The series is designed to clarify and subject to a more profound study the theoretical assumptions upon which a psycho-analytic system could be based.

warmth and absence of stimulus ; indeed, in sleeping, many people resume the foetal position. The feature characterizing the mind of a sleeping person is an almost complete withdrawal from the surrounding world and the cessation of all interest in it.

When we investigate psychoneurotic conditions, we find in each of them occasion to comment upon a so-called *temporal regression*, i.e. the particular extent to which each of them retraces the stages of its evolution. We distinguish two such regressions—one in the development of the ego and the other in that of the libido. In sleep, the latter is carried to the point of restoring the primitive narcissism, while the former goes back to the state of hallucinatory wish-fulfilment.

It is, of course, the study of dreams which has taught us what we know of the mental characteristics of sleep. It is true that dreams only show us the dreamer in so far as he is not asleep ; nevertheless they are bound to reveal to us characteristics of sleep itself at the same time. We have learnt from observation some peculiarities of dreams which at first we could not understand, but can now easily fit into a scheme. Thus, we know that dreams are absolutely egoistic and that the person who plays the chief part in their scenes is always to be recognized as the dreamer. We now readily understand that this is due to the narcissism of sleep. Narcissism and egoism are indeed one and the same ; the word 'narcissism' is only employed to emphasize that this egoism is a libidinal phenomenon as well ; or, to put it in another way, narcissism may be described as the libidinal complement of egoism. The 'diagnostic' capacity of dreams becomes equally comprehensible, too—a phenomenon which is universally acknowledged but regarded as so puzzling ; in dreams incipient physical disease is often detected earlier and more clearly than in waking life, and all the current bodily sensations assume gigantic proportions. This magnifying process is hypochondriacal in character ; it follows from the withdrawal of all mental

cathexes from the outer world back to the ego, and it makes possible early recognition of bodily changes which in waking life would still for a time have remained unnoticed.

A dream indicates that something was going on which tended to disturb sleep, and it enables us to understand the way in which this disturbance can be warded off. The final outcome is that the sleeper has dreamed and is able to go on sleeping; the inner claim which wanted to absorb him has been replaced by an outer experience, the claim of which he has succeeded in discharging. A dream is, therefore, among other things, a *projection*: an externalization of an internal process. We remember that we have already met with projection elsewhere among the means adopted for defence. The mechanism of an hysterical phobia, too, culminated in the substitution of an outer danger, from which the person might strive to protect himself by flight, for an inner instinctual claim. We will, however, reserve detailed treatment of projection till we come to analyse that narcissistic affection in which this mechanism plays the most striking part.

But now, how can it happen that the intention to sleep becomes disturbed? The disturbance may proceed from an inner excitation or from an outer stimulus. Let us first consider the more obscure and more interesting case of the disturbance from within. Experience shows us that dreams are excited by residues from the previous day, cathected thoughts, which have not submitted to the general withdrawal of cathexes, but have retained in spite of it a certain degree of libidinal or other interest. So the narcissism of sleep has here from the outset had to admit an exception, and there-with dream-formation begins. In analysis we learn to recognize these day-residues as latent dream-thoughts, which, both by reason of their nature and of the whole situation, must be regarded as preconscious ideas, belonging to the system Pcs.

Before we can explain dream-formation further,

certain difficulties have to be overcome. The narcissism of sleep does indeed signify the withdrawal of cathexis from all ideas of objects, both from the unconscious and the preconscious parts of them. If then certain 'day-residues' have retained their cathexis, we hesitate to assume that they acquire so much energy at night as to compel attention on the part of consciousness; we are inclined rather to assume that the cathexis they have retained is far weaker than that which they possessed during the day. Here analysis saves us further speculations, for it shows us that these day-residues have to receive reinforcement from unconscious instinctual impulses if they are to act as shapers of dreams. This hypothesis at first presents no difficulties, for we must believe that in sleep the censorship between the Pcs and the Ucs is greatly weakened, communication between the two systems being thus made easier.

But there is another ground for misgiving, which we must not pass over in silence. If the narcissistic state of sleep has resulted in withdrawal of all cathexes belonging to the systems Ucs and Pcs, then there can no longer be any possibility of the preconscious day-residue being reinforced by unconscious instinctual impulses, which have themselves surrendered their cathexes to the ego. Here the theory of dream-formation ends in a contradiction, unless we can rescue it by modifying our assumption of the narcissism of sleep.

Such a reservation is, as we shall discover later, necessary in the theory of dementia praecox as well. Our modified hypothesis must run as follows: that part of the system Ucs which is under repression does not comply with the ego's desire for sleep, but retains its cathexes in whole or in part, and in general has acquired, in consequence of repression, a certain measure of independence of the ego. To correspond with this, some amount of the expenditure on repression (anti-cathexis) would have to be maintained throughout the night, in order to meet the menace from the instincts,

though the blocking of all paths to affective discharge and to motility may considerably diminish the degree of anti-cathexis necessary. So we should picture the situation which leads to dream-formation something as follows: the desire for sleep endeavours to call in all the cathexes put forth by the ego and to establish an absolute narcissism. This can only partly succeed, for the repressed material in the system Ucs does not yield to the desire for sleep. Part of the anti-cathexis has to be maintained, therefore, and the censorship between the Ucs and the Pcs must remain operative, even if not in full force. So far as the control of the ego extends, all the systems are emptied of cathexes. The stronger the instinctual unconscious cathexes, the more unstable is the sleep. We know, too, the extreme case in which the ego gives up the desire to sleep because it feels unable to inhibit the repressed impulses set free during sleep—in other words, when sleep is abandoned because of the fear of dreams.

Later on we shall learn to appreciate the weighty consequences of this conclusion regarding the insubordination of repressed impulses. For the present let us follow out the situation in dream-formation.

The possibility mentioned above—that some of the preconscious thoughts of the day also prove refractory and retain a part of their cathexis—must be recognized as a second kind of interference with the narcissism. Fundamentally the two cases may be identical: the resistance of the day-residues may originate in a connection with unconscious tendencies already in existence during waking life; or the process may be less simple, and the day-residues which have not been wholly deprived of cathexis may establish a connection with the repressed material only in sleep, when there is greater facility of communication between the Pcs and the Ucs. In either case there follows the same decisive step in dream-formation: the preconscious dream-wish is formed, which *expresses the unconscious impulse in the material of the preconscious day-residues*. This dream-



wish must be sharply distinguished from the day-residues ; it need not have existed in waking life ; it may already display the irrational character noticeable in all that is unconscious when we come to translate it into terms of consciousness. Nor must the dream-wish be confounded with the wish-impulses that are, perhaps, but by no means necessarily, to be found amongst the preconscious (latent) dream-thoughts. If, however, such preconscious wishes do exist, the dream-wish allies itself with them, acting as the most effective reinforcement of them.

We now have to consider the further vicissitudes undergone by this wish-impulse, which essentially represents an unconscious instinctual demand and in the Pcs has taken on the guise of a dream-wish, a wish-fulfilling phantasy. Reflection tells us that this wish-impulse may be dealt with in three different ways. It may be the way that would be normal in waking life, by penetrating from the Pcs into consciousness ; or it may circumvent the Cs and find direct motor discharge ; or it may take the unsuspected way that observation nevertheless leads us to follow up. In the first case, it would become a *delusion* having as content the fulfilment of the wish ; but in sleep this never happens. (With our scanty knowledge of the metapsychological conditions of mental processes, we may perhaps see in this fact a hint that complete absence of cathexes in a system renders it less susceptible to stimulation.) The second case, that of direct motor discharge, should be excluded by the same principle, for access to motility is normally yet a step further off from the censorship of consciousness ; but we do meet with exceptional instances of this sort in the form of somnambulism. We do not know what conditions this phenomenon, or why it is not of more frequent occurrence. What actually happens in dream-formation constitutes a very remarkable and quite unforeseen solution. The process begun in the Pcs and reinforced by the Ucs pursues a retrogressive course, through the Ucs, to perception,

which forces itself upon consciousness. This *regression* is the third phase of dream-formation. To realize the whole process, let us recapitulate the two former phases: reinforcement of the preconscious day-residues by the Ucs—activation of the dream-wish.

We call this kind of regression a *topographical* one, to distinguish it from the previously mentioned temporal or developmental regression. The two do not necessarily always coincide, but they do so in the particular example before us. The reversion in its course of the excitation from the Pcs through the Ucs to perception is at the same time a return to the primitive level of hallucinatory wish-fulfilment.

We have already, in the *Traumdeutung*, described the way in which the regression of the preconscious day-residues proceeds in dream-formation. In this process thoughts are transformed into images, mainly visual; that is to say, verbal ideas are reduced to the ideas of the corresponding things, on the whole as if the process were controlled by considerations of *suitability for plastic representation*. When regression is complete, there remains a series of cathexes in the system Ucs, cathexes of the memory-traces of things, upon which the primary mental process works till, by means of condensation of them and displacement of their respective cathexes, it has shaped the manifest dream-content. Only where the verbal ideas in the day-residues are recent, actual fragments of perceptions, and not the expression of thoughts, are they treated like concrete ideas, becoming subject to the influence of condensation and displacement. Hence the rule laid down in the *Traumdeutung*, and since confirmed beyond all doubt, that words and speeches in the dream-content are not new formations, but are imitated from speeches from the day preceding the dream (or from other recent impressions, such as from something read). It is very remarkable how little the dream-work adheres to verbal ideas; it is always ready to exchange one word for another

till it finds the expression most favourable for plastic representation.<sup>1</sup>

Now it is in this respect that the essential difference between the dream-work and schizophrenia becomes clear. In the latter, the actual language in which the preconscious thought was expressed becomes the subject of elaboration by the primary process; in dreams, it is not the words, but the concrete ideas into which the words have been resolved. A topographical regression takes place in dreams, but not in schizophrenia; in dreams there is free communication between (pcs) word-cathexes and (ucs) thing-cathexes, while it is characteristic of schizophrenia that this communication is cut off. The impression this difference makes on one is lessened precisely by the dream-interpretations we essay in psycho-analytic practice. For as the work of interpretation traces the course taken by the dream-work, follows the paths which lead from the latent thoughts to the dream-elements, exhausts the possible meanings of verbal ambiguities and points out the words that act as bridges between different groups of material, we receive an impression now of a joke, now of schizophrenia, and are apt to forget that for a dream all operations with words are merely preparatory to regression to concrete ideas.

The dream-process is completed by the thought-

<sup>1</sup> I also ascribe to the consideration of suitability for plastic representation the fact (which is insisted on and perhaps overestimated by Silberer) that some dreams admit of two simultaneous, and yet essentially different, interpretations, one of which he calls the analytic and the other the 'anagogic'. When this happens, we are invariably concerned with thoughts of a very abstract nature which must have made representation in the dream very difficult. We might compare the task of representing pictorially a leading article in a political paper. In such cases, the dream-work must first replace the text of abstract thought by one more concrete, connected with the former in some way—by comparison, symbolism, allegorical allusion, or, best of all, genetically—so that the more concrete text then becomes material for the dream-work instead of the abstract. The abstract thoughts yield the so-called anagogic interpretation, which, when we unravel the meaning of the dream, we discover more easily than the true analytic one. Otto Rank has justly remarked that certain dreams of patients undergoing analytic treatment are the best models of these dreams with more than one interpretation.

content (transformed by regression and worked over into a wish-phantasy) entering consciousness as a sense-perception, undergoing, as it does so, the secondary elaboration to which every perceptual content is subject. We say that the dream-wish is converted into an *hallucination* and as such commands belief in the reality of its fulfilment. It is just round this concluding piece of dream-formation that the gravest uncertainties centre, to explain which we have set out to compare with dreams the pathological states allied to them.

The formation of the wish-phantasy and its regression to hallucination are the most essential parts of the dream-work, but they do not belong exclusively to dreams. On the contrary, they are found similarly in two morbid states: in acute hallucinatory confusion (Meynert's 'amentia'), and in the hallucinatory phase of schizophrenia. The hallucinatory delirium of amentia is a clearly recognizable wish-phantasy, often perfectly framed like a beautiful day-dream. One might speak in quite general terms of an *hallucinatory wish-psychosis*, ascribing it equally to dreams and to amentia. There are dreams, too, which consist of nothing but undistorted wish-phantasies, very rich in content. The hallucinatory phase of schizophrenia has been less thoroughly studied; it seems generally to be of a composite nature, but in its essence it might well correspond to a fresh attempt at restitution, designed to restore to the ideas of objects their libidinal cathexis.<sup>1</sup> I cannot extend the comparison to the other hallucinatory states in various pathological affections, because in their case I neither have experience of my own upon which to draw, nor can I utilize that of others.

Let us be clear that the hallucinatory wish-psychosis—in dreams or elsewhere—performs two by no means identical functions. Not only does it bring into con-

<sup>1</sup> We met with the first attempt of this sort—the hyper-cathexis of verbal ideas—in the paper on 'The Unconscious'. See p. 134.

consciousness hidden or repressed wishes, but it also represents them as fulfilled, and that in such a way as to command entire belief. It is important to understand this conjunction. It by no means necessarily follows that unconscious wishes must be regarded as realities when once they have entered consciousness; for, as we know, our judgement is very well able to distinguish realities from ideas and wishes, however intense. On the other hand, it seems justifiable to assume that belief in reality is bound up with sense-perception. When once a thought has succeeded in regressing as far as to the unconscious memory-traces of objects and thence to perception, that perception presents itself to us as real. So hallucination brings belief in reality with it. We now have to ask what conditions the forming of an hallucination. The first answer would be regression, and this would replace the question concerning the formation of hallucinations by one concerning the mechanism of regression. We do not need to wait long for an answer to this latter question where dreams are concerned. The regression of the preconscious dream-thoughts to the memory-pictures of things is clearly the result of the attraction exercised by these unconscious instinct-presentations—*e.g.* repressed recollections of experiences—upon the thoughts expressed in words. Only we soon perceive that we are on a false scent. If the secret of hallucination is nothing else than that of regression, every regression of sufficient intensity would produce an hallucination with belief in its reality. But we are quite familiar with situations in which a process of regressive reflection brings to consciousness very clear visual memory-pictures, though we do not on that account for a single moment take them for actual perceptions. Again, we could very well imagine cases in which the dream-work penetrated to such memory-pictures, made conscious what was previously unconscious, and mirrored to us a wish-phantasy which roused our longing but would not present itself to

us as the actual fulfilment of the wish. Hallucination must therefore be something more than the regressive revival of memory-images in themselves unconscious.

Let us, moreover, bear in mind the great practical importance there is in the capacity to distinguish perceptions from mental images, however intensively recalled. Our whole attitude to the outer world, to reality, depends on this capacity so to distinguish. We have posited that this capacity did not always exist, and that at the beginning of our mental life we really hallucinated the satisfying object when we felt the need of it. But even so, satisfaction remained lacking, and this failure must very soon have moved us to create some 'faculty' to help us to distinguish such a wish-perception from an actual fulfilment and to avoid it for the future. In other words, we gave up hallucinatory gratification of our wishes at a very early period and established a kind of 'testing' of reality. The question now arises in what this testing of reality consisted, and how the hallucinatory wish-psychosis of dreams and amentia, and such conditions, succeeds in abolishing it and in re-establishing the old mode of gratification.

The answer suggests itself if we now proceed to define somewhat more precisely the third of our mental systems, the system Cs, which hitherto we have not sharply distinguished from Pcs. Already in *Die Traumdeutung* it became necessary to decide upon regarding conscious perception as the function of a special system, to which we have ascribed certain remarkable properties and shall be justified in attributing other characteristics as well. This system, there called Pcpt (perception), we now identify with the system Cs, upon which normally the operation of becoming conscious depends. But the fact of something becoming conscious is still not wholly identical with that of its belonging to a particular system, for we have learnt that sensorial memory-pictures can be observed to

which we could not possibly accord a mental location in the systems Cs or Pcpt.

However, we must put off discussing this difficulty till we can focus our interest upon the system Cs itself. In the present connection we may be allowed to assume that hallucination consists in a cathexis of the system Cs (Pcpt), which, however, does not proceed—as normally—from without, but from within, the condition being that regression shall be carried far enough to reach this system itself and thus to pass beyond the testing of reality.<sup>1</sup>

In an earlier passage<sup>2</sup> we claimed that the still helpless organism had the capacity for making a first orientation in the world by means of its perceptions, distinguishing both 'outer' and 'inner' according to their relation to actions of the muscles. A perception which is made to disappear by motor activity is recognized as external, as reality; where such activity makes no difference, the perception originates within the subject's own body—it is not real. To be thus able not only to recognize, but at the same time to rid himself of, reality is of great value to the individual, and he would wish to be equipped with a similar weapon against the often merciless claims of his instincts. That is why he takes such pains to *project*, i.e. to transfer outwards, all that becomes troublesome to him from within.

This function of orientating the individual in the world by discrimination between inner and outer must now, after detailed dissection of the mental apparatus, be ascribed to the system Cs (Pcpt) alone. Cs must have at its command motor innervation which determines whether the perception can be made to disappear or whether it proves persistent. The capacity for testing reality need be nothing more than this

<sup>1</sup> To supplement the above, I will add that any attempt to explain hallucination would have to be made from the starting-point of a *negative* hallucination, rather than of a positive one.

<sup>2</sup> See 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes', p. 62.

function.<sup>1</sup> We can say nothing more precise on this point, for we know as yet too little of the nature and mode of operation of the system Cs. We shall place the testing of reality, as one of the great *institutions of the ego*, alongside the *ensorships* which we have come to recognize between the psychic systems, and we shall expect that analysis of the narcissistic affections will help to reveal other similar institutions.

On the other hand, we can already learn from pathology how the testing of reality may be abolished or put out of action ; this will be clearer in the wish-psychois, amentia, than in dreams. Amentia is the reaction to a loss which reality affirms, but which the ego tries to deny, since it finds it insupportable. Thereupon the ego breaks off its relation to reality ; it withdraws the cathexis from the perceptual system Cs—or perhaps better, one cathexis, the peculiar nature of which may be the subject of further inquiry. With this turning away from reality the testing of reality is done away with, the (unrepressed, completely conscious) wish-phantasies can penetrate into consciousness and thence be regarded as a more desirable reality. Such a withdrawal may be co-ordinated with the processes of repression ; amentia presents the interesting spectacle of a breach between the ego and one of its organs which had perhaps served it most faithfully and was most closely related to it.<sup>2</sup>

The function performed by this 'aversion' in amentia is performed in dreams by voluntary renunciation. Sleep desires to know nothing of the outer world, nor is it interested in reality, or only so far as abandoning the state of sleep—waking up—comes into account. Hence sleep withdraws cathexes from the system Cs as

<sup>1</sup> Cf. a later passage on the distinction between the testing of reality and of actuality.

<sup>2</sup> At this point we may venture to suggest that the toxic hallucinations, too, e.g. alcoholic delirium, are to be understood in analogous fashion. The unbearable loss imposed by reality would be just that of alcohol. If the latter is supplied, the hallucinations cease.



well as from the other systems, Pcs and Ucs, in so far as the libido-positions contained in them obey the sleep-wish. When the system Cs is thus devoid of cathexis, the possibility of a testing of reality is abandoned; and those excitations which have, independently of the state of sleep, entered on the path of regression will find it clear as far as the system Cs, where they will count as undisputed reality.<sup>1</sup> Where the hallucinatory psychosis of dementia praecox is concerned, we shall infer from our discussion that hallucination cannot be amongst the initial symptoms of the affection. It becomes possible only when the patient's ego is so far disintegrated that the testing of reality no longer stands in the way of it.

To our psychology of dream-processes we contribute this conclusion: that all essential characteristics of dreams are determined by the factor which conditions sleep. Aristotle of old is altogether right in his modest pronouncement that dreams are the mental activity of the sleeper. We might complete his statement by saying: they are remnants of mental activity made possible by the imperfect extent to which the narcissistic state of sleep has been achieved. This does not sound very different from what psychologists and philosophers have always said, but it is based on views concerning the structure and function of the mental apparatus that diverge entirely from the earlier ones and have this advantage over them—that they have enabled us also to approach an understanding of all the details of dreams.

Finally, let us once more glance at the significance the *topography* of the process of repression has for our

<sup>1</sup> The principle of the insusceptibility to excitation of uncathexed systems here appears to be invalidated in the case of the system Cs (Pcpt). But it can be a question only of the partial abolition of cathexis, and particularly for this perceptual system we must assume many conditions of excitation, very different from those of other systems.—Of course we should not attempt to disguise or gloss over the uncertain and tentative character of these metapsychological discussions. Only deeper investigation can lead to a certain degree of probability being attained.

insight into the mechanism of mental disturbances. In dreams the withdrawal of cathexis (libido, interest) affects all systems equally; in the transference neuroses, the preconscious cathexis is withdrawn; in schizophrenia, that of the Ucs; in amentia, that of the Cs.

## VIII

### MOURNING AND MELANCHOLIA <sup>1</sup>

(1917)

Now that dreams have proved of service to us as the normal prototypes of narcissistic mental disorders, we propose to try whether a comparison with the normal emotion of grief, and its expression in mourning, will not throw some light on the nature of melancholia. This time, however, we must make a certain prefatory warning against too great expectations of the result. Even in descriptive psychiatry the definition of melancholia is uncertain ; it takes on various clinical forms (some of them suggesting somatic rather than psychogenic affections) that do not seem definitely to warrant reduction to a unity. Apart from those impressions which every observer may gather, our material here is limited to a small number of cases the psychogenic nature of which was indisputable. Any claim to general validity for our conclusions shall be forgone at the outset, therefore, and we will console ourselves by reflecting that, with the means of investigation at our disposal to-day, we could hardly discover anything that was not typical, at least of a small group if not of a whole class of disorders.

A correlation of melancholia and mourning seems justified by the general picture of the two conditions.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, wherever it is possible to discern the external influences in life which have brought each of them about, this exciting cause proves to be the same in

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. IV., 1916-18 ; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Joan Riviere.]

<sup>2</sup> Abraham, to whom we owe the most important of the few analytic studies on this subject, also took this comparison as his starting-point. (*Zentralblatt*, Bd. II., 1912.)

both. Mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as fatherland, liberty, an ideal, and so on. As an effect of the same influences, melancholia instead of a state of grief develops in some people, whom we consequently suspect of a morbid pathological disposition. It is also well worth notice that, although grief involves grave departures from the normal attitude to life, it never occurs to us to regard it as a morbid condition and hand the mourner over to medical treatment. We rest assured that after a lapse of time it will be overcome, and we look upon any interference with it as inadvisable or even harmful.

The distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, abrogation of interest in the outside world, loss of the capacity to love, inhibition of all activity, and a lowering of the self-regarding feelings to a degree that finds utterance in self-reproaches and self-revilings, and culminates in a delusional expectation of punishment. This picture becomes a little more intelligible when we consider that, with one exception, the same traits are met with in grief. The fall in self-esteem is absent in grief; but otherwise the features are the same. Profound mourning, the reaction to the loss of a loved person, contains the same feeling of pain, loss of interest in the outside world—in so far as it does not recall the dead one—loss of capacity to adopt any new object of love, which would mean a replacing of the one mourned, the same turning from every active effort that is not connected with thoughts of the dead. It is easy to see that this inhibition and circumscription in the ego is the expression of an exclusive devotion to its mourning, which leaves nothing over for other purposes or other interests. It is really only because we know so well how to explain it that this attitude does not seem to us pathological.

We should regard it as a just comparison, too, to

call the temper of grief 'painful'. The justification for this comparison will probably prove illuminating when we are in a position to define pain in terms of the economics of the mind.<sup>1</sup>

Now in what consists the work which mourning performs? I do not think there is anything far-fetched in the following representation of it. The testing of reality, having shown that the loved object no longer exists, requires forthwith that all the libido shall be withdrawn from its attachments to this object. Against this demand a struggle of course arises—it may be universally observed that man never willingly abandons a libido-position, not even when a substitute is already beckoning to him. This struggle can be so intense that a turning away from reality ensues, the object being clung to through the medium of a hallucinatory wish-psychois.<sup>2</sup> The normal outcome is that deference for reality gains the day. Nevertheless its behest cannot be at once obeyed. The task is now carried through bit by bit, under great expense of time and cathectic energy, while all the time the existence of the lost object is continued in the mind. Each single one of the memories and hopes which bound the libido to the object is brought up and hyper-cathected, and the detachment of the libido from it accomplished. Why this process of carrying out the behest of reality bit by bit, which is in the nature of a compromise, should be so extraordinarily painful is not at all easy to explain in terms of mental economics. It is worth noting that this pain<sup>3</sup> seems natural to us. The fact is, however, that when the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free and uninhibited again.

Now let us apply to melancholia what we have

<sup>1</sup> [The words 'painful' and 'pain' in this paragraph represent the German *Schmerz* (i.e. the ordinary connotation of *pain* in English) and not *Unlust*, the mental antithesis of pleasure, also technically translated 'pain'.—TRANS.]

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the preceding paper.

<sup>3</sup> [Cf. first footnote on this page. The German here is *Schmerz-unlust*, a combination of the two words for *pain*.—TRANS.]

learnt about grief. In one class of cases it is evident that melancholia too may be the reaction to the loss of a loved object ; where this is not the exciting cause one can perceive that there is a loss of a more ideal kind. The object has not perhaps actually died, but has become lost as an object of love (*e.g.* the case of a deserted bride). In yet other cases one feels justified in concluding that a loss of the kind has been experienced, but one cannot see clearly what has been lost, and may the more readily suppose that the patient too cannot consciously perceive what it is he has lost. This, indeed, might be so even when the patient was aware of the loss giving rise to the melancholia, that is, when he knows whom he has lost but not *what* it is he has lost in them. This would suggest that melancholia is in some way related to an unconscious loss of a love-object, in contradistinction to mourning, in which there is nothing unconscious about the loss.

In grief we found that the ego's inhibited condition and loss of interest was fully accounted for by the absorbing work of mourning. The unknown loss in melancholia would also result in an inner labour of the same kind and hence would be responsible for the melancholic inhibition. Only, the inhibition of the melancholiac seems puzzling to us because we cannot see what it is that absorbs him so entirely. Now the melancholiac displays something else which is lacking in grief—an extraordinary fall in his self-esteem, an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale. In grief the world becomes poor and empty ; in melancholia it is the ego itself. The patient represents his ego to us as worthless, incapable of any effort and morally despicable ; he reproaches himself, vilifies himself and expects to be cast out and chastised. He abases himself before everyone and commiserates his own relatives for being connected with someone so unworthy. He does not realize that any change has taken place in him, but extends his self-criticism back over the past and declares that he was never any better. This picture of

delusional belittling—which is predominantly moral—is completed by sleeplessness and refusal of nourishment, and by an overthrow, psychologically very remarkable, of that instinct which constrains every living thing to cling to life.

Both scientifically and therapeutically it would be fruitless to contradict the patient who brings these accusations against himself. He must surely be right in some way and be describing something that corresponds to what he thinks. Some of his statements, indeed, we are at once obliged to confirm without reservation. He really is as lacking in interest, as incapable of love and of any achievement as he says. But that, as we know, is secondary, the effect of the inner travail consuming his ego, of which we know nothing but which we compare with the work of mourning. In certain other self-accusations he also seems to us justified, only that he has a keener eye for the truth than others who are not melancholic. When in his exacerbation of self-criticism he describes himself as petty, egoistic, dishonest, lacking in independence, one whose sole aim has been to hide the weaknesses of his own nature, for all we know it may be that he has come very near to self-knowledge; we only wonder why a man must become ill before he can discover truth of this kind. For there can be no doubt that whoever holds and expresses to others such an opinion of himself—one that Hamlet harboured of himself and all men<sup>1</sup>—that man is ill, whether he speaks the truth or is more or less unfair to himself. Nor is it difficult to see that there is no correspondence, so far as we can judge, between the degree of self-abasement and its real justification. A good, capable, conscientious woman will speak no better of herself after she develops melancholia than one who is actually worthless; indeed, the first is more likely to fall ill of the disease than the other, of whom we too should have nothing

<sup>1</sup> 'Use every man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?' (Act II. Sc. 2).

good to say. Finally, it must strike us that after all the melancholiac's behaviour is not in every way the same as that of one who is normally devoured by remorse and self-reproach. Shame before others, which would characterize this condition above everything, is lacking in him, or at least there is little sign of it. One could almost say that the opposite trait of insistent talking about himself and pleasure in the consequent exposure of himself predominates in the melancholiac.

The essential thing, therefore, is not whether the melancholiac's distressing self-abasement is justified in the opinion of others. The point must be rather that he is correctly describing his psychological situation in his lamentations. He has lost his self-respect and must have some good reason for having done so. It is true that we are then faced with a contradiction which presents a very difficult problem. From the analogy with grief we should have to conclude that the loss suffered by the melancholiac is that of an object; according to what he says the loss is one in himself.

Before going into this contradiction, let us dwell for a moment on the view melancholia affords of the constitution of the ego. We see how in this condition one part of the ego sets itself over against the other, judges it critically, and, as it were, looks upon it as an object. Our suspicion that the critical institution in the mind which is here split off from the ego might also demonstrate its independence in other circumstances will be confirmed by all further observations. We shall really find justification for distinguishing this institution from the rest of the ego. It is the mental faculty commonly called conscience that we are thus recognizing; we shall count it, along with the censorship of consciousness and the testing of reality, among the great institutions of the ego and shall also find evidence elsewhere showing that it can become diseased independently. In the clinical picture of melancholia dissatisfaction with the self on moral grounds is far the most outstanding feature; the self-criticism much



less frequently concerns itself with bodily infirmity, ugliness, weakness, social inferiority; among these latter ills that the patient dreads or asseverates the thought of poverty alone has a favoured position.

There is one observation, not at all difficult to make, which supplies an explanation of the contradiction mentioned above. If one listens patiently to the many and various self-accusations of the melancholiac, one cannot in the end avoid the impression that often the most violent of them are hardly at all applicable to the patient himself, but that with insignificant modifications they do fit someone else, some person whom the patient loves, has loved or ought to love. This conjecture is confirmed every time one examines the facts. So we get the key to the clinical picture—by perceiving that the self-reproaches are reproaches against a loved object which have been shifted on to the patient's own ego.

The woman who loudly pities her husband for being bound to such a poor creature as herself is really accusing her husband of being a poor creature in some sense or other. There is no need to be greatly surprised that among those transferred from him some genuine self-reproaches are mingled: they are allowed to obtrude themselves since they help to mask the others and make recognition of the true state of affairs impossible; indeed, they derive from the 'for' and 'against' contained in the conflict that has led to the loss of the loved object. The behaviour of the patients too becomes now much more comprehensible. Their complaints are really 'plaints' in the legal sense of the word; it is because everything derogatory that they say of themselves at bottom relates to someone else that they are not ashamed and do not hide their heads. Moreover, they are far from evincing towards those around them the attitude of humility and submission that alone would befit such worthless persons; on the contrary, they give a great deal of trouble, perpetually taking offence and behaving as if they had

been treated with great injustice. All this is possible only because the reactions expressed in their behaviour still proceed from an attitude of revolt, a mental constellation which by a certain process has become transformed into melancholic contrition.

Once this is recognized there is no difficulty in reconstructing this process. First there existed an object-choice, the libido had attached itself to a certain person; then, owing to a real injury or disappointment concerned with the loved person, this object-relationship was undermined. The result was not the normal one of withdrawal of the libido from this object and transference of it to a new one, but something different for which various conditions seem to be necessary. The object-cathexis proved to have little power of resistance, and was abandoned; but the free libido was withdrawn into the ego and not directed to another object. It did not find application there, however, in any one of several possible ways, but served simply to establish an *identification* of the ego with the abandoned object. Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, so that the latter could henceforth be criticized by a special mental faculty like an object, like the forsaken object. In this way the loss of the object became transformed into a loss in the ego, and the conflict between the ego and the loved person transformed into a cleavage between the criticizing faculty of the ego and the ego as altered by the identification.

Certain things may be directly inferred with regard to the necessary conditions and effects of such a process. On the one hand, a strong fixation to the love-object must have been present; on the other hand, in contradiction to this, the object-cathexis can have had little power of resistance. As Otto Rank has aptly remarked, this contradiction seems to imply that the object-choice had been effected on a narcissistic basis, so that when obstacles arise in the way of the object-cathexis it can regress into narcissism.

The narcissistic identification with the object then becomes a substitute for the erotic cathexis, the result of which is that in spite of the conflict with the loved person the love-relation need not be given up. This kind of substitution of identification for object-love is an important mechanism in the narcissistic affections ; Karl Landauer has lately been able to point to it in the process of recovery in schizophrenia.<sup>1</sup> It of course represents a regression from one type of object-choice to the primal narcissism. We have elsewhere described how object-choice develops from a preliminary stage of identification, the way in which the ego first adopts an object and the ambivalence in which this is expressed. The ego wishes to incorporate this object into itself, and the method by which it would do so, in this oral or cannibalistic stage, is by devouring it. Abraham is undoubtedly right in referring to this connection the refusal of nourishment met with in severe forms of melancholia.

The conclusion which our theory would require, namely, that the disposition to succumb to melancholia—or some part of it—lies in the narcissistic type of object-choice, unfortunately still lacks confirmation by investigation. In the opening remarks of this paper I admitted that the empirical material upon which this study is founded does not supply all we could wish. On the assumption that the results of observation would accord with our inferences, we should not hesitate to include among the special characteristics of melancholia a regression from object-cathexis to the still narcissistic oral phase of the libido. Identifications with the object are by no means rare in the transference-neuroses too ; indeed, they are a well-known mechanism in symptom-formation, especially in hysteria. The difference, however, between narcissistic and hysterical identification may be perceived in the object-cathexis, which in the first is relinquished, whereas in the latter it persists and

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschrift*, Bd. II., 1914.

exercises an influence, usually confined to certain isolated actions and innervations. Nevertheless, even in the transference-neuroses identification is the expression of a community which may signify love. The narcissistic identification is the older, and it paves the way to comprehension of the hysterical form, which has been less thoroughly studied.

Some of the features of melancholia, therefore, are borrowed from grief, and the others from the process of regression from narcissistic object-choice to narcissism. On the one hand, like mourning, melancholia is the reaction to a real loss of a loved object ; but, over and above this, it is bound to a condition which is absent in normal grief or which, if it supervenes, transforms the latter into a pathological variety. The loss of a love-object constitutes an excellent opportunity for the ambivalence in love-relationships to make itself felt and come to the fore. Consequently where there is a disposition to obsessional neurosis the conflict of ambivalence casts a pathological shade on the grief, forcing it to express itself in the form of self-reproaches, to the effect that the mourner himself is to blame for the loss of the loved one, *i.e.* desired it. These obsessional states of depression following upon the death of loved persons show us what the conflict of ambivalence by itself can achieve, when there is no regressive withdrawal of libido as well. The occasions giving rise to melancholia for the most part extend beyond the clear case of a loss by death, and include all those situations of being wounded, hurt, neglected, out of favour, or disappointed, which can import opposite feelings of love and hate into the relationship or reinforce an already existing ambivalence. This conflict of ambivalence, the origin of which lies now more in actual experience, now more in constitution, must not be neglected among the conditioning factors in melancholia. If the object-love, which cannot be given up, takes refuge in narcissistic identification, while the object itself is abandoned, then hate is expended upon

this new substitute-object, railing at it, depreciating it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic gratification from its suffering. The self-torments of melancholiacs, which are without doubt pleasurable, signify, just like the corresponding phenomenon in the obsessional neurosis, a gratification of sadistic tendencies and of hate,<sup>1</sup> both of which relate to an object and in this way have both been turned round upon the self. In both disorders the sufferers usually succeed in the end in taking revenge, by the circuitous path of self-punishment, on the original objects and in tormenting them by means of the illness, having developed the latter so as to avoid the necessity of openly expressing their hostility against the loved ones. After all, the person who has occasioned the injury to the patient's feelings, and against whom his illness is aimed, is usually to be found among those in his near neighbourhood. The melancholiac's erotic cathexis of his object thus undergoes a twofold fate: part of it regresses to identification, but the other part, under the influence of the conflict of ambivalence, is reduced to the stage of sadism, which is nearer to this conflict.

It is this sadism, and only this, that solves the riddle of the tendency to suicide which makes melancholia so interesting—and so dangerous. As the primal condition from which instinct-life proceeds we have come to recognize a self-love of the ego which is so immense, in the fear that rises up at the menace of death we see liberated a volume of narcissistic libido which is so vast, that we cannot conceive how this ego can connive at its own destruction. It is true we have long known that no neurotic harbours thoughts of suicide which are not murderous impulses against others re-directed upon himself, but we have never been able to explain what interplay of forces could carry such a purpose through to execution. Now the analysis of melancholia shows that the ego can kill

<sup>1</sup> For the distinction between the two, see the paper entitled 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes', p. 82.

itself only when, the object-cathexis having been withdrawn upon it, it can treat itself as an object, when it is able to launch against itself the animosity relating to an object—that primordial reaction on the part of the ego to all objects in the outer world.<sup>1</sup> Thus in the regression from narcissistic object-choice the object is indeed abolished, but in spite of all it proves itself stronger than the ego's self. In the two contrasting situations of intense love and of suicide the ego is overwhelmed by the object, though in totally different ways.

We may expect to find the derivation of that one striking feature of melancholia, the manifestations of dread of poverty, in anal erotism, torn out of its context and altered by regression.

Melancholia confronts us with yet other problems, the answer to which in part eludes us. The way in which it passes off after a certain time has elapsed without leaving traces of any gross change is a feature it shares with grief. It appeared that in grief this period of time is necessary for detailed carrying out of the behest imposed by the testing of reality, and that by accomplishing this labour the ego succeeds in freeing its libido from the lost object. We may imagine that the ego is occupied with some analogous task during the course of a melancholia ; in neither case have we any insight into the economic processes going forward. The sleeplessness characteristic of melancholia evidently testifies to the inflexibility of the condition, the impossibility of effecting the general withdrawal of cathexes necessary for sleep. The complex of melancholia behaves like an open wound, drawing to itself cathectic energy from all sides (which we have called in the transference-neuroses 'anti-cathexes') and draining the ego until it is utterly depleted ; it proves easily able to withstand the ego's wish to sleep. The amelioration in the condition that is regularly noticeable towards evening is probably due to a somatic factor and not

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes', p. 79.

explicable psychologically. These questions link up with the further one, whether a loss in the ego apart from any object (a purely narcissistic wound to the ego) would suffice to produce the clinical picture of melancholia and whether an impoverishment of ego-libido directly due to toxins would not result in certain forms of the disease.

The most remarkable peculiarity of melancholia, and one most in need of explanation, is the tendency it displays to turn into mania accompanied by a completely opposite symptomatology. Not every melancholia has this fate, as we know. Many cases run their course in intermittent periods, in the intervals of which signs of mania may be entirely absent or only very slight. Others show that regular alternation of melancholic and manic phases which has been classified as circular insanity. One would be tempted to exclude these cases from among those of psychogenic origin, if the psycho-analytic method had not succeeded in effecting an explanation and therapeutic improvement of several cases of the kind. It is not merely permissible, therefore, but incumbent upon us to extend the analytic explanation of melancholia to mania.

I cannot promise that this attempt will prove entirely satisfying ; it is much more in the nature of a first sounding and hardly goes beyond that. There are two points from which one may start : the first is a psycho-analytic point of view, and the second one may probably call a matter of general observation in mental economics. The psycho-analytic point is one which several analytic investigators have already formulated in so many words, namely, that the content of mania is no different from that of melancholia, that both the disorders are wrestling with the same ' complex ', and that in melancholia the ego has succumbed to it, whereas in mania it has mastered the complex or thrust it aside. The other point of view is founded on the observation that all states such as joy, triumph, exultation, which form the normal counterparts of mania,

are economically conditioned in the same way. First, there is always a long-sustained condition of great mental expenditure, or one established by long force of habit, upon which at last some influence supervenes making it superfluous, so that a volume of energy becomes available for manifold possible applications and ways of discharge,—for instance, when some poor devil, by winning a large sum of money, is suddenly relieved from perpetual anxiety about his daily bread, when any long and arduous struggle is finally crowned with success, when a man finds himself in a position to throw off at one blow some heavy burden, some false position he has long endured, and so on. All such situations are characterized by high spirits, by the signs of discharge of joyful emotion, and by increased readiness to all kinds of action, just like mania, and in complete contrast to the dejection and inhibition of melancholia. One may venture to assert that mania is nothing other than a triumph of this sort, only that here again what the ego has surmounted and is triumphing over remains hidden from it. Alcoholic intoxication, which belongs to the same group of conditions, may be explained in the same way—in so far as it consists in a state of elation; here there is probably a relaxation produced by toxins of the expenditure of energy in repression. The popular view readily takes for granted that a person in a maniacal state finds such delight in movement and action because he is so 'cheery'. This piece of false logic must of course be exploded. What has happened is that the economic condition described above has been fulfilled, and this is the reason why the maniac is in such high spirits on the one hand and is so uninhibited in action on the other.

If we put together the two suggestions reached, we have the following result. When mania supervenes, the ego must have surmounted the loss of the object (or the mourning over the loss, or perhaps the object itself), whereupon the whole amount of anti-cathexis



which the painful suffering of melancholia drew from the ego and 'bound' has become available. Besides this, the maniac plainly shows us that he has become free from the object by whom his suffering was caused, for he runs after new object-cathexes like a starving man after bread.

This explanation certainly sounds plausible, but in the first place it is too indefinite, and, secondly, it gives rise to more new problems and doubts than we can answer. We will not evade a discussion of them, even though we cannot expect it to lead us to clear understanding.

First, then: in normal grief too the loss of the object is undoubtedly surmounted, and this process too absorbs all the energies of the ego while it lasts. Why then does it not set up the economic condition for a phase of triumph after it has run its course or at least produce some slight indication of such a state? I find it impossible to answer this objection off-hand. It reminds us again that we do not even know by what economic measures the work of mourning is carried through; possibly, however, a conjecture may help us here. Reality passes its verdict—that the object no longer exists—upon each single one of the memories and hopes through which the libido was attached to the lost object, and the ego, confronted as it were with the decision whether it will share this fate, is persuaded by the sum of its narcissistic satisfactions in being alive to sever its attachment to the non-existent object. We may imagine that, because of the slowness and the gradual way in which this severance is achieved, the expenditure of energy necessary for it becomes somehow dissipated by the time the task is carried through.<sup>1</sup>

It is tempting to essay a formulation of the work

<sup>1</sup> The economic point of view has up till now received little attention in psycho-analytic researches. I would mention as an exception a paper by Viktor Tausk, 'Compensation as a Means of Discounting the Motive of Repression', *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, vol. v. (*Zeitschrift*, Bd. I., 1913.)

performed during melancholia on the lines of this conjecture concerning the work of mourning. Here we are met at the outset by an uncertainty. So far we have hardly considered the topographical situation in melancholia, nor put the question in what systems or between what systems in the mind the work of melancholia goes on. How much of the mental processes of the disease is still occupied with the unconscious object-cathexes that have been given up and how much with their substitute, by identification, in the ego ?

Now, it is easy to say and to write that ' the unconscious (thing-)presentation of the object has been abandoned by the libido '. In reality, however, this presentation is made up of innumerable single impressions (unconscious traces of them), so that this withdrawal of libido is not a process that can be accomplished in a moment, but must certainly be, like grief, one in which progress is slow and gradual. Whether it begins simultaneously at several points or follows some sort of definite sequence is not at all easy to decide ; in analyses it often becomes evident that first one, then another memory is activated and that the laments which are perpetually the same and wearisome in their monotony nevertheless each time take their rise in some different unconscious source. If the object had not this great significance, strengthened by a thousand links, to the ego, the loss of it would be no meet cause for either mourning or melancholia. This character of withdrawing the libido bit by bit is therefore to be ascribed alike to mourning and to melancholia ; it is probably sustained by the same economic arrangements and serves the same purposes in both.

As we have seen, however, there is more in the content of melancholia than in that of normal grief. In melancholia the relation to the object is no simple one ; it is complicated by the conflict of ambivalence. This latter is either constitutional, *i.e.* it is an element of every love-relation formed by this particular ego, or else it proceeds from precisely those experiences that

involved a threat of losing the object. For this reason the exciting causes of melancholia are of a much wider range than those of grief, which is for the most part occasioned only by a real loss of the object, by its death. In melancholia, that is, countless single conflicts in which love and hate wrestle together are fought for the object; the one seeks to detach the libido from the object, the other to uphold this libidoposition against assault. These single conflicts cannot be located in any system but the Ucs, the region of memory-traces of things (as contrasted with word-cathexes). The efforts to detach the libido are made in this system also during mourning; but in the latter nothing hinders these processes from proceeding in the normal way through the Pcs to consciousness. For the work of melancholia this way is blocked, owing perhaps to a number of causes or to their combined operation. Constitutional ambivalence belongs by nature to what is repressed, while traumatic experiences with the object may have stirred to activity something else that has been repressed. Thus everything to do with these conflicts of ambivalence remains excluded from consciousness, until the outcome characteristic of melancholia sets in. This, as we know, consists in the libidinal cathexis that is being menaced at last abandoning the object, only, however, to resume its occupation of that place in the ego whence it came. So by taking flight into the ego love escapes annihilation. After this regression of the libido the process can become conscious; it appears in consciousness as a conflict between one part of the ego and its self-criticizing faculty.

That which consciousness is aware of in the work of melancholia is thus not the essential part of it, nor is it even the part which we may credit with an influence in bringing the suffering to an end. We see that the ego debases itself and rages against itself, and as little as the patient do we understand what this can lead to and how it can change. We can more readily

credit such an achievement to the unconscious part of the work, because it is not difficult to perceive an essential analogy between the work performed in melancholia and in mourning. Just as the work of grief, by declaring the object to be dead and offering the ego the benefit of continuing to live, impels the ego to give up the object, so each single conflict of ambivalence, by disparaging the object, denigrating it, even as it were by slaying it, loosens the fixation of the libido to it. It is possible, therefore, for the process in the Ucs to come to an end, whether it be that the fury has spent itself or that the object is abandoned as no longer of value. We cannot tell which of these two possibilities is the regular or more usual one in bringing melancholia to an end, nor what influence this termination has on the future condition of the case. The ego may enjoy here the satisfaction of acknowledging itself as the better of the two, as superior to the object.

Even if we accept this view of the work of melancholia, it still does not supply an explanation of the one point upon which we hoped for light. By analogy with various other situations we expected to discover in the ambivalence prevailing in melancholia the economic condition for the appearance of mania when the melancholia has run its course. But there is one fact to which our expectations must bow. Of the three conditioning factors in melancholia—loss of the object, ambivalence, and regression of libido into the ego—the first two are found also in the obsessional reproaches arising after the death of loved persons. In these it is indubitably the ambivalence that motivates the conflict, and observation shows that after it has run its course nothing in the nature of a triumph or a manic state of mind is left. We are thus directed to the third factor as the only one that can have this effect. That accumulation of cathexis which is first of all 'bound' and then, after termination of the work of melancholia, becomes free and makes mania possible must be connected with the regression of the libido

into narcissism. The conflict in the ego, which in melancholia is substituted for the struggle surging round the object, must act like a painful wound which calls out unusually strong anti-cathexes. Here again, however, it will be well to call a halt and postpone further investigations into mania until we have gained some insight into the economic conditions, first, of bodily pain, and then of the mental pain<sup>1</sup> which is its analogue. For we know already that, owing to the interdependence of the complicated problems of the mind, we are forced to break off every investigation at some point until such time as the results of another attempt elsewhere can come to its aid.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [*Schmerz*.]

<sup>2</sup> *Additional Note*, 1924. Cf. the continued discussion of this problem in *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

PAPERS ON  
APPLIED PSYCHO-ANALYSIS



IX  
THE RELATION OF THE POET TO  
DAY-DREAMING<sup>1</sup>

(1908)

WE laymen have always wondered greatly—like the cardinal who put the question to Ariosto—how that strange being, the poet, comes by his material. What makes him able to carry us with him in such a way and to arouse emotions in us of which we thought ourselves perhaps not even capable? Our interest in the problem is only stimulated by the circumstance that if we ask poets themselves they give us no explanation of the matter, or at least no satisfactory explanation. The knowledge that not even the clearest insight into the factors conditioning the choice of imaginative material, or into the nature of the ability to fashion that material, will ever make writers of us does not in any way detract from our interest.

If we could only find some activity in ourselves, or in people like ourselves, which was in any way akin to the writing of imaginative works! If we could do so, then examination of it would give us a hope of obtaining some insight into the creative powers of imaginative writers. And indeed, there is some prospect of achieving this—writers themselves always try to lessen the distance between their kind and ordinary human beings; they so often assure us that every man is at heart a poet, and that the last poet will not die until the last human being does.

We ought surely to look in the child for the first traces of imaginative activity. The child's best loved and most absorbing occupation is play. Perhaps we

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Neue Revue*, I., 1908; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Zweite Folge. [Translated by I. F. Grant Duff.]



may say that every child at play behaves like an imaginative writer, in that he creates a world of his own or, more truly, he rearranges the things of his world and orders it in a new way that pleases him better. It would be incorrect to think that he does not take this world seriously; on the contrary, he takes his play very seriously and expends a great deal of emotion on it. The opposite of play is not serious occupation but—reality. Notwithstanding the large affective cathexis of his play-world, the child distinguishes it perfectly from reality; only he likes to borrow the objects and circumstances that he imagines from the tangible and visible things of the real world. It is only this linking of it to reality that still distinguishes a child's 'play' from 'day-dreaming'.

Now the writer does the same as the child at play; he creates a world of phantasy which he takes very seriously; that is, he invests it with a great deal of affect, while separating it sharply from reality. Language has preserved this relationship between children's play and poetic creation. It designates certain kinds of imaginative creation, concerned with tangible objects and capable of representation, as 'plays'; the people who present them are called 'players'. The unreality of this poetical world of imagination, however, has very important consequences for literary technique; for many things which if they happened in real life could produce no pleasure can nevertheless give enjoyment in a play—many emotions which are essentially painful may become a source of enjoyment to the spectators and hearers of a poet's work.

There is another consideration relating to the contrast between reality and play on which we will dwell for a moment. Long after a child has grown up and stopped playing, after he has for decades attempted to grasp the realities of life with all seriousness, he may one day come to a state of mind in which the contrast between play and reality is again abrogated. The adult can remember with what intense seriousness he

carried on his childish play ; then by comparing his would-be serious occupations with his childhood's play, he manages to throw off the heavy burden of life and obtain the great pleasure of humour.

As they grow up, people cease to play, and appear to give up the pleasure they derived from play. But anyone who knows anything of the mental life of human beings is aware that hardly anything is more difficult to them than to give up a pleasure they have once tasted. Really we never can relinquish anything ; we only exchange one thing for something else. When we appear to give something up, all we really do is to adopt a substitute. So when the human being grows up and ceases to play he only gives up the connection with real objects ; instead of playing he then begins to create phantasy. He builds castles in the air and creates what are called day-dreams. I believe that the greater number of human beings create phantasies at times as long as they live. This is a fact which has been overlooked for a long time, and its importance has therefore not been properly appreciated.

The phantasies of human beings are less easy to observe than the play of children. Children do, it is true, play alone, or form with other children a closed world in their minds for the purposes of play ; but a child does not conceal his play from adults, even though his playing is quite unconcerned with them. The adult, on the other hand, is ashamed of his day-dreams and conceals them from other people ; he cherishes them as his most intimate possessions and as a rule he would rather confess all his misdeeds than tell his day-dreams. For this reason he may believe that he is the only person who makes up such phantasies, without having any idea that everybody else tells themselves stories of the same kind. Day-dreaming is a continuation of play, nevertheless, and the motives which lie behind these two activities contain a very good reason for this different behaviour in the child at play and in the day-dreaming adult.

The play of children is determined by their wishes—really by the child's *one* wish, which is to be grown-up, the wish that helps to 'bring him up'. He always plays at being grown-up; in play he imitates what is known to him of the lives of adults. Now he has no reason to conceal this wish. With the adult it is otherwise; on the one hand, he knows that he is expected not to play any longer or to day-dream, but to be making his way in a real world. On the other hand, some of the wishes from which his phantasies spring are such as have to be entirely hidden; therefore he is ashamed of his phantasies as being childish and as something prohibited.

If they are concealed with so much secretiveness, you will ask, how do we know so much about the human propensity to create phantasies? Now there is a certain class of human beings upon whom not a god, indeed, but a stern goddess—Necessity—has laid the task of giving an account of what they suffer and what they enjoy. These people are the neurotics; among other things they have to confess their phantasies to the physician to whom they go in the hope of recovering through mental treatment. This is our best source of knowledge, and we have later found good reason to suppose that our patients tell us about themselves nothing that we could not also hear from healthy people.

Let us try to learn some of the characteristics of day-dreaming. We can begin by saying that happy people never make phantasies, only unsatisfied ones. Unsatisfied wishes are the driving power behind phantasies; every separate phantasy contains the fulfilment of a wish, and improves on unsatisfactory reality. The impelling wishes vary according to the sex, character and circumstances of the creator; they may be easily divided, however, into two principal groups. Either they are ambitious wishes, serving to exalt the person creating them, or they are erotic. In young women erotic wishes dominate the phantasies almost

exclusively, for their ambition is generally comprised in their erotic longings; in young men egoistic and ambitious wishes assert themselves plainly enough alongside their erotic desires. But we will not lay stress on the distinction between these two trends; we prefer to emphasize the fact that they are often united. In many altar-pieces the portrait of the donor is to be found in one corner of the picture; and in the greater number of ambitious day-dreams, too, we can discover a woman in some corner, for whom the dreamer performs all his heroic deeds and at whose feet all his triumphs are to be laid. Here you see we have strong enough motives for concealment; a well-brought-up woman is, indeed, credited with only a minimum of erotic desire, while a young man has to learn to suppress the overweening self-regard he acquires in the indulgent atmosphere surrounding his childhood, so that he may find his proper place in a society that is full of other persons making similar claims.

We must not imagine that the various products of this impulse towards phantasy, castles in the air or day-dreams, are stereotyped or unchangeable. On the contrary, they fit themselves into the changing impressions of life, alter with the vicissitudes of life; every deep new impression gives them what might be called a 'date-stamp'. The relation of phantasies to time is altogether of great importance. One may say that a phantasy at one and the same moment hovers between three periods of time—the three periods of our ideation. The activity of phantasy in the mind is linked up with some current impression, occasioned by some event in the present, which had the power to rouse an intense desire. From there it wanders back to the memory of an early experience, generally belonging to infancy, in which this wish was fulfilled. Then it creates for itself a situation which is to emerge in the future, representing the fulfilment of the wish—this is the day-dream or phantasy, which now carries in it traces both of the occasion which engendered it and of some past memory.

So past, present and future are threaded, as it were, on the string of the wish that runs through them all.

A very ordinary example may serve to make my statement clearer. Take the case of a poor orphan lad, to whom you have given the address of some employer where he may perhaps get work. On the way there he falls into a day-dream suitable to the situation from which it springs. The content of the phantasy will be somewhat as follows: He is taken on and pleases his new employer, makes himself indispensable in the business, is taken into the family of the employer, and marries the charming daughter of the house. Then he comes to conduct the business, first as a partner, and then as successor to his father-in-law. In this way the dreamer regains what he had in his happy childhood, the protecting house, his loving parents and the first objects of his affection. You will see from such an example how the wish employs some event in the present to plan a future on the pattern of the past.

Much more could be said about phantasies, but I will only allude as briefly as possible to certain points. If phantasies become over-luxuriant and over-powerful, the necessary conditions for an outbreak of neurosis or psychosis are constituted; phantasies are also the first preliminary stage in the mind of the symptoms of illness of which our patients complain. A broad by-path here branches off into pathology.

I cannot pass over the relation of phantasies to dreams. Our nocturnal dreams are nothing but such phantasies, as we can make clear by interpreting them.<sup>1</sup> Language, in its unrivalled wisdom, long ago decided the question of the essential nature of dreams by giving the name of 'day-dreams' to the airy creations of phantasy. If the meaning of our dreams usually remains obscure in spite of this clue, it is because of the circumstance that at night wishes of which we are ashamed also become active in us, wishes which we

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*.

have to hide from ourselves, which were consequently repressed and pushed back into the unconscious. Such repressed wishes and their derivatives can therefore achieve expression only when almost completely disguised. When scientific work had succeeded in elucidating the distortion in dreams, it was no longer difficult to recognize that nocturnal dreams are fulfillments of desires in exactly the same way as day-dreams are—those phantasies with which we are all so familiar.

So much for day-dreaming; now for the poet! Shall we dare really to compare an imaginative writer with 'one who dreams in broad daylight', and his creations with day-dreams? Here, surely, a first distinction is forced upon us; we must distinguish between poets who, like the bygone creators of epics and tragedies, take over their material ready-made, and those who seem to create their material spontaneously. Let us keep to the latter, and let us also not choose for our comparison those writers who are most highly esteemed by critics. We will choose the less pretentious writers of romances, novels and stories, who are read all the same by the widest circles of men and women. There is one very marked characteristic in the productions of these writers which must strike us all: they all have a hero who is the centre of interest, for whom the author tries to win our sympathy by every possible means, and whom he places under the protection of a special providence. If at the end of one chapter the hero is left unconscious and bleeding from severe wounds, I am sure to find him at the beginning of the next being carefully tended and on the way to recovery; if the first volume ends in the hero being shipwrecked in a storm at sea, I am certain to hear at the beginning of the next of his hairbreadth escape—otherwise, indeed, the story could not continue. The feeling of security with which I follow the hero through his dangerous adventures is the same as that with which a real hero throws himself into the water to

save a drowning man, or exposes himself to the fire of the enemy while storming a battery. It is this very feeling of being a hero which one of our best authors has well expressed in the famous phrase, '*Es kann dir nix g'schehen!*'<sup>1</sup> It seems to me, however, that this significant mark of invulnerability very clearly betrays—His Majesty the Ego, the hero of all day-dreams and all novels.

The same relationship is hinted at in yet other characteristics of these egocentric stories. When all the women in a novel invariably fall in love with the hero, this can hardly be looked upon as a description of reality, but it is easily understood as an essential constituent of a day-dream. The same thing holds good when the other people in the story are sharply divided into good and bad, with complete disregard of the manifold variety in the traits of real human beings; the 'good' ones are those who help the ego in its character of hero, while the 'bad' are his enemies and rivals.

We do not in any way fail to recognize that many imaginative productions have travelled far from the original naïve day-dream, but I cannot suppress the surmise that even the most extreme variations could be brought into relationship with this model by an uninterrupted series of transitions. It has struck me in many so-called psychological novels, too, that only one person—once again the hero—is described from within; the author dwells in his soul and looks upon the other people from outside. The psychological novel in general probably owes its peculiarities to the tendency of modern writers to split up their ego by self-observation into many component-egos, and in this way to personify the conflicting trends in their own mental life in many heroes. There are certain novels, which might be called 'excentric', that seem to stand in marked contradiction to the typical day-

<sup>1</sup> Anzengruber. [The phrase means 'Nothing can happen to me!']—Trans.]

dream ; in these the person introduced as the hero plays the least active part of anyone, and seems instead to let the actions and sufferings of other people pass him by like a spectator. Many of the later novels of Zola belong to this class. But I must say that the psychological analysis of people who are not writers, and who deviate in many things from the so-called norm, has shown us analogous variations in their day-dreams in which the ego contents itself with the rôle of spectator.

If our comparison of the imaginative writer with the day-dreamer, and of poetic production with the day-dream, is to be of any value, it must show itself fruitful in some way or other. Let us try, for instance; to examine the works of writers in reference to the idea propounded above, the relation of the phantasy to the wish that runs through it and to the three periods of time ; and with its help let us study the connection between the life of the writer and his productions. Hitherto it has not been known what preliminary ideas would constitute an approach to this problem ; very often this relation has been regarded as much simpler than it is ; but the insight gained from phantasies leads us to expect the following state of things. Some actual experience which made a strong impression on the writer had stirred up a memory of an earlier experience, generally belonging to childhood, which then arouses a wish that finds a fulfilment in the work in question, and in which elements of the recent event and the old memory should be discernible.

Do not be alarmed at the complexity of this formula ; I myself expect that in reality it will prove itself to be too schematic, but that possibly it may contain a first means of approach to the true state of affairs. From some attempts I have made I think that this way of approaching works of the imagination might not be unfruitful. You will not forget that the stress laid on the writer's memories of his childhood, which perhaps seems so strange, is ultimately derived



from the hypothesis that imaginative creation, like day-dreaming, is a continuation of and substitute for the play of childhood.

We will not neglect to refer also to that class of imaginative work which must be recognized not as spontaneous production, but as a re-fashioning of ready-made material. Here, too, the writer retains a certain amount of independence, which can express itself in the choice of material and in changes in the material chosen, which are often considerable. As far as it goes, this material is derived from the racial treasure-house of myths, legends and fairy-tales. The study of these creations of racial psychology is in no way complete, but it seems extremely probable that myths, for example, are distorted vestiges of the wish-phantasies of whole nations—the age-long dreams of young humanity.

You will say that, although writers came first in the title of this paper, I have told you far less about them than about phantasy. I am aware of that, and will try to excuse myself by pointing to the present state of our knowledge. I could only throw out suggestions and bring up interesting points which arise from the study of phantasies, and which pass beyond them to the problem of the choice of literary material. We have not touched on the other problem at all, *i.e.* what are the means which writers use to achieve those emotional reactions in us that are roused by their productions. But I would at least point out to you the path which leads from our discussion of day-dreams to the problems of the effect produced on us by imaginative works.

You will remember that we said the day-dreamer hid his phantasies carefully from other people because he had reason to be ashamed of them. I may now add that even if he were to communicate them to us, he would give us no pleasure by his disclosures. When we hear such phantasies they repel us, or at least leave us cold. But when a man of literary talent presents

his plays, or relates what we take to be his personal day-dreams, we experience great pleasure arising probably from many sources. How the writer accomplishes this is his innermost secret ; the essential *ars poetica* lies in the technique by which our feeling of repulsion is overcome, and this has certainly to do with those barriers erected between every individual being and all others. We can guess at two methods used in this technique. The writer softens the egotistical character of the day-dream by changes and disguises, and he bribes us by the offer of a purely formal, that is, aesthetic, pleasure in the presentation of his phantasies. The increment of pleasure which is offered us in order to release yet greater pleasure arising from deeper sources in the mind is called an 'incitement premium' or technically, 'fore-pleasure'. I am of opinion that all the aesthetic pleasure we gain from the works of imaginative writers is of the same type as this 'fore-pleasure', and that the true enjoyment of literature proceeds from the release of tensions in our minds. Perhaps much that brings about this result consists in the writer's putting us into a position in which we can enjoy our own day-dreams without reproach or shame. Here we reach a path leading into novel, interesting and complicated researches, but we also, at least for the present, arrive at the end of the present discussion.

## X

### ' THE ANTITHETICAL SENSE OF PRIMAL WORDS ' <sup>1</sup>

A Review of a Pamphlet by Karl Abel, *Über  
den Gegensinn der Urworte*, 1884

(1910)

**I**N my *Traumdeutung* I made a statement concerning one of the findings of my analytic work which I did not then understand. I will repeat it at the beginning of this review :

'The attitude of dreams towards the category of antithesis and contradiction is most striking. This category is simply ignored; the word "No" does not seem to exist for a dream. Dreams show a special tendency to reduce two opposites to a unity or to represent them as one thing. Dreams even take the liberty, moreover, of representing any element whatever by the opposite wish, so that it is at first impossible to ascertain, in regard to any element capable of an opposite, whether it is to be taken negatively or positively in the dream-thoughts.'<sup>2</sup>

Dream-interpreters of antiquity seem to have made the most extensive use of the supposition that anything in a dream may mean its opposite. This possibility has also been occasionally recognized by modern investigators of dreams, in so far as they have conceded sense and explicability to dreams at all.<sup>3</sup> I do not think I shall meet with any contradiction when I presume that all who have followed me along the path

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Jahrbuch*, Bd. II., 1910; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Dritte Folge. [Translated by M. N. Searl.]

<sup>2</sup> *Die Traumdeutung*, Section VI.

<sup>3</sup> Cf., for example, B. G. H. v. Schubert, *Die Symbolik des Traumes*, 1862, Kap. II. 'Die Sprache des Traumes'.

of scientific dream-interpretation have found confirmation of the assertion quoted above.

To the chance reading of a work by the philologist K. Abel I owe my first understanding of the strange tendency of the dream-work to disregard negation and to express contraries by identical means of representation; this work was published in 1884 as an independent pamphlet, and in the following year was included among the author's *Sprachwissenschaftliche Abhandlungen*. The interest of the subject will justify quotation of the full text of the relevant parts of Abel's treatise (omitting most of the examples). For they give us the astonishing information that this habit of the dream-work to which I refer exactly tallies with a peculiarity in the oldest languages known to us.

After laying stress on the age of the Egyptian language, which must have been developed long before the first hieroglyphic inscriptions, Abel continues (p. 4):

'Now in the Egyptian language, this unique relic of a primitive world, we find a fair number of words with two meanings, one of which says the exact opposite of the other. Imagine, if one can imagine anything so obviously nonsensical, that the word 'strong' in German means 'weak' as well as 'strong'; that the noun 'light' is used in Berlin to denote 'darkness' as well as 'light'; that one Munich citizen calls beer 'beer', while another uses the same word when he speaks of water—the ancient Egyptians habitually exercised this astonishing practice in their language. How can one blame anyone for shaking his head incredulously? . . . .' (examples):

(P. 7): 'In view of this and many similar cases of antithetical meaning (*see* Appendix), there can be no room for doubt that in at least *one* language there were quite a large number of words which at one and the same time denoted a thing and the opposite of this thing. However astounding it may be, we are faced with a fact and have to reckon with it.'

The author now rejects the explanation of this state of affairs through chance similarity of sound, and with equal decision protests against referring it to the low state of Egyptian mental development :

(P. 9) : ' But Egypt was anything but a home of nonsense. It was, on the contrary, one of the earliest seats of the development of human wisdom. It recognized a pure and noble morality and had formulated a great part of the Ten Commandments at a time when those peoples to whom the civilization of to-day belongs were slaughtering human victims to blood-thirsty idols. A people which lighted the torch of rectitude and culture in such dark ages can certainly not have been positively stupid in everyday speech and thought. . . . Those who could make glass, and raise and move huge blocks with machinery, must at least have had sufficient sense not to regard a thing as at one and the same time itself and its opposite. How can we reconcile this with the fact that the Egyptians permitted themselves such a strangely contradictory language ? . . . that they used to entrust two most inimical thoughts to be borne by one and the same sound, and used to combine in a sort of insoluble union what was mutually most intensely opposed ? '

Before we make any attempt at explanation, another still more incomprehensible procedure in the Egyptian tongue must be mentioned. ' Of all the eccentricities of the Egyptian lexicon perhaps the most extraordinary is this : that, in addition to the words which unite antithetical meanings, it possesses other compound-words in which two syllables of contrary meaning are united into a whole, which then has the meaning of only one of its constituent members. Thus in this extraordinary language there are not only words which denote both " strong " and " weak ", or " command " as well as " obey " ; there are also compound-words like " oldyoung ", " farnear ", " bindloose ", " outsideinside " : . . . ; and of these, in spite of their conjunction of the extremes of difference, the first

means only "young", the second only "near", the third only "bind", the fourth only "inside". . . . So that in these compound-words contradictory concepts are quite intentionally combined, not in order to create a third concept, as happens now and then in Chinese, but only in order to express, by means of the combination of the two, the meaning of one of its contradictory members, which alone would have meant the same. . . .'

However, the riddle is more easily solved than appears. Our conceptions arise through comparison. 'Were it always light we should not distinguish between light and dark, and accordingly could not have either the conception of, nor the word for, light. . . .' 'It is clear that everything on this planet is relative and has independent existence only in so far as it is distinguished in its relations to and from other things. . . .' 'Since every conception is thus the twin of its opposite, how could it be thought of first, how could it be communicated to others who tried to think it, except by being measured against its opposite? . . .' (p. 15): 'Since any conception of strength was impossible except in contrast with weakness, the word which denoted "strong" contained a simultaneous reminder of "weak", as of that by means of which it first came into existence. In reality this word indicated neither "strong" nor "weak", but the relation between the two, and also the difference between them which created both in equal proportion'. . . . 'Man has not been able to acquire even his oldest and simplest conceptions otherwise than in contrast with their opposite; he only gradually learnt to separate the two sides of the antithesis and think of the one without conscious comparison with the other.'

Since language serves not only for the expression of one's own thoughts but essentially for communication of them to others, one may put the question how the 'primitive Egyptian' gave his neighbour to understand 'which side of the twin conception he meant on each

occasion'. In writing this was accomplished with the help of the so-called 'determinative' pictures, which, placed against the alphabetical signs, are intended to give the sense of the latter and not to be spoken themselves. 'If the Egyptian word *ken* is to mean "strong" there stands against its alphabetically written sound the picture of an upright, armed man; if the same word has to express "weak" the character is followed by the picture of a crouching, weary man. Similarly, most of the other ambiguous words are accompanied by explanatory pictures.' In speech, thinks Abel, gesture served to indicate the meaning of the spoken word which followed.

According to Abel it is in the 'oldest roots' that the antithetical double meaning is to be observed. Then in the further course of its development these double meanings disappeared from the language and, in Ancient Egyptian at least, all the transitional stages can be followed up to the single meaning of the modern vocabulary. 'The original words with a double meaning separate in the later language into two with single meanings, while each of the two opposite meanings takes to itself a slight "reduction" (modification) in the sound of the original root.' Thus, for example, as early even as in hieroglyphics, *ken* ('strongweak') divides into *ken*, 'strong' and *kan*, 'weak'. 'In other words, those conceptions which could be arrived at only by means of an antithesis become in course of time sufficiently familiar to the human mind to make possible an independent existence for each of their two parts, and therewith creation of a separate phonetic representative for each part.'

The proof of originally contradictory meanings, easily made in Egyptian, extends also, according to Abel, to the Semitic and Indo-European tongues. 'How far this may happen in other language-groups remains to be seen; for although the antithesis of meaning must originally have been there to the thinking members of each race, this need not necessarily have become

recognizable or have been retained everywhere in the meanings of words.'

Abel further impresses on us that the philosopher Bain, apparently without knowledge of the actual phenomenon, has claimed on purely theoretical grounds as a logical necessity this double meaning of words. The passage in question<sup>1</sup> begins with the sentences :

'The essential relativity of all knowledge, thought, or consciousness cannot but show itself in language. If everything that we can know is viewed as a transition from something else, every experience must have two sides ; and either every name must have a double meaning, or else for every meaning there must be two names.'

From the 'Appendix of Examples of Egyptian, Indo-germanic and Arabian Antithetical Meanings' in Abel's treatise, I select a few cases which may impress even those of us who are not linguistic experts : In Latin, *altus* means high and deep, *sacer* holy and accursed ; thus in both there exists the exactly contrary sense without modification of sound. Phonetic alteration to distinguish the opposites is shown in examples like *clamare*, to cry—*clam*, softly ; *siccus*, dry—*succus*, juice. In German *Boden* (garret, ground) still means the attic as well as the ground-floor of the house. To our *bös* (bad) corresponds a *bass* (good) ; in Old Saxon compare *bat* (good) with English *bad* ; in English *to lock* with German *Lücke*, *Loch* (hole) ; German *kleben* (to stick, to cleave to) English *to cleave* (divide) ; German *stumm* (dumb)—*Stimme* (voice) ; and so on. In this way perhaps the much derided derivation *lucus a non lucendo* would have some real meaning.

In his section on the origin of language,<sup>2</sup> Abel calls attention to yet other traces of the old difficulties of thought. Even to-day the Englishman in order to express 'ohne' says 'without' ('*mitohne*' in German) ;

<sup>1</sup> *Logic*, vol. i. p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> 'Ursprung der Sprache', *l.c.* p. 305.



and the East Prussian does the same. 'With' itself, which to-day corresponds with our German 'mit', originally meant 'without' as well as 'with', as can be recognized from 'withdraw', 'withhold'. The same transformation is to be seen in German 'wider' (against) and 'wieder' (together with).

For comparison with the dream-work there is significance in still another very strange characteristic of the Ancient Egyptian tongue. 'In Egyptian, words could—we will at first say, apparently—reverse their sound as well as their sense. Let us suppose the word "good" was Egyptian; then it could mean "bad" as well as "good", and be pronounced *doog* as well as *good*. Of such reversals of sound, which are too numerous to be explained as chance-products, plenty of examples can be produced from the Aryan and Semitic languages. If we confine ourselves at first to Germanic, we find: *Topf* (pot)—pot; boat—tub; wait—*täuwen* (wait); hurry—*Ruhe* (rest); care—reck; *Balken* (club)—*Kloben* (club). If we take into consideration the other Indo-Germanic tongues the number of relevant cases grows accordingly; for example: *capere*—*packen*; *ren*—*Niere* (kidney); leaf—*folium*; dum-a, θυμός—(Sanskrit) *mêdh*, *mûdha*, *Mut*; *rauchen* (to smoke)—(Russian) *Kur-it*; *kreischen* (to shriek)—shriek; and so on.'

The phenomenon of reversal of sound Abel tries to explain as a doubling, reduplication, of the root. Here we should find some difficulty in following the philologist. We remember how fond children are of playing at reversing the sound of words, and how frequently the dream-work makes use for various ends of a reversal of the material to hand for representation. (Here it is no longer letters but visual images of which the order is reversed.) We should therefore rather be inclined to derive the reversal of sound from a factor of deeper origin.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On the phenomenon of reversal of sound (metathesis), which has perhaps a still more intimate relation to the dream-work than contra-

In the agreement between that peculiarity of the dream-work mentioned at the beginning of this paper and this which philologists have discovered to be habitual in the oldest languages, we may see a confirmation of our supposition in regard to the regressive, archaic character of thought-expression in dreams. And we cannot dismiss the conjecture, which forces itself on us psychiatrists, that we should understand the language of dreams better and translate it more easily if we knew more about the development of language.<sup>1</sup>

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diction (antithesis), compare further W. Meyer-Rintel in *Kölnische Zeitung*, March 7, 1909.

<sup>1</sup> We may easily suppose, too, that the original antithetical meaning of words is the prototype of that frequent mechanism by which slips of the tongue make use of contraries in the service of various tendencies.

## XI

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LOVE

A SPECIAL TYPE OF CHOICE OF OBJECT MADE BY MEN <sup>1</sup>

(1910)

**H**ITHERTO we have left it to poets and imaginative writers to depict for us the 'conditions of love' under which men and women make their choice of an object, and the way in which they reconcile the demands expressed in their phantasy with the exigencies of real life. Writers indeed have certain qualities which fit them for such a task; more especially, a sensitiveness of perception in regard to the hidden feelings of others, and the courage to give voice to their own unconscious minds. But from the point of view of knowledge one circumstance lessens the value of what they tell us. Writers are bound to certain conditions; they have to evoke intellectual and aesthetic pleasure as well as certain effects on the emotions. For this reason they cannot reproduce reality unchanged; they have to isolate portions of it, detach them from their connection with disturbing elements, fill up gaps and soften the whole. This is the privilege of what is called 'poetic licence'. They can display no great interest, moreover, in the origin and growth of those conditions of mind which they portray in being. It is inevitable, therefore, that science should lay hands on the stuff which poets have fashioned so as to give pleasure to mankind for thousands of years, although its touch must be clumsier and the result in pleasure less. These considerations may serve to

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Jahrbuch*, Bd. II., 1910; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Joan Riviere.]

vindicate our handling of the loves of men and women as well as other things in a strictly scientific way. For science betokens the most complete renunciation of the pleasure-principle of which our minds are capable.

During psycho-analytic treatment one has plenty of opportunity for collecting impressions about the erotic life of neurotics, and when this happens one also recalls having noticed or heard of similar behaviour on the part of ordinary healthy persons or even in people of exceptional qualities. When by a lucky chance any such impressions are multiplied in the material that comes under observation, distinct types clearly emerge. I shall first describe one type of this kind relating to a choice of object effected by men, because it is characterized by a series of 'conditions of love' the juxtaposition of which is unintelligible or indeed disconcerting, and because it admits of a simple psycho-analytic explanation.

1. The first of these conditions of love must be described as quite specific; wherever one discovers it one may look out for the presence of the other features belonging to the type. It may be termed the 'need for an injured third party'; its effect is that the person in question never chooses as an object of love a woman who is unattached, that is, a girl or an independent woman, but only one in regard to whom another man has some right of possession, whether as husband, betrothed, or near friend. In some cases this condition is so peremptory that a given woman can be ignored or even treated with contempt so long as she belongs to no other man, but instantly becomes the object of feelings of love as soon as she comes into a relationship of the kind described with another man.

2. The second condition is perhaps a less constant one, but it is no less remarkable. The type I am speaking of is only built up by the two conditions in combination; the first condition seems also to occur

very frequently by itself. The second condition is thus constituted: a virtuous and reputable woman never possesses the charm required to exalt her to an object of love; this attraction is exercised only by one who is more or less sexually discredited, whose fidelity and loyalty admit of some doubt. This last element may vary within the limits of a significant series, from the faint breath of scandal attaching to a married woman who is not averse to flirtation up to the openly polygamous way of life of a prostitute, or of a *grande amoureuse*—but the man who belongs to the type in question will never dispense with something of the kind. By a rough characterization this condition could be called that of 'love for a harlot'.

While the first condition provides an opportunity for gratification of the feelings of enmity against the man from whom the loved woman is wrested, the second, that of the woman's infidelity, is connected with feelings of jealousy, which seem to be a necessity to lovers of this type. Not until they have some occasion for jealousy does their passion reach its height and the woman acquire her full value to them, and they never fail to seize upon some incident by which this intensity of feeling may thus be called out. Strange to say, it is not the lawful possessor of the loved one against whom this jealousy is directed, but new acquaintances or strangers in regard to whom she may be brought under suspicion. In pronounced cases the lover shows no desire to possess her for himself alone and seems altogether contented with the triangular situation. One of my patients, who had suffered torments from his lady's escapades, had no objection to her marrying, doing all he could to bring it about; and after, throughout several years, he never showed a trace of jealousy against the husband. Another typical case had, it is true, in his first love-affair been very jealous of the husband and had insisted on the lady ceasing marital relations; but in his numerous later relationships he behaved like the others

and no longer regarded the lawful husband as any disturbance.

So much for the conditions required in the loved object; the following points relate to the lover's behaviour towards the object of his choice.

3. In normal love between the sexes the value of the woman is measured according to her sexual integrity and sinks with any approach to the character of a 'light woman'. It seems to be a striking departure from the normal, therefore, that men of this type should set the *highest value* upon women of this character as their love-objects. Their love-relationships with such women absorb the whole of their mental energy, to the exclusion of all other interests; such women are 'the only ones it is possible to love' and the ideal of the lover's own fidelity is invariably set up again, however often it may be shattered in reality. A high degree of compulsion, which indeed in some measure characterizes every case of passionate love, is clearly discernible in these features of the love-relationships described. But the sincerity and intensity of the attachment in these cases is no indication that any one such relationship makes up the whole erotic life of the person concerned or happens only once in it. On the contrary, passionate attachments of this kind are repeated many times over with all the same peculiarities—each an exact replica of the others—in the lives of those belonging to this type; indeed, in consequence of external conditions, such as changes of residence and environment, the loved objects may be so often replaced by others that it comes in the end to a long chain of such experiences being formed.

4. The trait in this type of lover that is most astonishing to the observer is the desire they express to 'rescue' the beloved. The man is convinced that the loved woman has need of him, that without him she would lose all hold on respectability and rapidly sink to a deplorable level. He saves her from this fate, therefore, by not letting her go. The impulse to

rescue the woman is occasionally justified by her untrustworthy temperament sexually and by the danger to her social position ; it is no less plainly marked, however, where any such real occasion for it is absent. One of the men belonging to the type, who knew how to win his ladies by the subtlety of his methods of seduction and his skill in argument, spent endless pains during the course of each of these love-relationships in composing tracts to induce the loved one to keep in the path of ' virtue '.

When we review the various features of the picture presented here—the condition that the woman should belong to another man, her ' light ' nature, the high value set on this last, the thirst for jealousy, the fidelity which is in spite of all compatible with the long chain of repetitions, and the longing to ' save '—any hope of tracing them all back to a single source will seem very remote. And yet penetrating psycho-analytic study of the lives of those concerned yields this quite easily. The choice of an object complying with these peculiar conditions and this strange way of loving her have the same source as the normal attitude in love ; they are derived from a fixation of the infantile feelings of tenderness for the mother and represent one of the forms in which this fixation expresses itself. In the normal attitude there remain only a few traces unmistakably betraying the maternal prototype behind the chosen object, for instance, the preference young men show for mature women ; the detachment of the libido from the mother is accomplished comparatively swiftly. In our type, on the contrary, the libido has dwelt so long in its attachment to the mother, even after puberty, that the maternal characteristics remain stamped on the love-objects chosen later—so long that they all become easily recognizable mother-surrogates. The comparison with the way in which the skull of a new-born child is shaped comes irresistibly to one's mind ; after a protracted labour it always bears the form of a cast of the maternal pelvis.

It is now obligatory on us to show some probable grounds for the statement that the characteristic features of this type, both as to conditions of love and behaviour in love, actually derive from the group of feelings relating to the mother. This is most easily accomplished in reference to the first condition, that the woman should belong to another man, the 'need for an injured third party'. One sees at once that the fact of the mother belonging to the father would come to be an inseparable part of the mother's nature to the child growing up in the family circle, also that the 'injured third party' is none other than the father himself. The feature of overestimation by which the loved one becomes the unique, the irreplaceable one, fits just as readily into the infantile set of ideas, for no one possesses more than one mother, and the relation to her rests on an experience which is assured beyond all doubt and can never be repeated again.

If the love-objects chosen by our type are above everything mother-surrogates, then the formation of a long series of them, which seems so directly to contradict the condition of fidelity to the woman, becomes comprehensible as well. We learn through other examples which psycho-analysis has brought to light that the pressing desire in the unconscious for some irreplaceable thing often resolves itself into an endless series in actuality—endless for the very reason that the satisfaction longed for is in spite of all never found in any surrogate. The insatiable questioning which children are given to at a certain age is explicable in this way—they have one single question to ask, the words of which they cannot bring their lips to form; and in the same way, too, the garrulity of many neurotically crippled persons may be explained—what makes them talk is the burden of a secret pressing for disclosure, which in spite of all temptation they never reveal.

The second condition of love, that of the 'loose' character of the object chosen, seems on the other



hand to stand in sharp opposition to a derivation from the mother-complex. The grown man's conscious mind likes to regard the mother as a personification of impeccable moral purity, and few suggestions from without are so insulting, or from within so painful, as those which cast doubt on the mother's character in this respect. This very relation, however, of sharpest possible contrast between the 'mother' and the 'harlot' would prompt us to study the developmental history of the two complexes and unconscious relation between them, since we long ago discovered that a thing which in consciousness makes its appearance as two contraries is often in the unconscious a united whole. Investigation then leads us back to the period in the boy's life at which he first obtained more or less detailed knowledge of the sexual relations between adults, somewhere in the years before puberty. The secret of sexual life is revealed to him then in coarse language, undisguisedly derogatory and hostile in intent, and the effect is to destroy the authority of adults, which is irreconcilable with these revelations about their sexual activities. The greatest impression on the child who is being initiated is made by the relation the information bears to his own parents, which is often instantly repudiated in some such words as these: 'It may be true that your father and mother and other people do such things, but it is quite impossible that mine do'.

Along with this piece of 'sexual enlightenment' there seldom fails to go, as a corollary, a further one about the existence of certain women who practise sexual intercourse as a means of livelihood and are universally despised in consequence. To the boy himself this contempt is necessarily quite foreign; as soon as he realizes that he too can be initiated by these unfortunates into that sexual life which he has hitherto regarded as the exclusive prerogative of 'grown-ups', his feeling for them is only a mixture of longing and shuddering. Then, when he cannot any longer main-

tain the doubt that claims exception for his own parents from the ugly sexual behaviour of the rest of the world, he says to himself with cynical logic that the difference between his mother and a whore is after all not so very great, since at bottom they both do the same thing. What he has been told has in fact revived the memory-traces of his early infantile impressions and desires, and thus re-activated certain feelings in his mind. In the light of this new knowledge he begins to desire the mother herself and to hate the father anew for standing in his way ; he comes, as we say, under the sway of the Oedipus complex. He does not forget that the mother has given the privilege of sexual intercourse with her to the father instead of to him, and he regards it as an act of infidelity on her part. If these feelings do not rapidly pass, there is only one way in which they can find an outlet—the way of phantasies, in which the mother is represented in sexual situations of the most manifold kind, and in which also the accompanying excitement leads particularly readily to culmination in an onanistic act. In consequence of the constant simultaneous pressure of the two currents of feeling, desire for the mother and revenge against the father, phantasies of the mother's infidelity are by far the most favoured ; the lover with whom the mother commits the act of unfaithfulness almost invariably bears the features of the boy himself, or, to be more correct, of the idealized image he forms of himself as brought to equality with his father by growing to manhood. What I have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> described as the 'family-romance' comprises the manifold elaborations of this work of phantasy, which is interwoven with various egoistic interests active at this period of life. Now, however, that we have had a glimpse into this phase of mental development we can no longer regard it as contradictory or extraordinary that the condition of a 'loose' character in the woman should derive directly from the mother-complex. The type of erotic life in

<sup>1</sup>In Otto Rank's *Der Mythos von der Geburt des Helden*, p. 64.

men which we are considering bears the marks of this historical development, and is easily to be understood as a fixation on the phantasies formed by the boy during puberty which have after all found their way to realization later in life. There is no difficulty in assuming that the ardent masturbation practised in the years of puberty contributed to the fixation of these phantasies.

The impulse to 'rescue' the beloved appears to stand merely in a loose and superficial relation, founded entirely on conscious grounds, to these phantasies that have gained control of the love-experiences of real life. Her propensity to fickleness and infidelity brings the loved woman into dangerous situations, so it is natural that the lover should do all he can to protect her by watching over her virtue and opposing her evil ways. Study of the screen-memories, phantasies and nocturnal dreams of men and women shows, however, that an exceptionally felicitous 'rationalization' of an unconscious motive is present here, comparable to a very successful secondary elaboration of a dream. The idea of 'rescue' actually has a significance and history of its own and is an independent derivative of the mother-complex, or, more correctly, of the parental complex. When a child hears that he owes his life to his parents, that his mother gave him life, the feelings of tenderness in him mingle with the longing to be big and independent himself, so that he forms the wish to repay the parents for this gift and requite it by one of a like value. It is as though the boy said in his defiance: 'I want nothing from father; I shall repay him all I have cost him'. He then weaves a phantasy of saving his father's life on some dangerous occasion by which he becomes quits with him, and this phantasy is commonly enough displaced on to the Emperor, the King, or any other great man, after which it can enter consciousness and is even made use of by poets. So far as it applies to the father, the attitude of defiance in the 'saving' phantasy far out-

weighs the tender feeling in it, the latter being usually directed towards the mother. The mother gave the child his life and it is not easy to replace this unique gift with anything of equal value. By a slight change of meaning, which is easily effected in the unconscious—comparable to the way in which shades of meaning merge into one another in conscious conceptions—rescuing the mother acquires the significance of giving her a child or making one for her—one like himself, of course. The departure from the original meaning of the idea of 'saving life' is not too great, the change in sense is no arbitrary one. The mother gave him his own life and he gives her back another life, that of a child as like himself as possible. The son shows his gratitude by wishing to have a son by his mother that shall be like himself; in the rescue phantasy, that is, he identifies himself completely with the father. All the instincts, the loving, the grateful, the sensual, the defiant, the self-assertive and independent—all are gratified in the wish to be *the father of himself*. Even the element of danger is not lost in the change of meaning; the experience of birth itself is the danger from which he was saved by the mother's efforts. Birth is in fact the first of all dangers to life, as well as the prototype of all the later ones we fear; and this experience has probably left its mark behind it on that expression of emotion which we call anxiety. Thus it was that Macduff of the Scottish legend, who was not born of his mother but 'ripp'd from her womb', knew no fear.

The ancient dream-interpreter Artemidorus was undoubtedly right in his opinion that dreams have different meanings according to the person of the dreamer. Under the laws governing the expression of unconscious thoughts, the meaning of 'saving life' can vary according to whether the phantasy is framed by a man or a woman. It can mean either: making a child, bringing it to life (in a man); or giving birth to a child (in a woman).

These various significations of ' saving ' in dreams and phantasies are especially clearly recognizable when they occur in some connection with water. When in a dream a man rescues a woman from the water, it means that he makes her a mother, which in view of the considerations discussed above means that he makes her his own mother. When a woman rescues someone else (a child) out of the water, she represents herself as the mother who bore him, like Pharaoh's daughter in the Moses legend.<sup>1</sup>

The phantasy of rescuing the father will also occasionally have a tender meaning. It then expresses the wish to have the father for a son, that is, to have a son like the father. On account of all these connections between the idea of ' saving ' and the parental complex, the desire to rescue the loved woman forms an essential feature of the type under discussion.

I do not consider it necessary to advance any justification for my method of working out my observations ; here, as also in the matter of anal erotism, the aim of it is first of all to single out extreme types in sharp outline. In both these fields there is a far greater number of persons in whom only one or two of the typical features, and even these but indistinctly traced, are recognizable ; it is evident, therefore, that it will not be possible to appreciate them correctly until the whole range of ideas to which these elements belong has been explored.

<sup>1</sup> Rank, *loc. cit.*

XII  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PSYCHOLOGY  
OF LOVE

THE MOST PREVALENT FORM OF DEGRADATION  
IN EROTIC LIFE <sup>1</sup>

(1912)

I

**I**F a practising psycho-analyst asks himself what disorder he is most often called upon to remedy, he is obliged to reply—apart from anxiety in all its many forms—psychical impotence. This strange disorder affects men of a strongly libidinous nature, and is manifested by a refusal on the part of the sexual organs to execute the sexual act, although both before and after the attempt they can show themselves intact and competent to do so, and although a strong mental inclination to carry out the act is present. The man gets his first inkling in the direction of understanding his condition by discovering that he fails in this way only with certain women, whereas it never happens with others. He knows then that the inhibition of his masculine potency is due to some quality in the sexual object, and sometimes he describes having had a sensation of holding back, of having perceived some check within him which interfered successfully with his conscious intention. What this inner opposition is, however, he cannot guess, or what quality in the sexual object makes it active. If the failure has been repeated several times he probably concludes, by the familiar erroneous line of argument, that a recollection of the first occasion acted as a disturbance by

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Jahrbuch*, Bd. IV., 1912; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Joan Riviere.]

causing anxiety and brought about the subsequent failures ; the first occasion itself he refers to some ' accidental ' occurrence.

Psycho-analytic studies of psychical impotence have already been carried out and published by various writers.<sup>1</sup> Every analyst can, from his own experience, confirm the explanations adduced in them. The disorder is in fact due to the inhibiting influence of certain complexes in the mind that are withdrawn from the knowledge of the person in question. As the most universal feature of this pathogenic material an incestuous fixation on mother and sister which has not been surmounted stands out. In addition to this, the influence of accidental impressions of a painful kind connected with infantile sexuality comes into consideration, together with those factors which in general reduce the amount of libido available for the female sexual object.<sup>2</sup>

When cases of severe psychical impotence are subjected to exhaustive study by means of psycho-analysis, the following psycho-sexual processes are found to be operative. Here again—as very probably in all neurotic disorders—the root of the trouble lies in an arrest occurring during the course of development of the libido to that ultimate form which may be called normal. To ensure a fully normal attitude in love, two currents of feeling have to unite—we may describe them as the tender, affectionate feelings and the sensual feelings—and this confluence of the two currents has in these cases not been achieved.

Of these two currents affection is the older. It springs from the very earliest years of childhood, and was formed on the foundation provided by the interests of the self-preservative instinct ; it is directed towards the members of the family and those who have care of

<sup>1</sup> M. Steiner, *Die funktionelle Impotenz des Mannes und ihre Behandlung* ; W. Stekel, in *Nervöse Angstzustände und ihre Behandlung* ; Ferenczi, ' Analytic Interpretation and Treatment of Psychosexual Impotence '.

<sup>2</sup> W. Stekel, *loc. cit.* p. 191 et seq.

the child. From the very beginning elements from the sexual instincts are taken up into it—component-parts of the erotic interest—which are more or less clearly visible in childhood and are invariably discovered in the neurotic by psycho-analysis in later years. This tender feeling represents the earliest childish choice of object. From this we see that the sexual instincts find their first *objects* along the path laid down by the ego-instincts and in accordance with the value set by the latter on their objects, in just the same way that the first sexual *satisfactions* are experienced, *i.e.* in connection with the bodily functions necessary for self-preservation. The 'affection' shown to the child by its parents and attendants which seldom fails to betray its erotic character ('a child is an erotic plaything') does a great deal to increase the erotic contributions to the cathexes that are put forth by the ego-instincts in the child, and to raise them to a level which is bound to leave its mark on future development, especially when certain other circumstances leading to the same result are present.

These fixations of the child's feelings of affection are maintained through childhood, continually absorbing erotic elements, which are thus deflected from their sexual aims. Then, when the age of puberty is reached, there supervenes upon this state of things a powerful current of 'sensual' feeling the aims of which can no longer be disguised. It never fails, apparently, to pursue the earlier paths and to invest the objects of the primary infantile choice with currents of libido that are now far stronger. But in relation to these objects it is confronted by the obstacle of the incest-barrier that has in the meanwhile been erected; consequently it seeks as soon as possible to pass on from these objects unsuited for real satisfaction to others in the world outside, with whom a real sexual life may be carried on. These new objects are still chosen after the pattern (*imago*) of the infantile ones; in time, however, they attract to themselves the tender



feeling that had been anchored to those others. A man shall leave father and mother—according to the Biblical precept—and cleave to his wife; then are tenderness and sensuality united. The greatest intensity of sensual passion will bring with it the highest mental estimation of the object (the normal over-estimation of the sexual object characteristic of men).

Two factors will determine whether this advance in the development of the libido is accomplished successfully or otherwise. First, there is the degree of frustration in reality which is opposed to the new object-choice and reduces its value for the person concerned. For there is no sense in entering upon a choice of object if one is not to be allowed to choose at all or has no prospect of being able to choose one fit for the part. The second factor is the degree of attraction that may be exercised by the infantile objects which should be relinquished, and this is proportionate to the erotic cathexis already attaching to them in childhood. If these two factors are sufficiently powerful, the general mechanism leading to the formation of neurosis will come into operation. The libido turns away from reality, and is absorbed into the creation of phantasy (introversion), strengthens the images of the first sexual objects, and becomes fixated to them. The incest-barrier, however, necessarily has the effect that the libido attaching to these objects should remain in the unconscious. The sensual current of feeling is now attached to unconscious ideas of objects, and discharge of it in onanistic acts contributes to a strengthening of this fixation. It constitutes no change in this state of affairs if the step forward to extraneous objects which miscarried in reality is now made in phantasy, if in the phantasied situations leading up to onanistic gratification the extraneous objects are but replacements of the original ones. The phantasies become capable of entering consciousness by this replacement, but in the direction of applying the

libido externally in the real world no advance has been made.

In this way it may happen that the whole current of sensual feeling in a young man may remain attached in the unconscious to incestuous objects, or, to put it in another way, may be fixated to incestuous phantasies. The result of this is then total impotence, which is perhaps even reinforced by an actual weakening, developing concurrently, of the organs destined to execute the sexual act.

Less severe conditions will suffice to bring about what is usually called psychical impotence. It is not necessary that the whole amount of sensual feeling should be fated to conceal itself behind the tender feelings; it may remain sufficiently strong and unchecked to secure some outlet for itself in reality. The sexual activity of such people shows unmistakable signs, however, that it has not behind it the whole mental energy belonging to the instinct. It is capricious, easily upset, often clumsily carried out, and not very pleasurable. Above all, however, it avoids all association with feelings of tenderness. A restriction has thus been laid upon the object-choice. The sensual feeling that has remained active seeks only objects evoking no reminder of the incestuous persons forbidden to it; the impression made by someone who seems deserving of high estimation leads, not to a sensual excitation, but to feelings of tenderness which remain erotically ineffectual. The erotic life of such people remains dissociated, divided between two channels, the same two that are personified in art as heavenly and earthly (or animal) love. Where such men love they have no desire and where they desire they cannot love. In order to keep their sensuality out of contact with the objects they love, they seek out objects whom they need not love; and, in accordance with the laws of the 'sensitivity of complexes' and the 'return of the repressed', the strange refusal implied in psychical impotence is made whenever

the objects selected in order to avoid incest possess some trait, often quite inconspicuous, reminiscent of the objects that must be avoided.

The principal means of protection used by men against this complaint consists in *lowering* the sexual object in their own estimation, while reserving for the incestuous object and for those who represent it the overestimation normally felt for the sexual object. As soon as the sexual object fulfils the condition of being degraded, sensual feeling can have free play, considerable sexual capacity and a high degree of pleasure can be developed. Another factor also contributes to this result. There is usually little refinement in the ways of obtaining erotic pleasure habitual to people in whom the tender and the sensual currents of feeling are not properly merged; they have remained addicted to perverse sexual aims which they feel it a considerable deprivation not to gratify, yet to such men this seems possible only with a sexual object who in their estimate is degraded and worth little.

The motives behind the phantasies mentioned in the preceding paper,<sup>1</sup> by which boys degrade the mother to the level of a prostitute, now become intelligible. They represent efforts to bridge the gulf between the two currents of erotic feeling, at least in phantasy: by degrading her, to win the mother as an object for sensual desires.

## II

So far we have pursued our inquiry into psychical impotence from a medico-psychological angle which is not justified by the title of this paper. It will prove, however, that this introduction was necessary in order to provide an approach to our actual theme.

We have reduced psychical impotence to a disunion

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 199.

between the tender and sensual currents of erotic feeling, and have explained this inhibition in development itself as an effect of strong fixations in childhood and of frustration in reality later, after the incest-barrier has intervened. There is one principal objection to raise against this doctrine: it does too much, it explains why certain persons suffer from psychical impotence, but it makes it seem puzzling that others can escape the affliction. Since all the factors that appear to be involved, the strong fixation in childhood, the incest-barrier, and the frustration in the years of development after puberty, are demonstrably present in practically all civilized persons, one would be justified in expecting that psychical impotence was universally prevalent in civilized countries and not a disease of particular individuals.

It would not be difficult to escape from this conclusion by pointing to the quantitative element in the causation of disease, that greater or lesser amount of each single factor which determines whether or not recognizable disease results. But although this argument is in my opinion sound, I do not myself intend to employ it in refuting the objection advanced above. I shall, on the contrary, put forward the proposition that psychical impotence is far more widespread than is generally supposed, and that some degree of this condition does in fact characterize the erotic life of civilized peoples.

If one enlarges the meaning of the term psychical impotence, and ceases to limit it to failure to perform the act of coitus, although an intention to derive pleasure from it is present and the genital apparatus is intact, it would comprise, to begin with, all those men who are described as psycho-anaesthetic, *i.e.* who never fail in the act but who perform it without special pleasure—a state of things which is commoner than one might think. Psycho-analytic study of such cases has discovered the same aetiological factors in them as those found in psychical impotence, when employed in the

narrower sense, without at first discovering any explanation of the symptomatic difference between the two. By an analogy which is easy to justify, one is led on from these anaesthetic men to consider the enormous number of frigid women, whose attitude to love can in fact not be described or understood better than by equating it with psychical impotence in men, although the latter is more conspicuous.<sup>1</sup>

If, however, instead of attributing a wide significance to the term psychical impotence, we look about for instances of its peculiar symptomatology in less marked forms, we shall not be able to deny that the behaviour in love of the men of present-day civilization bears in general the character of the psychically impotent type. In only very few people of culture are the two strains of tenderness and sensuality duly fused into one; the man almost always feels his sexual activity hampered by his respect for the woman and only develops full sexual potency when he finds himself in the presence of a lower type of sexual object; and this again is partly conditioned by the circumstance that his sexual aims include those of perverse sexual components, which he does not like to gratify with a woman he respects. Full sexual satisfaction only comes when he can give himself up wholeheartedly to enjoyment, which with his well-brought-up wife, for instance, he does not venture to do. Hence comes his need for a less exalted sexual object, a woman ethically inferior, to whom he need ascribe no aesthetic misgivings, and who does not know the rest of his life and cannot criticize him. It is to such a woman that he prefers to devote his sexual potency, even when all the tenderness in him belongs to one of a higher type. It is possible, too, that the tendency so often observed in men of the highest rank in society to take a woman of a low class as a permanent mistress, or even as a wife,

<sup>1</sup> At the same time I willingly admit that the frigidity of women is a complicated subject which can also be approached from another angle.

is nothing but a consequence of the need for a lower type of sexual object on which, psychologically, the possibility of complete gratification depends.

I do not hesitate to lay the responsibility also for this very common condition in the erotic life of civilized men on the two factors operative in absolute psychical impotence, namely, the very strong incestuous fixation of childhood and the frustration by reality suffered during adolescence. It has an ugly sound and a paradoxical as well, but nevertheless it must be said that whoever is to be really free and happy in love must have overcome his deference for women and come to terms with the idea of incest with mother or sister. Anyone who in the face of this test subjects himself to serious self-examination will indubitably find that at the bottom of his heart he too regards the sexual act as something degrading, which soils and contaminates not only the body. And he will only be able to look for the origin of this attitude, which he will certainly not willingly acknowledge, in that period of his youth in which his sexual passions were already strongly developed but in which gratification of them with an object outside the family was almost as completely prohibited as with an incestuous one.

The women of our civilized world are similarly affected by their up-bringing and further, too, by the reaction upon them of this attitude in men. Naturally the effect upon a woman is just as unfavourable if the man comes to her without his full potency as if, after overestimating her in the early stages of falling in love, he then, having successfully possessed himself of her, sets her at naught. Women show little need to degrade the sexual object; no doubt this has some connection with the circumstance that as a rule they develop little of the sexual overestimation natural to men. The long abstinence from sexuality to which they are forced and the lingering of their sensuality in phantasy have in them, however, another important consequence. It is often not possible for them later on to undo the

connection thus formed in their minds between sensual activities and something forbidden, and they turn out to be psychically impotent, *i.e.* frigid, when at last such activities do become permissible. This is the source of the desire in so many women to keep even legitimate relations secret for a time; and of the appearance of the capacity for normal sensation in others as soon as the condition of prohibition is restored by a secret intrigue—untrue to the husband, they can keep a second order of faith with the lover.

In my opinion the necessary condition of forbiddenness in the erotic life of women holds the same place as the man's need to lower his sexual object. Both are the consequence of the long period of delay between sexual maturity and sexual activity which is demanded by education for social reasons. The aim of both is to overcome the psychical impotence resulting from the lack of union between tenderness and sensuality. That the effect of the same causes differs so greatly in men and in women is perhaps due to another difference in the behaviour of the two sexes. Women belonging to the higher levels of civilization do not usually transgress the prohibition against sexual activities during the period of waiting, and thus they acquire this close association between the forbidden and the sexual. Men usually overstep the prohibition under the condition of lowering the standard of object they require, and so carry this condition on into their subsequent erotic life.

In view of the strenuous efforts being made in the civilized world at the present day to reform sexual life, it is not superfluous to remind the reader that psycho-analytic investigations have no more bias in any direction than has any other scientific research. In tracing back to its concealed sources what is manifest, psycho-analysis has no aim but that of disclosing connections. It can but be satisfied if what it has brought to light is of use in effecting reforms by substituting more advantageous for injurious condi-

tions. It cannot, however, predict whether other, perhaps even greater, sacrifices may not result from other institutions.

### III

The fact that the restrictions imposed by cultural education upon erotic life involve a general lowering of the sexual object may prompt us to turn our eyes from the object to the instincts themselves. The injurious results of the deprivation of sexual enjoyment at the beginning manifest themselves in lack of full satisfaction when sexual desire is later given free rein in marriage. But, on the other hand, unrestrained sexual liberty from the beginning leads to no better result. It is easy to show that the value the mind sets on erotic needs instantly sinks as soon as satisfaction becomes readily obtainable. Some obstacle is necessary to swell the tide of the libido to its height; and at all periods of history, wherever natural barriers in the way of satisfaction have not sufficed, mankind has erected conventional ones in order to be able to enjoy love. This is true both of individuals and of nations. In times during which no obstacles to sexual satisfaction existed, such as, may be, during the decline of the civilizations of antiquity, love became worthless, life became empty, and strong reaction-formations were necessary before the indispensable emotional value of love could be recovered. In this context it may be stated that the ascetic tendency of Christianity had the effect of raising the psychical value of love in a way that heathen antiquity could never achieve; it developed greatest significance in the lives of the ascetic monks, which were almost entirely occupied with struggles against libidinous temptation.

One's first inclination undoubtedly is to see in this difficulty a universal characteristic of our organic instincts. It is certainly true in a general way that the importance of an instinctual desire is mentally increased



by frustration of it. Suppose one made the experiment of exposing a number of utterly different human beings to hunger under the same conditions. As the imperative need for food rose in them all their individual differences would be effaced, and instead the uniform manifestations of one unsatisfied instinct would appear. But is it also true, conversely, that the mental value of an instinct invariably sinks with gratification of it? One thinks, for instance, of the relation of the wine-drinker to wine. Is it not a fact that wine always affords the drinker the same toxic satisfaction—one that in poetry has so often been likened to the erotic and that science as well may regard as comparable? Has one ever heard of a drinker being forced constantly to change his wine because he soon gets tired of always drinking the same? On the contrary, habit binds a man more and more to the particular kind of wine he drinks. Do we ever find a drinker impelled to go to another country where the wine is dearer or where alcohol is prohibited, in order to stimulate his dwindling pleasure in it by these obstacles? Nothing of the sort. If we listen to what our great lovers of alcohol say about their attitude to wine, for instance, B. Böcklin,<sup>1</sup> it sounds like the most perfect harmony, a model of a happy marriage. Why is the relation of the lover to his sexual object so very different?

However strange it may sound, I think the possibility must be considered that something in the nature of the sexual instinct itself is unfavourable to the achievement of absolute gratification. When we think of the long and difficult evolution the instinct goes through, two factors to which this difficulty might be ascribed at once emerge. First, in consequence of the two 'thrusts' of sexual development impelling towards choice of an object, together with the intervention of the incest-barrier between the two, the ultimate object selected is never the original one but only a surrogate for it. Psycho-analysis has shown us, however, that

<sup>1</sup> G. Floerke, *Zehn Jahre mit Böcklin*, 2 Aufl., 1902, p. 16.

when the original object of an instinctual desire becomes lost in consequence of repression, it is often replaced by an endless series of substitute-objects, none of which ever give full satisfaction. This may explain the lack of stability in object-choice, the 'craving for stimulus', which is so often a feature of the love of adults.

Secondly, we know that at its beginning the sexual instinct is divided into a large number of components—or, rather, it develops from them—not all of which can be carried on into its final form; some have to be suppressed or turned to other uses before the final form results. Above all, the coprophilic elements in the instinct have proved incompatible with our aesthetic ideas, probably since the time when man developed an upright posture and so removed his organ of smell from the ground; further, a considerable proportion of the sadistic elements belonging to the erotic instinct have to be abandoned. All such developmental processes, however, relate only to the upper layers of the complicated structure. The fundamental processes which promote erotic excitation remain always the same. Excremental things are all too intimately and inseparably bound up with sexual things; the position of the genital organs—*inter urinas et faeces*—remains the decisive and unchangeable factor. One might say, modifying a well-known saying of the great Napoleon's, 'Anatomy is destiny'. The genitals themselves have not undergone the development of the rest of the human form in the direction of beauty; they have retained their animal cast; and so even to-day love, too, is in essence as animal as it ever was. The erotic instincts are hard to mould; training of them achieves now too much, now too little. What culture tries to make out of them seems attainable only at the cost of a sensible loss of pleasure; the persistence of the impulses that are not enrolled in adult sexual activity makes itself felt in an absence of satisfaction.

So perhaps we must make up our minds to the idea

that altogether it is not possible for the claims of the sexual instinct to be reconciled with the demands of culture, that in consequence of his cultural development renunciation and suffering, as well as the danger of his extinction at some far future time, are not to be eluded by the race of man. This gloomy prognosis rests, it is true, on the single conjecture that the lack of satisfaction accompanying culture is the necessary consequence of certain peculiarities developed by the sexual instinct under the pressure of culture. This very incapacity in the sexual instinct to yield full satisfaction as soon as it submits to the first demands of culture becomes the source, however, of the grandest cultural achievements, which are brought to birth by ever greater sublimation of the components of the sexual instinct. For what motive would induce man to put his sexual energy to other uses if by any disposal of it he could obtain fully satisfying pleasure? He would never let go of this pleasure and would make no further progress. It seems, therefore, that the irreconcilable antagonism between the demands of the two instincts—the sexual and the egoistic—have made man capable of ever greater achievements, though, it is true, under the continual menace of danger, such as that of the neuroses to which at the present time the weaker are succumbing.

The purpose of science is neither to alarm nor to reassure. But I myself freely admit that such far-reaching conclusions as those drawn here should be built up on a broader foundation, and that perhaps developments in other directions will enable mankind to remedy the effects of these, which we have here been considering in isolation.

XIII  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PSYCHOLOGY  
OF LOVE

THE TABOO OF VIRGINITY <sup>1</sup>

(1918)

**T**HERE are few details of the sexual life of primitive races which seem so strange to our feeling as their attitude towards virginity, the condition in a woman of being sexually untouched. The high value set upon her virginity by a man wooing a woman seems to us so deeply planted and self-evident that we become almost perplexed if called upon to give reasons for it. The demand that the girl shall bring with her into marriage with one man no memory of sexual relations with another is after all nothing but a logical consequence of the exclusive right of possession over a woman which is the essence of monogamy—it is but an extension of this monopoly on to the past.

From this it is not difficult to go on and justify what at first appeared to be a prejudice by referring to our ideas concerning the character of the erotic life in women. The maiden whose desire for love has for so long and with such difficulty been held in check, in whom the influences of environment and education have formed resistances, will take the man who gratifies her longing, and thereby overcomes her resistances, into a close and lasting relationship which will never again be available to any other man. This experience brings about a state of 'thralldom' in the woman that assures the man lasting and undisturbed possession of her and makes her able to withstand new impressions and temptations from without.

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge, 1918. [Translated by Joan Riviere.]

The expression 'sexual thralldom'<sup>1</sup> was adopted by von Krafft-Ebing in 1892 to denote the fact that one person may develop an unusually high degree of dependence and helplessness towards another with whom he has a sexual relationship. This 'thralldom' can at times go to great lengths, even to the total loss of independent will and the heaviest sacrifices of personal interests; the author has not failed to observe, however, that a certain degree of this dependence is 'absolutely necessary if the relationship is to have any permanence'. Some measure of sexual thralldom is indeed indispensable in maintaining civilized marriage and restraining the polygamous tendencies that threaten to undermine it, and in our social communities this factor is regularly taken into account.

Krafft-Ebing derives the origin of sexual thralldom from the conjunction of 'an unusual degree of development of love and of weakness of character' in the one partner with unbounded egoism in the other. Analytic experience, however, makes it impossible for us to be content with this simple explanation. On the contrary, one can clearly see that the decisive factor is the strength of the sexual resistances that are surmounted, together with the extent to which this conquest is concentrated in one single act and carried out once and for all. For this reason sexual thralldom is incomparably more frequent and more intense in women than in men, though it is nowadays much commoner in the latter than it was in antiquity. Where we have been able to study sexual thralldom in men it has proved to be the result of a victory over psychical impotence in respect of one particular woman, to whom the man in question thenceforward remained bound. Many a surprising marriage and many a tragic fate—even some of far-reaching consequences—seem to find their explanation in this course of events.

The attitude of primitive races which I shall now

<sup>1</sup> Von Krafft-Ebing, 'Bemerkungen über "geschlechtliche Hörigkeit" und Masochismus'.

discuss would be incorrectly described by saying that they set no value on virginity and by seeking to prove this from the circumstance that the defloration of girls is performed apart from marriage and before the first act of marital intercourse. On the contrary, it appears that the act of defloration has great significance for them also, but it has become the subject of a taboo, of what may be called a religious prohibition. Instead of reserving it for the bridegroom and future husband of the girl, custom demands that he should abstain from the performance of it.<sup>1</sup>

It is not my intention to reproduce in full the evidence in the literature concerning the existence of this prohibition, to follow out its geographical distribution or to enumerate the various forms in which it is expressed. I shall content myself with the statement that the custom of rupturing the hymen in this way apart from subsequent marriage is a very widespread one among primitive races. Thus Crawley says:<sup>2</sup> 'This marriage ceremony consists in perforation of the hymen by some appointed person other than the husband; it is most common in the lowest stages of culture, especially in Australia.'

If, however, defloration is not to be effected through the first act of marital intercourse, it must, in some way or other and by some person or other, be performed beforehand. I shall quote some passages from Crawley's *Mystic Rose* which give some information on this point, but also give ground for some critical remarks.

P. 191. 'Thus in the Dieri and neighbouring tribes (in Australia) it is the universal custom when a girl reaches puberty to rupture the hymen' (*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, xxiv. 169). In the Portland and Glenelg tribes this is done to the bride

<sup>1</sup> Crawley, *The Mystic Rose: a Study of Primitive Marriage*, 1902; Ploss-Bartels, *Das Weib in der Natur- und Völkerkunde*, 1891; various passages in Frazer's *Taboo and the Perils of the Soul*; and Havelock Ellis, *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.* p. 347.

by an old woman ; and sometimes white men are asked for this reason to deflower maidens (Brough Smith, *op. cit.* ii. 319).

P. 307. 'The artificial rupture of the hymen sometimes takes place in infancy, but generally at puberty. . . . It is often combined, as in Australia, with a ceremonial act of intercourse.'

P. 348. (In communications made by Spencer and Gillen about Australian tribes in which the well-known exogamic restrictions in regard to marriage are customary.) 'The hymen is artificially perforated, and then the men who are assisting have access (ceremonial, be it observed) to the girl in a stated order. . . . The act is in two parts, perforation and intercourse.'

P. 349. 'An important preliminary of marriage amongst the Masai (in Equatorial Africa) is the performance of this operation on the girl (J. Thomson, *op. cit.* ii. 258). This defloration is performed by the father of the bride amongst the Sakais (Malay), Battas (Sumatra), and Alfoers of Celebes (Ploss und Bartels, *op. cit.* ii. 490). In the Philippines there were certain men whose profession it was to deflower brides, in case the hymen had not been ruptured in childhood by an old woman who was sometimes employed for this (Featherman, *op. cit.* ii. 474). The defloration of the bride was amongst some Eskimo tribes entrusted to the *angekok*, or priest (*id.* iii. 406).'

The critical remarks to which I alluded refer to two points. First, it is unfortunate that in these accounts a closer distinction is not drawn between mere rupture of the hymen without coitus and coitus for the purpose of rupturing the hymen. Only in one place is it expressly stated that the process was divided into two actions, *i.e.* defloration (by manual or instrumental means) followed by an act of intercourse. The material collected by Ploss-Bartels, which is in other respects most fruitful, is almost useless for our purpose, because in their account the psychological significance of the act of defloration is entirely displaced by interest in its

anatomical result. Secondly, one would like to hear more about the difference between the 'ceremonial' (purely formal, ritual, official) coitus performed on these occasions and ordinary sexual intercourse. The writers of such works as I could obtain were either too much ashamed to mention such things or else they again underestimated the psychological importance of these sexual details. It is to be hoped that the first-hand reports of travellers and missionaries may be fuller and less equivocal, but in view of the inaccessibility at the present time of publications of this nature,<sup>1</sup> which are mostly foreign, I cannot speak with any certainty upon the matter. In any event one is entitled to pass over the doubt arising on the second point, in view of the consideration that a ceremonial mock-coitus would only be a substitute for the complete act and perhaps a commutation of the act itself performed in earlier times.<sup>2</sup>

Various factors, which I shall now briefly discuss, can be adduced in explanation of this taboo of virginity. Defloration of a maiden usually causes a flow of blood; the first attempt at explanation refers therefore to the dread of shedding blood among primitive races who regard blood as the seat of life. This blood-taboo is expressed in many different regulations which have nothing to do with sexuality; it is clearly connected with the prohibition against murder and represents a defensive measure against the primordial blood-thirstiness, primitive man's lust to kill. This conception of it brings the taboo of virginity into relation with the taboo of menstruation that is almost universally observed. The primitive cannot help connecting the mysterious phenomenon of the monthly flow of blood with sadistic ideas. Thus he interprets menstruation, especially at its onset, as the bite of a spirit-animal, or possibly as the token of sexual intercourse with this

<sup>1</sup> [Owing to the European War.—Trans.]

<sup>2</sup> There can be no doubt that in a large number of other forms of wedding-ceremony other persons beside the bridegroom, *i.e.* his friends and companions (the 'best man' of our custom), were accorded full sexual access to the bride.



spirit. Occasionally the reports reveal this spirit as one of an ancestor and then from other knowledge we have gained<sup>1</sup> we understand that it is in virtue of her being the property of this spirit-ancestor that the menstruating girl is taboo.

Other considerations, however, warn us not to exaggerate the influence of a factor such as the horror of blood. After all, the latter does not suffice to suppress customs like the circumcision of boys and the still more cruel extirpation of the clitoris and labia minora in girls, which are practised to some extent by the same races, nor to abolish the prevalence of other ceremonies at which blood is shed. It would not have been surprising, therefore, if this taboo had been relaxed in favour of the husband on the occasion of the first cohabitation.

The second explanation is also unconnected with sexuality; it is even more general, however, and less specific than the first. It suggests that primitive man is a prey to a perpetual 'anxious expectation', to a lurking sense of apprehension, just like those suffering from the anxiety-neurosis classified by us in the psycho-analytical theory of the neuroses. This 'anxious expectation' shows itself most intensely on all occasions that depart from what is usual, in regard to anything that involves something novel, unexpected, unexplained, uncanny. It is also the origin of the ritual, so widely adopted in later religions, that is observed in connection with beginning any new undertaking, with the commencement of each new period of time, or with the first-fruits of human, animal and plant life. The dangers which in his imagination menace the fearful are never expected to be more terrible than at the beginning of a perilous enterprise, and it is consequently only at that point that protective measures can avail him. The first act of intercourse in marriage certainly has sufficient importance to justify its being preceded by precautionary measures of this kind. These two

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Freud, *Totem und Tabu*.

attempts at explanation, by reference to the horror of blood and the dread of what is novel, do not gainsay each other ; on the contrary, they reinforce each other. The first act of intercourse is certainly a critical matter and all the more if it causes blood to flow.

A third explanation—it is that preferred by Crawley—points out that the taboo of virginity belongs to a range of ideas that includes the whole of sexual life. Not only is the first act of coitus with any woman taboo, but sexual intercourse in general ; it might almost be said that woman is altogether taboo. Not merely is woman taboo in special situations connected with her sexual life, such as during menstruation, pregnancy, child-birth and lying-in ; but quite apart from these occasions intercourse with a woman is subject to such heavy and numerous restrictions that we have every reason to question the apparent sexual liberty of savages. It is true that on special occasions the sexuality of primitive man sets all these restraints at naught ; ordinarily, however, it seems to be more strictly circumscribed than it is in higher levels of civilization. As soon as a man sets about any special undertaking, such as an expedition, a hunt, a campaign, he must avoid women, and especially abstain from sexual intercourse with them ; otherwise his strength will be paralysed and the result of the enterprise disaster. Also in the customs relating to daily life there exists an unmistakable tendency to keep the sexes apart. Women live with women and men with men ; family life as we know it is said to be hardly known in many primitive tribes. At times the separation goes so far that one sex may not speak the names of the other sex, and the women develop a special vocabulary. These dividing barriers may be broken through from time to time by sexual need, but in many tribes even intercourse between married couples must take place outside the house in secret.

Wherever primitive man institutes a taboo, there he fears a danger ; and it cannot be disputed that the

general principle underlying all these regulations and avoidances is a dread of woman. Perhaps this fear is founded on the difference of woman from man, on her eternally inexplicable, mysterious and strange nature, which thus seems hostile. Man fears that his strength will be taken from him by woman, dreads becoming infected with her femininity and then proving himself a weakling. The effect of coitus in discharging tensions and inducing flaccidity may be a prototype of what these fears represent ; and realization of the influence gained by the woman over a man as a result of sexual relations, and the favours she extorts by this means, may all conduce to justify the growth of these fears. There is nothing in all this which is extinct, which is not still alive in the heart of man to-day.

Many observers of primitive races existing at the present time have formed the opinion that the erotic instinct in them is comparatively weak and never reaches the intensity usually found in civilized man. Others again contradict this statement ; but in any event the taboos described are evidence of the existence of a force which, by rejecting woman as strange and hostile, sets itself against love.

Crawley, in terms that are hardly distinguishable from those employed by psycho-analysis, sets forth how each individual is separated from the others by a 'taboo of personal isolation' and that it is precisely the little dissimilarities in persons who are otherwise alike that arouse feelings of strangeness and enmity between them. It would be tempting to follow up this idea and trace back to this 'narcissism of small differences' the antagonism which in all human relations we see successfully combating feelings of fellowship and the commandment of love towards all men. Psycho-analysis believes that, in pointing out the castration complex and its influence on the estimation in which women are held, it has discovered one of the chief factors underlying the narcissistic rejection of women by men that is so liberally mingled with disdain.

We perceive, however, that these later considerations go far beyond the subject under discussion. The universal taboo of women throws no light on special regulations for the first sexual act with a virgin. As regards this, we have got no further than the two first explanations relating to the dread of blood and the dread of what is novel, and even these, we must object, do not touch the core of the taboo-ordinance in question. The purpose underlying the latter is quite clearly that of denying to the future husband in particular, or of relieving him from, something inseparably connected with the first sexual act; although, according to the statements with which this paper opened, this very relation would give rise to a specially close attachment in the woman to this one man.

Our present task is not that of examining the origin and ultimate significance of taboo-ordinances in general. In my book *Totem und Tabu* I have done so, and have gone into the question of an innate ambivalence inherent in taboo and argued the genesis of taboo from prehistoric conditions and events leading up to the foundation of the human family. This earlier significance pertaining to taboo is no longer recognizable in the ceremonies of those primitive men we can observe to-day. Any such expectation shows how easily we forget that the conditions of life under which even the most primitive peoples live are a complicated development far removed from the primeval state and just as old as our own, representing a later, if different, stage of development just as our own civilization does.

We find the taboos of primitive races to-day already elaborated into intricate systems, just like those constructed by our neurotics in their phobias; the original motives in them are replaced by newer ones which harmonize with the others. Leaving these genetic problems on one side, however, we will return to the point of view that where primitive man fears a danger there he institutes a taboo. This danger that he fears is, taken altogether, a psychical one, for the primitive

is not constrained to make the distinctions which to us seem so necessary. He does not separate physical danger from psychical, nor real from imaginary danger. In his animistic view of life, logically worked out as it is, every danger proceeds from a hostile impulse on the part of some being with a soul like his own, just as much if the menace comes from some force of nature as from other human beings or animals. On the other hand, however, he has the habit of projecting his own inner feelings of hostility on to the outside world, that is, of ascribing them to whatever objects he dislikes or even is merely unfamiliar with. Now woman is also looked upon as a source of such dangers and the first sexual act with a woman stands out as a specially perilous one.

I think now we shall obtain some light on the question of what this specially intense danger consists in, and why it menaces the future husband in particular, by examining the behaviour of present-day civilized women in the same circumstances. I will anticipate the result of such an examination by saying that a danger of the kind does really exist, so that with his taboo primitive man is protecting himself from a danger—a psychical one, it is true—which his intuition had quite correctly divined.

We regard it as the normal reaction to coitus for a woman to hold the man closely in her arms and press him to her at the climax of gratification, and this seems to us an expression of her gratitude and an assurance of lasting thralldom to him. We know, however, that the first act of intercourse is by no means always followed by this behaviour ; very often the experience merely signifies a disappointment to the woman, who remains cold and unsatisfied ; usually it takes some time and frequent repetition of the sexual act before satisfaction in it for her too sets in. From these cases of merely initial and quite temporary frigidity there proceeds a gradation up to the unsatisfactory extreme case of permanent and unremitting frigidity, which not

the utmost tenderness and eagerness on the part of the husband is able to overcome. In my opinion this frigidity in women is not yet sufficiently understood ; wherever the insufficient potency of the husband is not to blame, it demands explanation, which must be sought, if necessary, in other phenomena of a similar nature.

I shall not here consider the frequent attempts of women to escape the first sexual act, because they can have more than one meaning, and in the main, if not entirely, are to be construed as expressions of the general female tendency to ward off sexuality. I believe, on the other hand, that certain pathological cases throw a light on the riddle of female frigidity ; these are women who after the first act of intercourse—and, indeed, after every renewed act—openly express their enmity against the man by reviling him, threatening to strike him or even actually striking him. In one very pronounced case of this kind, which I was able to subject to thorough analysis, this animosity displayed itself although the woman loved the man deeply, used to demand intercourse and unquestionably obtained great satisfaction in it. I believe this strangely self-contradictory reaction is due to the very feelings that generally attain to expression only in the form of frigidity, *i.e.* that are then capable of preventing the tender reaction though unable to break through to expression themselves. That which in the far more common type of frigid woman unites to form an inhibition in the pathological case fell into its two components ; just as happens in what are called the 'two-movement' symptoms of the obsessional neurosis which were long ago recognized. The danger which is thus aroused through defloration of a woman would consist in drawing down upon oneself this animosity, and the future husband would be the very man with most reason to avoid so doing.

Now analysis enables us easily to discover what those impulses in women are that bring about this

paradoxical behaviour, and which, as I expect, explain frigidity. The first act of coitus stirs up a number of impulses which can find no place in the womanly attitude proper to the situation, some of which, moreover, do not necessarily arise during subsequent intercourse. First of all one thinks of the pain inflicted on a virgin at defloration ; indeed, one might be inclined to regard this factor as the decisive one and give up looking for any others. But so much importance cannot well be attributed to pain ; we must set in its place the narcissistic wound which follows the destruction of an organ, and which even finds rationalized expression in the realization of a diminished sexual value after virginity is lost. The marriage-ceremonies of primitives warn us, however, not to overestimate this. We have seen that often the rite consists of two parts ; after the rupture of the hymen has been carried out (with the hand or some instrument) there follows an official act of intercourse, or a mock-coitus, with certain persons who take the husband's place ; this is evidence that the purpose of the taboo-ordinance is not fully achieved by avoidance of the anatomical defloration and that the husband is to be spared something else beside the woman's reaction to the painful injury.

A further ground for disappointment on experiencing the first sexual act is found to lie in its failure to fulfil expectations, at least so far as civilized women are concerned. Until this moment sexual intercourse has been closely associated with a heavy prohibition ; lawful and permissible intercourse is apprehended consequently as a quite different thing. How fundamental this association can be is illustrated in an almost comic manner by the behaviour of so many young women about to be married, who try to keep the new experience of a love-relationship secret from everyone, including even their parents, where there is no sort of need to do so and no objection is anticipated. Girls openly declare that love loses its value to them if others know about it. This feeling can sometimes outweigh all others and

totally prevent any development of the capacity to love in marriage. The woman then recovers her feelings of tenderness only in an illicit relationship which must be kept secret, and in which she feels certain of being actuated by her own will alone.

Not even this motive goes deep enough, however ; it is bound up, moreover, with civilized conditions and lacks sufficient connection with primitive states of culture. The next factor, therefore, which depends on the evolution of the libido, is all the more important. Analytic researches have discovered how universal and how powerful the first attachments of the libido are. It is a question of sexual wishes active in childhood and never relinquished—in women generally a fixation of the libido upon the father, or upon a brother taking his place—wishes that often enough were directed to things other than coitus, or that included it among others only as a vaguely conceived aim. A husband is, so to speak, never anything but a proxy, never the right man ; the first claim upon the feeling of love in a woman belongs to someone else, in typical cases to her father ; the husband is at best a second. Now whether the husband is rejected as unsatisfying depends upon the strength of this fixation and the tenacity with which it is upheld. The same conditioning factors thus lead to the development of frigidity as to neurosis. The more powerful the mental element in a woman's sexual life, the more her libido-distribution will resist the shock involved in the first sexual act and the less overwhelming will be the effect of a man taking bodily possession of her. Frigidity may establish itself thenceforth as a neurotic inhibition or become the soil from which other neuroses can spring, and even a quite moderate diminution of potency in the man contributes appreciably to this.

Primitive custom appears to accord some recognition to the existence of the early sexual wish by assigning the duty of defloration to an elder, a priest, or a holy man, that is, to a father-substitute (*vide*



*supra*). This seems to lead directly to the much-contested *jus primae noctis* of mediaeval feudal lords. A. J. Storfer<sup>1</sup> has expressed the same view of this matter, and, further, has construed the widespread custom of the 'Tobias nights' (the custom of continence during the first three nights) to be an acknowledgement of the prerogative of the patriarch, as C. G. Jung had done before him.<sup>2</sup> It is only in accord with our expectations, therefore, to find divine figures, too, among the father-surrogates to whom defloration is entrusted. In many districts in India the bride was obliged to sacrifice the hymen as an offering to the wooden lingam; and according to St. Augustine the same custom obtained in Roman marriage-ceremonies (of his time?), though toned down to the extent that the young wife had only to seat herself upon the gigantic stone phallus of Priapus.<sup>3</sup>

There is another motive reaching down into yet deeper strata, on which can be seen to rest the chief blame for the paradoxical reaction towards the man, and the influence of which in my opinion is still at work in female frigidity. The first coitus stirs yet other, older impulses in the woman besides those described—impulses which in their whole tendency oppose the female function and the female part.

From the analyses of many neurotic women we have learnt that women go through an early phase in which they envy their brothers the token of maleness and feel themselves handicapped and ill-treated on account of the lack of it (really, on account of its diminutive form). In our view this 'penis-envy' forms part of the castration complex. If 'masculine' is to include the connotation of 'wishing to be masculine', the term 'masculine protest' fits this attitude; this term was coined by Alfred Adler for the purpose of proclaiming this factor as

<sup>1</sup> *Zur Sonderstellung des Vatermordes.*

<sup>2</sup> 'Die Bedeutung des Vaters für das Schicksal des Einzelnen.'

<sup>3</sup> Ploss und Bartels, *Das Weib*, I., XII., and Dulaure, *Des Divinités génératrices*, p. 142 et seq.

the foundation of all neurosis in general. During this early phase little girls often make no secret of their envy of the favoured brother, and the animosity it gives rise to against him; they even try to urinate standing upright like the brother, thus asserting the equality with him that they claim. In the case mentioned of unbridled aggressiveness after coitus against the man who was otherwise greatly loved, I was able to establish that this phase had existed before object-choice had set in. Only later did the libido of the little girl turn towards the father and then her desire was, instead of the penis—a child.<sup>1</sup>

I should not wonder if in other cases this sequence were found to be reversed, this element of the castration complex becoming operative only after object-choice had been effected. But the masculine phase in woman during which she envies the boy his penis is at all events developmentally the earlier and more closely allied to primal narcissism than to object-love.

Not long ago chance gave me an opportunity of obtaining insight into a dream of a newly married woman, which revealed itself as a reaction to the loss of her virginity. It betrayed unmistakably the wish to castrate the young husband and keep his penis for herself. There was room, to be sure, for the more harmless interpretation that it was prolongation and repetition of the act that she wanted; unfortunately, however, some details of the dream overstepped this possibility, and both the character and subsequent behaviour of the dreamer were evidence for the graver view of it. Now, upon this penis-envy follows that hostile embitterment displayed by women against men, never entirely absent in the relations between the sexes, the clearest indications of which are to be found in the writings and ambitions of 'emancipated' women. Ferenczi, in a palaeo-biological speculation, traces this enmity in women back to the era when differentiation between the sexes

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'On the Transformation of Instincts with Special Reference to Anal Erotism', COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. ii.

took place—I do not know whether the priority for it is his. First of all, he believes, copulation was effected between two single organisms of the same kind, one of which, however, developed until it was stronger and then forced the weaker to submit to sexual union; and the embitterment on account of this subjection is still an active predisposition in women to-day. I see no harm in such speculations, so long as one does not overestimate their value.

After this enumeration of the motives underlying the paradoxical reaction of women to defloration and traceable in frigidity, one may sum up and say that it is the immature sexuality of the woman which discharges itself upon the man who first introduces her to sexual intercourse. With this, the taboo of virginity becomes intelligible enough, and we understand a regulation which enjoins avoidance of these dangers on the very man who is entering upon life in company with this woman. In higher levels of culture the importance attaching to this danger has given way before the promise of the woman's thralldom, and certainly too for other reasons and inducements; the virginity of the woman is looked upon as an asset which the man should not resign. Analysis of the causes of unhappy marriage, however, shows that the motives impelling the woman to revenge herself for her defloration are not entirely extinguished even in the minds of civilized women. The surprisingly large number of women who remain anaesthetic and unhappy throughout their first marriage and then, after this is dissolved, become a loving wife, able to make another man happy, must, I think, strike any observer. The archaic reaction has exhausted itself, so to speak, on the first object.

But elsewhere too in our civilized life the taboo of virginity is not extinct. The soul of the people knows it, and poets have at times made use of this material. In one of Anzengruber's comedies, a simple peasant youth refuses to marry his intended bride, because she

is 'a girl who'll cost her first his life'. He agrees to her marrying another man, and then when she is a widow and no longer dangerous he will have her. The title of the piece, *Das Jungferngift* (The Virgin's Poison), reminds one of the practice of snake-charmers who first make the snake bite a rag so that they can afterwards handle it safely.<sup>1</sup>

The taboo of virginity and some part of its motivation has been portrayed most powerfully of all in the well-known figure of Judith in Hebbel's tragedy, *Judith und Holofernes*. Judith is one of those women whose virginity is protected by a taboo. Her first husband was paralysed on the wedding-night by an inexplicable fear and never again dared to touch her. 'My beauty is like deadly nightshade,' she says, 'enjoyment of it brings madness and death'. When the Assyrian general is besieging the city, she conceives the plan of enticing him with her beauty and destroying him, thus using a patriotic motive to mask a sexual one. After being deflowered by the masterful man who makes a boast of his might and his ruthlessness, she in her fury finds strength to strike off his head and so becomes the saviour of her people. Decapitation is to us a well-known symbolic substitute for castration; so Judith is a woman who castrates the man by whom she was deflowered, just as the newly married woman wished to do in the dream I mentioned. Hebbel deliberately sexualized the patriotic narrative in the Apocrypha, for there Judith boasts after her return to the city of not having been polluted, nor is there any mention in

<sup>1</sup> A masterly short story of Arthur Schnitzler's (*Das Schicksal des Freiherrn von Leisenbogh*) deserves to be mentioned in this connection, in spite of a departure in it from the situation under discussion. The lover of an actress who had had great experience in love is dying as the result of an accident; and he creates a new virginity for her, as it were, by uttering a curse of death upon the next man to possess her after him. For a time the woman who is thus placed under a taboo does not venture to have intercourse with anyone. Then she falls in love with a singer, and resorts to the plan of first granting a night with her to Freiherr von Leisenbogh, who has for years tried in vain to win her. And the curse fulfils itself on him; he dies of a stroke on hearing the reason of his unexpected good fortune.

the Biblical text of her uncanny nuptials. But with the sensitive intuition of a poet Hebbel probably divined the primordial theme that had been lost in the tendentious story, and only gave back to the content its earlier currency.

Sadger has worked out in an excellent analysis the way in which Hebbel's choice of material was determined by his own parental complex, and how it was that in a struggle between the sexes he invariably took the part of woman and knew intuitively the most hidden feelings of her soul.<sup>1</sup> He quotes also the reasons the poet himself gave for his alterations of the material, and rightly finds them factitious and apparently designed superficially to justify the poet's own unconscious to himself, but ultimately to conceal it. I will not touch Sadger's explanation of why the widowed Judith of the Bible had to become a virgin widow. He adduces the motive in the infantile phantasy of denying the sexual intercourse of the parents, so that the mother becomes an untouched virgin. But I will continue: after the poet has duly established his heroine's virginity, his phantasy probes into and dwells upon the resentful reaction let loose after maidenhood has been violated.

In conclusion, then, we may say that the act of defloration has not merely the socially useful result of binding the woman closely to the man; it also liberates an archaic reaction of enmity towards the man, which may assume pathological forms, and often enough expresses itself by inhibitions in the érotic life of the pair, and to which one may ascribe the fact that second marriages so often turn out better than first. The strange taboo of virginity—the fear which among primitive peoples induces the husband to avoid the performance of defloration—finds its full justification in this hostile turn of feeling.

It is interesting now to find that psycho-analysts come across women in whom the two contrary attitudes

<sup>1</sup> Sadger, ' Von der Pathographie zur Psychographie '.

—thralldom and enmity—both come to expression and remain in close association. There are women who appear to be utterly alienated from their husbands and who can yet make only vain attempts to separate from them. As often as they try to turn their love to some other man, the image of the first, who is nevertheless not loved, comes as a barrier between. Analysis then shows that these women still cling to their first husbands, in thralldom, truly, but no longer from affection. They cannot free themselves from him because their revenge upon him is not yet complete ; and, indeed, in extreme cases they have never even let the vengeful impulse reach their conscious minds.

## XIV

### THE OCCURRENCE IN DREAMS OF MATERIAL FROM FAIRY-TALES<sup>1</sup>

(1913)

IT is not surprising to find that psycho-analysis confirms us in our recognition of how great an influence folk fairy-tales have upon the mental life of our children. In some people a recollection of their favourite fairy-tales takes the place of memories of their own childhood: they have made the fairy-tales into screen-memories.

Elements and situations derived from fairy-tales are also frequently to be found in dreams. In interpreting those portions of the dreams the patient will produce the significant fairy-tale as an association. In the present paper I shall give two instances of this very common occurrence. But it will not be possible to do more than hint at the relation of the fairy-tales to the history of the dreamer's childhood and to his neurosis, though this limitation will involve the risk of snapping threads which were of the utmost importance in the analysis.

#### I

Here is a dream of a young married woman (who had had a visit from her husband a few days before): *She was in a room that was entirely brown. A little door led to the top of a steep staircase, and up this staircase there came into the room a curious manikin—small, with white hair, a bald top to his head and a red nose. He danced round the room in front of her, carried on in the*

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. I., 1913; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by James Strachey.]

funniest way, and then went down the staircase again. He was dressed in a grey garment, through which his whole figure was visible. (A correction was made subsequently: He was wearing a long black coat and grey trousers.)

The analysis was as follows. The description of the manikin's personal appearance fitted the dreamer's father-in-law without any alteration being necessary.<sup>1</sup> Immediately afterwards, however, the story of 'Rumpelstiltskin' occurred to her; for he danced around in the same funny way as the man in the dream and in so doing betrayed his name to the queen. But by that he also lost his claim upon the queen's first child, and in his fury he tore himself in two.

On the day before she had the dream she herself had been furious with her husband and had exclaimed: 'I could tear him in two'.

The brown room at first gave rise to difficulties. All that occurred to her was her parents' dining-room, which was panelled in that colour—in brown wood. She then told some stories of beds which were so uncomfortable for two people to sleep in. A few days before, when the subject of conversation had been beds in other countries, she had said something very *mal à propos*—quite innocently, as she maintained—and everyone in the room had roared with laughter.

The dream was now already intelligible. The brown wood room<sup>2</sup> was in the first place a bed, and through the connection with the dining-room it was a double bed.<sup>3</sup> She was therefore in her double bed. Her visitor should have been her young husband, who, after an absence of several months, had visited her to play his part in the double bed. But to begin with it was her husband's father, her father-in-law.

<sup>1</sup> Except for the detail that the manikin had his hair cut short, whereas her father-in-law wore his long.

<sup>2</sup> Wood, as is well known, is frequently a female or maternal symbol: e.g. *materia*, *Madeira*, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, 'marriage-bed'. For table and bed stand for marriage. [Cf. the legal phrase: *a mensa et toro*.—Ed.]



Behind this interpretation we have a glimpse of a deeper and purely sexual content. The room, at this level, was the vagina. (The room was in her—this was reversed in the dream.) The little man who made grimaces and behaved so funnily was the penis. The narrow door and the steep stairs confirmed the view that the situation was a representation of coitus. As a rule we are accustomed to find the penis symbolized by a child ; but we shall find that there was good reason for a father being introduced to represent the penis in this instance.

The solution of the remaining portion of the dream will entirely confirm us in this interpretation. The dreamer herself explained the transparent grey garment as a condom. We may gather that considerations of preventing conception and worries whether this visit of her husband's might not have sown the seed of a second child were among the instigating causes of the dream.

*The black coat.* Coats of that kind suited her husband admirably. She was eager to influence him always to wear them, instead of his usual clothes. Dressed in the black coat, therefore, her husband was as she would like to see him. *The black coat and the grey trousers.* At two different levels, one above the other, this had the same meaning : ' I should like you to be dressed like that. I like you like that.'

Rumpelstiltskin was connected with the contemporary thoughts underlying the dream—the day's residues—by a neat antithetic relation. He comes in the fairy-tale in order to take away the queen's first child. The little man in the dream comes in the shape of a father, because he has presumably brought a second child. But Rumpelstiltskin also gave access to the deeper, infantile stratum of the dream-thoughts. The droll little fellow, whose very name is unknown, whose secret is so eagerly canvassed, who can perform such extraordinary tricks—in the fairy-tale he turns straw into gold—the fury against him, or rather against

his possessor, who is envied for possessing him (the penis-envy felt by girls)—all of these are elements whose relation to the foundations of the patient's neurosis can, as I have said, barely be touched upon in this paper. The short-cut hair of the manikin in the dream was no doubt also connected with the subject of castration.

If we carefully observe from clear instances the way in which the dreamer uses the fairy-tale and the point at which he brings it in, we may perhaps also succeed in picking up some hints which will help in interpreting any remaining obscurities in the fairy-tale itself.

## II

A young man<sup>1</sup> told me the following dream. He had a chronological basis for his early memories in the circumstance that his parents moved from one country estate to another just before the end of his fifth year; the dream, which he said was his earliest one, occurred while he was still upon the first estate.

*'I dreamt that it was night and that I was lying in my bed. (My bed stood with its foot towards the window; in front of the window there was a row of old walnut trees. I know it was winter when I had the dream, and night-time.) Suddenly the window opened of its own accord, and I was terrified to see that some white wolves were sitting on the big walnut tree in front of the window. There were six or seven of them. The wolves were quite white, and looked more like foxes or sheep-dogs, for they had big tails like foxes and they had their ears pricked like dogs when they are attending to something. In great terror, evidently of being eaten up by the wolves, I screamed and woke up. My nurse hurried to my bed, to see what had happened to me. It took quite a long while before*

<sup>1</sup> [A detailed analysis of this patient's case will be found in 'From the History of an Infantile Neurosis', COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. iii.—Trans.]

I was convinced that it had only been a dream ; I had had such a clear and life-like picture of the window opening and the wolves sitting on the tree. At last I grew quieter, felt as though I had escaped from some danger, and went to sleep again.

'The only piece of action in the dream was the opening of the window ; for the wolves sat quite still and without any movement on the branches of the tree, to the right and left of the trunk, and looked at me. It seemed as though they had riveted their whole attention upon me.—I think this was my first anxiety-dream. I was three, four, or at most five years old at the time. From then until my eleventh or twelfth year I was always afraid of seeing something terrible in my dreams.'

He added a drawing of the tree with the wolves, which confirmed his description. The analysis of the dream brought the following material to light.

He had always connected this dream with the recollection that during these years of his childhood he was most tremendously afraid of the picture of a wolf in a book of fairy-tales. His elder sister, who was very much his superior, used to tease him by holding up this particular picture in front of him on some excuse or other, so that he was terrified and began to scream. In this picture the wolf was standing upright, striding out with one foot, with its claws stretched out and its ears pricked. He thought this picture must have been an illustration to the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood'.

Why were the wolves white ? This made him think of the sheep, large flocks of which were kept in the neighbourhood of the estate. His father occasionally took him with him to visit these flocks, and every time this happened he felt very proud and blissful. Later on—according to inquiries that were made it may easily have been shortly before the time of the dream—an epidemic broke out among the sheep. His father sent for a follower of Pasteur's, who inoculated the

animals, but after the inoculation even more of them died than before.

How did the wolves come to be on the tree? This reminded him of a story that he had heard his grandfather tell. He could not remember whether it was before or after the dream, but its subject is a decisive argument in favour of the former view. The story ran as follows. A tailor was sitting at work in his room, when the window opened and a wolf leapt in. The tailor hit after him with his yard—no (he corrected himself), caught him by his tail and pulled it off, so that the wolf ran away in terror. Some time later the tailor went into the forest, and suddenly saw a pack of wolves coming towards him; so he climbed up a tree to escape from them. At first the wolves were in perplexity; but the maimed one, which was among them and wanted to revenge himself upon the tailor, proposed that they should climb one upon another till the last one could reach him. He himself—he was a vigorous old fellow—would be the base of the pyramid. The wolves did as he suggested, but the tailor had recognized the visitor whom he had punished, and suddenly called out as he had before: ‘Catch the grey one by his tail!’ The tailless wolf, terrified by the recollection, ran away, and all the others tumbled down.

In this story the tree appears, upon which the wolves were sitting in the dream. But it also contains an unmistakable allusion to the castration-complex. The *old* wolf was docked of his tail by the tailor. The fox-tails of the wolves in the dream were probably compensations for this taillessness.

Why were there six or seven wolves? There seemed to be no answer to this question, until I raised a doubt whether the picture that had frightened him could be connected with the story of ‘Little Red Riding Hood’. This fairy-tale only offers an opportunity for two illustrations—Little Red Riding Hood’s meeting with the wolf in the wood, and the scene in which the wolf

lies in bed in the grandmother's night-cap. There must therefore be some other fairy-tale behind his recollection of the picture. He soon discovered that it could only be the story of 'The Wolf and the Seven Little Goats'. Here the number seven occurs, and also the number six, for the wolf only ate up six of the little goats, while the seventh hid itself in the clock-case. The white, too, comes into this story, for the wolf had his paw made white at the baker's after the little goats had recognized him on his first visit by his grey paw. Moreover, the two fairy-tales have much in common. In both there is the eating up, the cutting open of the belly, the taking out of the people who have been eaten and their replacement by heavy stones, and finally in both of them the wicked wolf perishes. Besides all this, in the story of the little goats the tree appears. The wolf lay down under a tree after his meal and snored.

I shall have, for a special reason, to deal with this dream again elsewhere, and interpret it and consider its significance in greater detail. For it is the earliest anxiety-dream that the dreamer remembered from his childhood, and its content, taken in connection with other dreams that followed it soon afterwards and with certain events in his earliest years, is of quite peculiar interest. We must confine ourselves here to the relation of the dream to the two fairy-tales which have so much in common with each other, 'Little Red Riding Hood' and 'The Wolf and the Seven Little Goats'. The effect produced by these stories was shown in the little dreamer by a regular animal-phobia. This phobia was only distinguished from other similar cases by the fact that the anxiety-animal was not an object easily accessible to observation (such as a horse or a dog), but was known to him only from stories and picture-books.

I shall discuss on another occasion the explanation of these animal-phobias and the significance attaching to them. I will only remark in anticipation that this

explanation is in complete harmony with the principal characteristic shown by the neurosis from which the present dreamer suffered in the later part of his life. His fear of his father was the strongest motive for his falling ill, and his ambivalent attitude towards every father-surrogate was the dominating feature of his life as well as of his behaviour during the treatment.

If in my patient's case the wolf was merely a first father-surrogate, the question arises whether the hidden content in the fairy-tales of the wolf that ate up the little goats and of 'Little Red Riding Hood' may not simply be infantile fear of the father.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, my patient's father had the characteristic, shown by so many people in relation to their children, of indulging in '*affectionate abuse*'; and it is possible that during the patient's earlier years his father (though he grew severe later on) may more than once, as he caressed the little boy or played with him, have threatened in fun to 'gobble him up'. One of my patients told me that her two children could never get to be fond of their grandfather, because in the course of his affectionate romping with them he used to frighten them by saying he would cut open their tummies.

<sup>1</sup> Compare the similarity between these two fairy-tales and the myth of Cronos, which was pointed out by Rank in his paper, '*Völkerpsychologische Parallelen zu den infantilen Sexualtheorien*' (1912).

## XV

### THE THEME OF THE THREE CASKETS <sup>1</sup>

(1913)

#### I

**T**WO scenes from Shakespeare, one from a comedy and the other from a tragedy, have lately given me occasion for setting and solving a little problem.

The former scene is the suitors' choice between the three caskets in *The Merchant of Venice*. The fair and wise Portia, at her father's bidding, is bound to take for her husband only that one among her suitors who chooses the right casket from among the three before him. The three caskets are of gold, silver and lead: the right one is that containing her portrait. Two suitors have already withdrawn, unsuccessful: they have chosen gold and silver. Bassanio, the third, elects for the lead; he thereby wins the bride, whose affection was already his before the trial of fortune. Each of the suitors had given reasons for his choice in a speech in which he praised the metal he preferred, while depreciating the other two. The most difficult task thus fell to the share of the third fortunate suitor; what he finds to say in glorification of lead as against gold and silver is but little and has a forced ring about it. If in psycho-analytic practice we were confronted with such a speech, we should suspect concealed motives behind the unsatisfying argument.

Shakespeare did not invent this oracle of choosing a casket; he took it from a tale in the *Gesta Romanorum*, in which a girl undertakes the same choice to

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Imago*, Bd. II., 1913; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by C. J. M. Hubback.]

win the son of the Emperor.<sup>1</sup> Here too the third metal, the lead, is the bringer of fortune. It is not hard to guess that we have here an ancient theme, which requires to be interpreted and traced back to its origin. A preliminary conjecture about the meaning of this choice between gold, silver and lead is soon confirmed by a statement from E. Stucken,<sup>2</sup> who has made a study of the same material in far-reaching connections. He says, 'The identity of the three suitors of Portia is clear from their choice: the Prince of Morocco chooses the gold casket: he is the sun; the Prince of Arragon chooses the silver casket: he is the moon; Bassanio chooses the leaden casket: he is the star youth'. In support of this explanation he cites an episode from the Esthonian folk-epic 'Kalewipoeg', in which the three suitors appear undisguisedly as the sun, moon and star youths ('the eldest son of the Pole star') and the bride again falls to the lot of the third.

Thus our little problem leads to an astral myth. The only pity is that with this explanation we have not got to the end of the matter. The question goes further, for we do not share the belief of many investigators that myths were read off direct from the heavens; we are more inclined to judge with Otto Rank<sup>3</sup> that they were projected on to the heavens after having arisen quite otherwise under purely human conditions. Now our interest is in this human content.

Let us glance once more at our material. In the Esthonian epic, as in the tale from the *Gesta Romanorum*, the subject is the choice of a maiden among three suitors; in the scene from *The Merchant of Venice* apparently the subject is the same, but at the same time in this last something in the nature of an inversion of the idea makes its appearance: a man chooses between three—caskets. If we had to do with a dream, it would at once occur to us that caskets are

<sup>1</sup> G. Brandes, *William Shakespeare*.

<sup>2</sup> *Astralmythen*, p. 655.

<sup>3</sup> O. Rank, *Der Mythos von der Geburt des Helden*, p. 8 et seq.



also women, symbols of the essential thing in woman, and therefore of a woman herself, like boxes, large or small, baskets, and so on. If we let ourselves assume the same symbolic substitution in the story, then the casket scene in *The Merchant of Venice* really becomes the inversion we suspected. With one wave of the hand, such as usually only happens in fairy-tales, we have stripped the astral garment from our theme ; and now we see that the subject is an idea from human life, a man's choice between three women.

This same content, however, is to be found in another scene of Shakespeare's, in one of his most powerfully moving dramas ; this time not the choice of a bride, yet linked by many mysterious resemblances to the casket-choice in *The Merchant of Venice*. The old King Lear resolves to divide his kingdom while he yet lives among his three daughters, according to the love they each in turn express for him. The two elder ones, Goneril and Regan, exhaust themselves in asseverations and glorifications of their love for him, the third, Cordelia, refuses to join in these. He should have recognized the unassuming, speechless love of the third and rewarded it, but he misinterprets it, banishes Cordelia, and divides the kingdom between the other two, to his own and the general ruin. Is not this once more a scene of choosing between three women, of whom the youngest is the best, the supreme one ?

There immediately occur to us other scenes from myth, folk-tale and literature, with the same situation as their content : the shepherd Paris has to choose between three goddesses, of whom he declares the third to be the fairest. Cinderella is another such youngest, and is preferred by the prince to the two elder sisters ; Psyche in the tale of Apuleius is the youngest and fairest of three sisters ; on the one hand, she becomes human and is revered as Aphrodite, on the other, she is treated by the goddess as Cinderella was treated by her stepmother and has to sort a heap of mixed seeds, which she accomplishes with the help of little creatures

(doves for Cinderella, ants for Psyche).<sup>1</sup> Anyone who cared to look more closely into the material could undoubtedly discover other versions of the same idea in which the same essential features had been retained.

Let us content ourselves with Cordelia, Aphrodite, Cinderella and Psyche! The three women, of whom the third surpasses the other two, must surely be regarded as in some way alike if they are represented as sisters. It must not lead us astray if in *Lear* the three are the daughters of him who makes the choice; this means probably nothing more than that Lear has to be represented as an old man. An old man cannot very well choose between three women in any other way: thus they become his daughters.

But who are these three sisters and why must the choice fall on the third? If we could answer this question, we should be in possession of the solution we are seeking. We have once already availed ourselves of an application of psycho-analytic technique, in explaining the three caskets as symbolic of three women. If we have the courage to continue the process, we shall be setting foot on a path which leads us first to something unexpected and incomprehensible, but perhaps by a devious route to a goal.

It may strike us that this surpassing third one has in several instances certain peculiar qualities besides her beauty. They are qualities that seem to be tending towards some kind of unity; we certainly may not expect to find them equally well marked in every example. Cordelia masks her true self, becomes as unassuming as lead, she remains dumb, she 'loves and is silent'. Cinderella hides herself, so that she is not to be found. We may perhaps equate concealment and dumbness. These would of course be only two instances out of the five we have picked out. But there is an intimation of the same thing to be found, curiously enough, in two other cases. We have decided

<sup>1</sup> I have to thank Dr. Otto Rank for calling my attention to these similarities.

to compare Cordelia, with her obstinate refusal, to lead. In Bassanio's short speech during the choice of the caskets these are his words of the lead—properly speaking, without any connection :

Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence  
( ' plainness ' , according to another reading )

Thus : Thy plainness moves me more than the blatant nature of the other two. Gold and silver are ' loud ' ; lead is dumb, in effect like Cordelia, who ' loves and is silent ' .<sup>1</sup>

In the ancient Greek tales of the Judgement of Paris, nothing is said of such a withholding of herself on the part of Aphrodite. Each of the three goddesses speaks to the youth and tries to win him by promises. But, curiously enough, in a quite modern handling of the same scene this characteristic of the third that has struck us makes its appearance again. In the libretto of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, Paris, after telling of the solicitations of the other two goddesses, relates how Aphrodite bore herself in this contest for the prize of beauty :

La troisième, ah ! la troisième !  
La troisième ne dit rien,  
Elle eut le prix tout de même. . . .

If we decide to regard the peculiarities of our ' third one ' as concentrated in the ' dumbness ' , then psycho-analysis has to say that dumbness is in dreams a familiar representation of death.<sup>2</sup>

More than ten years ago a highly intelligent man told me a dream which he wanted to look upon as proof of the telepathic nature of dreams. He saw an absent friend from whom he had received no news for a very long time, and reproached him warmly for his

<sup>1</sup> In Schlegel's translation this allusion is quite lost ; indeed, changed into the opposite meaning : *Dein schlichtes Wesen spricht bereit mich an.* (Thy plainness speaks to me with eloquence.)

<sup>2</sup> In Stekel's *Sprache des Traumes*, dumbness is also mentioned among the ' death ' symbols (p. 351).

silence. The friend made no reply. It then proved that he had met his death by suicide about the time of the dream. Let us leave the problem of telepathy on one side: there seems to be no doubt that here the dumbness in the dream represents death. Concealment, disappearance from view, too, which the prince in the fairy-tale of Cinderella has to experience three times, is in dreams an unmistakable symbol of death; and no less so is a striking pallor, of which the paleness of the lead in one reading of Shakespeare's text reminds us.<sup>1</sup> The difficulty of translating these significations from the language of dreams into the mode of expression in the myth now occupying our attention is much lightened if we can show with any probability that dumbness must be interpreted as a sign of death in other productions that are not dreams.

I will single out at this point the ninth of Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, the one with the title 'The Twelve Brothers'. A king and a queen have twelve children, all boys. Thereupon the king says, 'If the thirteenth child is a girl, the boys must die'. In expectation of this birth he has twelve coffins made. The twelve sons flee with their mother's help into a secret wood, and swear death to every maiden they shall meet.

A girl-child is born, grows up, and learns one day from her mother that she had twelve brothers. She decides to seek them out, and finds the youngest in the wood; he recognizes her but wants to hide her on account of the brothers' oath. The sister says: 'I will gladly die, if thereby I can save my twelve brothers'. The brothers welcome her gladly, however, and she stays with them and looks after their house for them.

In a little garden near the house grow twelve lilies: the maiden plucks these to give one to each brother. At that moment the brothers are changed into ravens, and disappear, together with the house and garden. Ravens are spirit-birds, the killing of the twelve brothers by their sister is thus again represented by the plucking

<sup>1</sup> Stekel, *loc. cit.*

of the flowers, as at the beginning of the story by the coffins and the disappearance of the brothers. The maiden, who is once more ready to save her brothers from death, is now told that as a condition she is to be dumb for seven years, and not speak one single word. She submits to this test, by which she herself goes into danger, *i.e.* she herself dies for her brothers, as she promised before meeting with them. By remaining dumb she succeeds at last in delivering the ravens.

In the story of 'The Six Swans' the brothers who are changed into birds are released in exactly the same way, *i.e.* restored to life by the dumbness of the sister. The maiden has taken the firm resolve to release her brothers, 'an if it cost her life'; as the king's wife she again risks her own life because she will not relinquish her dumbness to defend herself against evil accusations.

Further proofs could undoubtedly be gathered from fairy-tales that dumbness is to be understood as representing death. If we follow these indications, then the third one of the sisters between whom the choice lies would be a dead woman. She may, however, be something else, namely, Death itself, the Goddess of Death. By virtue of a displacement that is not infrequent, the qualities that a deity imparts to men are ascribed to the deity himself. Such a displacement will astonish us least of all in relation to the Goddess of Death, since in modern thought and artistic representation, which would thus be anticipated in these stories, death itself is nothing but a dead man.

But if the third of the sisters is the Goddess of Death, we know the sisters. They are the Fates, the Moerae, the Parcae or the Norns, the third of whom is called Atropos, the inexorable.

## II

Let us leave on one side for a while the task of inserting this new-found meaning into our myth, and

let us hear what the mythologists have to say about the origin of and the part played by the Fates.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest Greek mythology only knows one *Moîpa*, personifying the inevitable doom (in Homer). The further development of this one Moera into a group of three sisters—goddesses—, less often two, probably came about in connection with other divine figures to which the Moerae are clearly related: the Graces and the Horae, the Hours.

The Hours are originally goddesses of the waters of the sky, dispensing rain and dew, and of the clouds from which rain falls; and since these clouds are conceived of as a kind of web it comes about that these goddesses are looked on as spinners, a character that then became attached to the Moerae. In the sun-favoured Mediterranean lands it is the rain on which the fertility of the soil depends, and thus the Hours become the goddesses of vegetation. The beauty of flowers and the abundance of fruit is their doing, and man endows them plentifully with charming and graceful traits. They become the divine representatives of the Seasons, and possibly in this connection acquire their triple number, if the sacred nature of the number three is not sufficient explanation of this. For these ancient peoples at first distinguished only three seasons: winter, spring, summer. Autumn was only added in late Graeco-Roman times, after which four Hours were often represented in art.

The relation to time remained attached to the Hours: later they presided over the time of day, as at first over the periods of the year: at last their name came to be merely a designation for the period of sixty minutes (hour, *heure*, *ora*). The Norns of German mythology are akin to the Hours and the Moerae and exhibit this time-signification in their names. The nature of these deities could not fail, however, to be apprehended more profoundly in time, so that the

<sup>1</sup> What follows is taken from Roscher's *Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, under the relevant headings.

essential thing about them was shifted until it came to consist of the abiding law at work in the passage of time : the Hours thus became guardians of the law of Nature, and of the divine order of things whereby the constant recurrence of the same things in unalterable succession in the natural world takes place.

This knowledge of nature reacted on the conception of human life. The nature-myth changed into a myth of human life : the weather-goddesses became goddesses of destiny. But this aspect of the Hours only found expression in the Moerae, who watch over the needful ordering of human life as inexorably as do the Hours over the regular order of nature. The implacable severity of this law, the affinity of it with death and ruin, avoided in the winsome figures of the Hours, was now stamped upon the Moerae, as though mankind had only perceived the full solemnity of natural law when he had to submit his own personality to its working.

The names of the three spinners have been interpreted significantly by mythologists. Lachesis, the name of the second, seems to mean 'the accidental within the decrees of destiny'<sup>1</sup>—we might say 'that which is experienced'—while Atropos means 'the inevitable'—Death—, and then for Clotho there remains 'the fateful tendencies each one of us brings into the world'.

And now it is time to return to the idea contained in the choice between the three sisters, which we are endeavouring to interpret. It is with deep dissatisfaction that we find how unintelligible insertion of the new interpretation makes the situations we are considering and what contradictions of the apparent content then result. The third of the sisters should be the Goddess of Death, nay, Death itself ; in the Judgement of Paris she is the Goddess of Love, in the tale of Apuleius one comparable to the goddess for her beauty, in *The Merchant of Venice* the fairest and wisest of women, in *Lear* the one faithful daughter. Can a contradiction be more complete ? Yet perhaps close

<sup>1</sup> Roscher, after Preller-Robert's *Griechische Mythologie*.

at hand there lies even this, improbable as it is—the acme of contradiction. It is certainly forthcoming if every time in this theme of ours there occurs a free choice between the women, and if the choice is thereupon to fall on death—that which no man chooses, to which by destiny alone man falls a victim.

However, contradictions of a certain kind, replacements by the exact opposite, offer no serious difficulty to analytic interpretation. We shall not this time take our stand on the fact that contraries are constantly represented by one and the same element in the modes of expression used by the unconscious, such as dreams. But we shall remember that there are forces in mental life tending to bring about replacement by the opposite, such as the so-called reaction-formation, and it is just in the discovery of such hidden forces that we look for the reward of our labours. The Moerae were created as a result of a recognition which warns man that he too is a part of nature and therefore subject to the immutable law of death. Against this subjection something in man was bound to struggle, for it is only with extreme unwillingness that he gives up his claim to an exceptional position. We know that man makes use of his imaginative faculty (phantasy) to satisfy those wishes that reality does not satisfy. So his imagination rebelled against the recognition of the truth embodied in the myth of the Moerae, and constructed instead the myth derived from it, in which the Goddess of Death was replaced by the Goddess of Love and by that which most resembles her in human shape. The third of the sisters is no longer Death, she is the fairest, best, most desirable and the most lovable among women. Nor was this substitution in any way difficult: it was prepared for by an ancient ambivalence, it fulfilled itself along the lines of an ancient context which could at that time not long have been forgotten. The Goddess of Love herself, who now took the place of the Goddess of Death, had once been identical with her. Even the Greek Aphrodite had not wholly relinquished



her connection with the underworld, although she had long surrendered her rôle of goddess of that region to other divine shapes, to Persephone, or to the tri-form Artemis-Hecate. The great Mother-goddesses of the oriental peoples, however, all seem to have been both founts of being and destroyers ; goddesses of life and of fertility, and death-goddesses. Thus the replacement by the wish-opposite of which we have spoken in our theme is built upon an ancient identity.

The same consideration answers the question how the episode of a choice came into the myth of the three sisters. A wished-for reversal is again found here. Choice stands in the place of necessity, of destiny. Thus man overcomes death, which in thought he has acknowledged. No greater triumph of wish-fulfilment is conceivable. Just where in reality he obeys compulsion, he exercises choice ; and that which he chooses is not a thing of horror, but the fairest and most desirable thing in life.

On a closer inspection we observe, to be sure, that the original myth is not so much disguised that traces of it do not show through and betray its presence. The free choice between the three sisters is, properly speaking, no free choice, for it must necessarily fall on the third if every kind of evil is not to come about, as in *Lear*. The fairest and the best, she who has stepped into the place of the Death-goddess, has kept certain characteristics that border on the uncanny, so that from them we might guess at what lay beneath.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Psyche of Apuleius' story has kept many traits that remind us of her kinship with death. Her wedding is celebrated like a funeral, she has to descend into the underworld, and afterwards sinks into a death-like sleep (Otto Rank).

On the significance of Psyche as goddess of the spring and as 'Bride of Death', cf. A. Zinzow, *Psyche und Eros*.

In another of Grimm's Tales ('The Goose-girl at the Fountain') there is, as in 'Cinderella', an alternation between the ugly and the beautiful aspect of the third sister, in which may be seen an indication of her double nature—before and after the substitution. This third one is repudiated by her father, after a test which nearly corresponds with that in *King Lear*. Like the other sisters, she has to say how dear she holds their father, and finds no expression for her love except the comparison of it with salt. (Kindly communicated by Dr. Hanns Sachs.)

So far we have followed out the myth and its transformation, and trust that we have rightly indicated the hidden causes of this transformation. Now we may well be interested in the way in which the poet has made use of the idea. We gain the impression that in his mind a reduction to the original idea of the myth is going on, so that we once more perceive the original meaning containing all the power to move us that had been weakened by the distortion of the myth. It is by means of this undoing of the distortion and partial return to the original that the poet achieves his profound effect upon us.

To avoid misunderstandings, I wish to say that I have no intention of denying that the drama of *King Lear* inculcates the two prudent maxims: that one should not forgo one's possessions and privileges in one's lifetime and that one must guard against accepting flattery as genuine. These and similar warnings do undoubtedly arise from the play; but it seems to me quite impossible to explain the overpowering effect of *Lear* from the impression that such a train of thought would produce, or to assume that the poet's own creative instincts would not carry him further than the impulse to illustrate these maxims. Moreover, even though we are told that the poet's intention was to present the tragedy of ingratitude, the sting of which he probably felt in his own heart, and that the effect of the play depends on the purely formal element, its artistic trappings, it seems to me that this information cannot compete with the comprehension that dawns upon us after our study of the theme of a choice between the three sisters.

Lear is an old man. We said before that this is why the three sisters appear as his daughters. The paternal relationship, out of which so many fruitful dramatic situations might arise, is not turned to further account in the drama. But Lear is not only an old man; he is a dying man. The extraordinary project of dividing the inheritance thus loses its strangeness.

The doomed man is nevertheless not willing to renounce the love of women ; he insists on hearing how much he is loved. Let us now recall that most moving last scene, one of the culminating points reached in modern tragic drama : ' Enter Lear with Cordelia dead in his arms '. Cordelia is Death. Reverse the situation and it becomes intelligible and familiar to us—the Death-goddess bearing away the dead hero from the place of battle, like the Valkyr in German mythology. Eternal wisdom, in the garb of the primitive myth, bids the old man renounce love, choose death and make friends with the necessity of dying.

The poet brings us very near to the ancient idea by making the man who accomplishes the choice between the three sisters aged and dying. The regressive treatment he has thus undertaken with the myth, which was disguised by the reversal of the wish, allows its original meaning so far to appear that perhaps a superficial allegorical interpretation of the three female figures in the theme becomes possible as well. One might say that the three inevitable relations man has with woman are here represented : that with the mother who bears him, with the companion of his bed and board, and with the destroyer. Or it is the three forms taken on by the figure of the mother as life proceeds : the mother herself, the beloved who is chosen after her pattern, and finally the Mother Earth who receives him again. But it is in vain that the old man yearns after the love of woman as once he had it from his mother ; the third of the Fates alone, the silent goddess of Death, will take him into her arms.

## XVI

### THE MOSES OF MICHELANGELO <sup>1</sup>

(1914)

I MAY say at once that I am no connoisseur in art, but simply a layman. I have often observed that the subject-matter of works of art has a stronger attraction for me than their formal and technical qualities, though to the artist their value lies first and foremost in these latter. I am unable rightly to appreciate many of the methods used and the effects obtained in art. I state this so as to secure the reader's indulgence for the attempt I propose to make here.

Nevertheless, works of art do exercise a powerful effect on me, especially those of literature and sculpture, less often of painting. This has occasioned me, when I have been contemplating such things, to spend a long time before them trying to apprehend them in my own way, *i.e.* to explain to myself what their effect is due to. Wherever I cannot do this, as for instance with music, I am almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure. Some rationalistic, or perhaps analytic, turn of mind in me rebels against being moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what it is that affects me.

This has brought me to recognize the apparently paradoxical fact that precisely some of the grandest and most overwhelming creations of art are still un-

<sup>1</sup> Originally published anonymously in *Imago*, Bd. III.; 1914, prefaced by the following editorial note: *Although this paper does not, strictly speaking, conform to the conditions under which contributions are accepted for publication in this Journal, the editors have decided to print it, since the author, who is personally known to them, belongs to psycho-analytical circles, and since his mode of thought has in point of fact a certain resemblance to the methodology of psycho-analysis.* [Translated by Alix Strachey.]

solved riddles to our understanding. We admire them, we feel overawed by them, but we are unable to say what they represent to us. I am not sufficiently well-read to know whether this fact has already been remarked upon; possibly, indeed, some writer on aesthetics has discovered that this state of intellectual bewilderment is a necessary condition when a work of art is to achieve its greatest effects. It would be only with the greatest reluctance that I could bring myself to believe in any such necessity.

I do not mean that connoisseurs and lovers of art find no words with which to praise such objects to us. They are eloquent enough, it seems to me. But usually in the presence of a great work of art each says something different from the other; and none of them says anything that solves the problem for the unpretending admirer. In my opinion, it can only be the artist's intention, in so far as he has succeeded in expressing it in his work and in conveying it to us, that grips us so powerfully. I realize that it cannot be merely a matter of intellectual comprehension; what he aims at is to awaken in us the same emotional attitude, the same mental constellation as that which in him produced the impetus to create. But why should the artist's intention not be capable of being communicated and comprehended in words like any other fact of mental life? Perhaps where great works of art are concerned this would never be possible without the application of psycho-analysis. The product itself after all must admit of such an analysis, if it really is an effective expression of the intentions and emotional activities of the artist. To discover his intention, though, I must first find out the meaning and content of what is represented in his work; I must, in other words, be able to *interpret* it. It is possible, therefore, that a work of art of this kind needs interpretation, and that until I have accomplished that interpretation I cannot come to know why I have been so powerfully affected. I even venture to hope that

the effect of the work will undergo no diminution after we have succeeded in thus analysing it.

Let us consider Shakespeare's masterpiece, *Hamlet*, a play now over three centuries old.<sup>1</sup> I have followed the literature of psycho-analysis closely, and I accept its claim that it was not until the material of the tragedy had been traced back analytically to the Oedipus theme that the mystery of its effect was at last explained. But before this was done, what a mass of differing and contradictory interpretative attempts, what a variety of opinions about the hero's character and the dramatist's design! Does Shakespeare claim our sympathies on behalf of a sick man, or of an ineffectual weakling, or of an idealist who is only too good for the real world? And how many of these interpretations leave us cold—so cold that they do nothing to explain the effect of the play and rather incline us to the view that its magical appeal rests solely upon the impressive thoughts in it and the splendour of its language. And yet, do not those very endeavours speak for the fact that we feel the need of discovering in it some source of power beyond these alone?

Another of these inscrutable and wonderful works of art is the marble statue of Moses, by Michelangelo, in the Church of S. Pietro in Vincoli in Rome. As we know, it was only a fragment of the gigantic tomb which the artist was to have erected for the powerful Pope Julius II.<sup>2</sup> It always delights me to read an appreciative sentence about this statue, such as that it is 'the crown of modern sculpture' (Hermann Grimm). For no piece of statuary has ever made a stronger impression on me than this. How often have I mounted the steep steps of the unlovely Corso Cavour to the lonely place where the deserted church stands, and have essayed to support the angry scorn of the hero's glance! Some-

<sup>1</sup> Probably first performed in 1602.

<sup>2</sup> According to Henry Thode, the statue was made between the years 1512 and 1516.

times I have crept cautiously out of the half-gloom of the interior as though I myself belonged to the mob upon whom his eye is turned—the mob which can hold fast no conviction, which has neither faith nor patience and which rejoices when it has regained its illusory idols.

But why do I call this statue inscrutable? There is not the slightest doubt that it represents Moses, the Law-giver of the Jews, holding the Tables of the Ten Commandments. That much is certain, but that is all. As recently as 1912 an art critic, Max Sauerlandt, has said, 'No other work of art in the world has been judged so diversely as the Moses with the head of Pan. The mere interpretation of the figure has given rise to completely opposed views. . . .' Basing myself on an essay published only five years ago,<sup>1</sup> I will first set out what are the doubts associated with this figure of Moses; and it will not be difficult to show that behind them lies concealed all that is most essential and valuable for the comprehension of this work of art.

## I

The Moses of Michelangelo is represented as seated; his body faces forward, his head with its mighty beard looks to the left, his right foot rests on the ground and his left leg is raised so that only the toes touch the ground. His right arm links the Tables of the Law with a portion of his beard; his left arm lies in his lap. Were I to give a more detailed description of his attitude, I should have to anticipate what I want to say later on. The descriptions of the figure given by various writers are, by the way, curiously inapt. What has not been understood has been inaccurately perceived or reproduced. Grimm says that the right hand 'under whose arm the Tables rest, grasps his beard'. So also Lübke: 'Profoundly shaken, he grasps with

<sup>1</sup> Henry Thode, *Michelangelo: kritische Untersuchungen über seine Werke*, Bd. I., 1908.





his right hand his magnificent streaming beard . . .'; and Springer: 'Moses presses one (the left) hand against his body, and thrusts the other, as though unconsciously, into the mighty locks of his beard'. Justi thinks that the fingers of his (right) hand are playing with his beard, 'as an agitated man nowadays might play with his watch-chain'. Müntz, too, lays stress on this playing with the beard. Thode speaks of the 'calm, firm posture of the right hand upon the Tables resting against his side'. He does not recognize any sign of excitement even in the right hand, as Justi and also Boito do. 'The hand remains grasping his beard, in the position it was before the Titan turned his head to one side.' Jakob Burckhardt complains that 'the celebrated left arm has no other function in reality than to press his beard to his body'.

If mere descriptions do not agree we shall not be surprised to find a divergence of view as to the meaning of various features of the statue. In my opinion we cannot better characterize the facial expression of Moses than in the words of Thode, who reads in it 'a mixture of wrath, pain and contempt',—'wrath in his threatening contracted brows, pain in his glance, and contempt in his protruded under lip and in the down-drawn corners of his mouth'. But other admirers must have seen with other eyes. Thus Dupaty says, 'His august brow seems to be but a transparent veil only half concealing his great mind'.<sup>1</sup> Lübke, on the other hand, declares that 'one would look in vain in that head for an expression of higher intelligence; his down-drawn brow speaks of nothing but a capacity for infinite wrath and an all-compelling energy'. Guillaume (1875) differs still more widely in his interpretation of the expression of the face. He finds no emotion in it, 'only a proud simplicity, an inspired dignity, a living faith. The eye of Moses looks into the future, he foresees the lasting survival of his people, the immutability of his law.' Similarly, to Müntz, 'the

<sup>1</sup> Thode, *loc. cit.* p. 197.

eyes of Moses rove far beyond the race of men. They are turned towards those mysteries which he alone has descried.' To Steinmann, indeed, this Moses is 'no longer the stern Law-giver, no longer the terrible enemy of sin, armed with the wrath of Jehovah, but the royal priest, whom age may not approach, beneficent and prophetic, with the reflection of eternity upon his brow, taking his last farewell of his people'.

There have even been some for whom the Moses of Michelangelo had nothing at all to say, and who are honest enough to admit it. Thus a critic in the *Quarterly Review* of 1858: 'There is an absence of meaning in the general conception, which precludes the idea of a self-sufficing whole. . . .' And we are astonished to learn that there are yet others who find nothing to admire in the Moses, but who revolt against it and complain of the brutality of the figure and the animal cast of the head.

Has then the master-hand indeed traced such a vague or ambiguous script in the stone, that so many different readings of it are possible?

Another question, however, arises, which covers the first one. Did Michelangelo intend to create a 'timeless study of character and mood' in this Moses, or did he portray him at a particular and, if so, at a highly significant moment of his life? The majority of judges have decided in the latter sense and are able to tell us what episode in his life it is which the artist has immortalized in stone. It is the descent from Mount Sinai, where Moses has received the Tables from God, and it is the moment when he perceives that the people have meanwhile made themselves a Golden Calf and are dancing around it and rejoicing. This is the scene upon which his eyes are turned, this the spectacle which calls out the feelings depicted in his countenance—those feelings which in the next instant will launch his great frame to violent action. Michelangelo has chosen this last moment of hesitation, of calm before the storm, for his representation. In the next instant

Moses will spring to his feet—his left foot is already raised from the ground—hurl the Tables to the ground, and let loose his rage upon his faithless people.

Once more many individual differences of opinion exist among those who support this interpretation.

Jacob Burckhardt writes: 'Moses seems to be shown in that moment in which he catches sight of the worship of the Golden Calf, and is springing to his feet. His form is animated by the inception of a mighty movement and the physical strength with which he is endowed causes us to await it with fear and trembling.'

And Lübke says: 'As if at this moment his flashing eye were perceiving the sin of the worship of the Golden Calf and a mighty inward movement were running through his whole frame. Profoundly shaken, he grasps with his right hand his magnificent, streaming beard, as though to master his actions for one instant longer, only for the explosion of his wrath to burst with more annihilation the next.'

Springer agrees with this view, but not without mentioning one misgiving, which will engage our attention later in the course of this paper. He says, 'Burning with energy and zeal, it is with difficulty that the hero subdues his inward emotion. . . . We are thus involuntarily reminded of a dramatic situation and are brought to believe that Moses is represented in that moment when he sees the people of Israel worshipping the Golden Calf and is about to start up in wrath. Such an impression, it is true, is not easy to reconcile with the artist's real intention, since the figure of Moses, like the other five seated figures on the upper part of the Papal tomb, is meant primarily to have a decorative effect. But it testifies very convincingly to the vitality and individuality portrayed in the figure of Moses.'

One or two writers, without actually accepting the Golden Calf theory, do nevertheless agree on its main point, namely, that Moses is just about to spring to his feet and take action.

According to Hermann Grimm, 'The form (of Moses) is filled with a majesty, a consciousness of self, a feeling that all the thunders of heaven are at his command, and that yet he is holding himself in check before loosing them, waiting to see whether his foes whom he means to annihilate will dare to attack him. He sits there as if on the point of starting to his feet, his proud head carried high on his shoulders; the hand under whose arm the Tables rest grasps his beard which falls in heavy waves over his breast, his nostrils distended and his lips shaped as though words were trembling upon them.'

Heath Wilson declares that Moses' attention has been excited by something, and he is about to leap to his feet, but is still hesitating; and that his glance of mingled scorn and indignation is still capable of changing into one of compassion.

Wölfflin speaks of 'inhibited movement'. The cause of this inhibition, he says, lies in the will of the man himself; it is the last moment of self-control before he lets himself go and leaps to his feet.

Justi has gone the furthest of all in his interpretation of the statue as Moses in the act of perceiving the Golden Calf, and he has pointed out details hitherto unobserved in it and worked them into his hypothesis. He directs our attention to the position of the two Tables, and it is indeed an unusual one, for they are about to slip down on to the stone seat. 'He (Moses) might therefore be looking in the direction from which the clamour was coming with an expression of evil foreboding, or it might be the actual sight of the abomination which has dealt him a stunning blow. Quivering with horror and pain he has sunk down.<sup>1</sup> He has sojourned on the mountain forty days and nights and he is weary. A horror, a great turn of

<sup>1</sup> It should be remarked that the careful arrangement of the mantle over the knees of the sitting figure invalidates this first part of Justi's view. On the contrary, this would lead us to suppose that Moses is represented as sitting there in calm repose until he is startled by some sudden perception.

fortune, a crime, even happiness itself, can be perceived in a single moment, but not grasped in its essence, its depths or its consequences. For an instant it seems to Moses that his work is destroyed and he despairs of his people. In such moments the inner emotions betray themselves involuntarily in small movements. He lets the Tables slip from his right hand on to the stone seat ; they have been brought up sideways there, pressed by his forearm against the side of his body. His hand, however, comes in contact with his breast and beard and thus, by the turning of the head to the spectator's right, it draws the beard to the left and breaks the symmetry of that masculine ornament. It looks as though his fingers were playing with his beard as an agitated man nowadays might play with his watch-chain. His left hand is buried in his garment over the lower part of his body—in the Old Testament the viscera are the seat of the emotions—but the left leg is already drawn back and the right put forward ; in the next instant he will leap up, his mental energy will be transposed from feeling into action, his right arm will move, the Tables will fall to the ground, and the shameful trespass will be expiated in torrents of blood. . . . 'Here is not yet the moment of tension of a physical act. The pain of mind still dominates him almost like a paralysis.'

Fritz Knapp takes exactly the same view, except that he does not introduce the doubtful point at the beginning of the description,<sup>1</sup> and carries the idea of the sliding Tables further. 'He who just now was alone with his God is distracted by earthly sounds. He hears a noise ; voices shouting to dance and music wake him from his dream ; he turns his eyes and his head in the direction of the clamour. In one instant fear, rage and unbridled passion traverse his huge frame. The Tables begin to slip down, and will fall to the ground and break when he leaps to his feet and hurls the angry thunder of his words into the midst of

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. previous note.—Trans.]

his back-sliding people. . . . This is the moment of highest tension which is chosen. . . .’ Knapp, therefore, emphasizes the element of preparation for action, and disagrees with the view that what is being represented is an initial inhibition due to an overmastering agitation.

It cannot be denied that there is something extraordinarily attractive about attempts at an interpretation of the kind made by Justi and Knapp. This is because they do not stop short at the general effect of the figure, but are based on separate features in it; these we usually fail to notice, being overcome by the total impression of the statue and as it were paralysed by it. The marked turn of the head and eyes to the left, whereas the body faces forwards, supports the view that the resting Moses has suddenly seen something on that side to rivet his attention. His lifted foot can hardly mean anything else but that he is preparing to spring up; <sup>1</sup> and the very unusual way in which the Tables are held (for they are most sacred objects and are not to be introduced into the composition like any other belonging) is fully accounted for if we suppose that they have slipped down as a result of the agitation of their bearer and will fall to the ground. According to this view we should believe that the statue represents a special and important moment in the life of Moses, and we should be left in no doubt of what that moment is.

But two remarks of Thode’s deprive us of the knowledge we thought to have gained. This critic says that to his eye the Tables are not slipping down but are ‘firmly lodged’. He notes the ‘calm, firm pose of the right hand upon the resting Tables’. If we look for ourselves we cannot but admit unreservedly that Thode is right. The Tables are firmly placed and in no danger of slipping. Moses’ right hand supports them or is supported by them. This does not explain the position

<sup>1</sup> Although the left foot of the reposeful seated figure of Giuliano in the Medici Chapel is similarly raised from the ground.

in which they are held, it is true, but the interpretation of *Justi* and others cannot be based upon it.

The second observation is still more final. Thode reminds us that 'this statue was planned as one out of six, and is intended to be seated. Both facts contradict the view that Michelangelo meant to record a particular historical moment. For as to the first consideration, the plan of representing a row of seated figures as types of human beings—as the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*—excluded a representation of particular historic episodes. And as to the second, the representation of a seated posture—a posture necessitated by the artistic conception of the whole monument—contradicts the nature of that episode, namely, the descent of Moses from Mount Sinai into the camp.'

If we accept Thode's objection we shall find that we can add to its weight. The figure of Moses was to have decorated the base of the tomb together with five other statues (in a later sketch, with three). Its immediate complement was to have been a figure of Paul. One other pair, representing the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa* in the shape of Leah and Rachel—standing, it is true—has been executed on the tomb as it still exists in its mournfully aborted form. The Moses thus forms part of a whole and we cannot imagine that the figure was meant to arouse an expectation in the spectator that it was on the point of leaping up from its seat and rushing away to create a disturbance on its own account. If the other figures are not also represented as about to take violent action—and this seems very improbable—then it would create a very bad impression for one of them to give us the illusion that it was going to leave its place and its companions, in fact to abandon its rôle in the general scheme. Such an intention would have a chaotic effect and we could not charge a great artist with it unless the facts drove us to it. A figure in the act of instant departure would be utterly at variance with the state of mind which the tomb is meant to induce in us.

The figure of Moses, therefore, cannot be supposed to be springing to his feet ; he must be allowed to remain as he is in sublime repose like the other figures and like the proposed statue of the Pope (which was not, however, executed by Michelangelo himself). But then the statue we see before us cannot be that of a man filled with wrath, of Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai and found his people faithless and threw down the Holy Tables so that they were broken. And, indeed, I can recollect my own disillusionment when, during my first visits to the church, I used to sit down in front of the statue in the expectation that I should now see how it would start up on its raised foot, hurl the Tables of the Law to the ground and let fly its wrath. Nothing of the kind happened. Instead, the stone image became more and more transfixed, an almost oppressively solemn calm emanated from it, and I was obliged to realize that something was represented here that could stay without change ; that this Moses would remain sitting like this in his wrath for ever.

But if we have to abandon our interpretation of the statue as showing Moses just before his outburst of wrath at the sight of the Golden Calf, we have no alternative but to accept one of those hypotheses which regard it as a study of character. Thode's view seems to be the least arbitrary and to have the closest reference to the meaning of its movements. He says, ' Here, as always, he is concerned with representing a certain type of character. He creates the image of a passionate leader of mankind who, conscious of his divine mission as Law-giver, meets the uncomprehending opposition of men. The only means of representing a man of action of this kind was to accentuate the power of his will, and this was done by a rendering of movement pervading the whole of his apparent quiet, as we see in the turn of his head the tension of his muscles and the position of his left foot. These are the same distinguishing marks that we find again in the *vir activus*



of the Medici chapel in Florence. This general character of the figure is further heightened by laying stress on the conflict which is bound to arise between such a reforming genius and the rest of mankind. Emotions of anger, contempt and pain are typified in him. Without them it would not have been possible to portray the nature of a superman of this kind. Michelangelo has created, not an historical figure, but a character-type, embodying an inexhaustible inner force which tames the recalcitrant world; and he has given a form not only to the Biblical narrative of Moses, but to his own inner experiences, and to his impressions both of the individuality of Julius himself, and also, I believe, of the underlying springs of Savonarola's perpetual conflicts.'

This view may be brought into connection with Knackfuss's remark that the great secret of the effect produced by the Moses lies in the artistic contrast between the inward fire and the outer calm of his bearing.

For myself, I see nothing to object to in Thode's explanation; but I feel the lack of something in it. Perhaps it is the need to discover a closer parallel between the state of mind of the hero as expressed in his attitude, and the above-mentioned contrast between his 'outward' calm and 'inward' emotion.

## II

Long before I had any opportunity of hearing about psycho-analysis, I learnt that a Russian art-connoisseur, Ivan Lermolieff,<sup>1</sup> had caused a revolution in the art galleries of Europe by questioning the authorship of many pictures, showing how to distinguish copies from originals with certainty, and constructing hypothetical artists for those works of art whose former supposed authorship had been discredited. He achieved this by insisting that attention should be diverted from the

<sup>1</sup> His first essays were published in German between 1874 and 1876.

general impression and main features of a picture, and he laid stress on the significance of minor details, of things like the drawing of the finger-nails, of the lobe of an ear, of aureoles and such unconsidered trifles which the copyist neglects to imitate and yet which every artist executes in his own characteristic way. I was then greatly interested to learn that the Russian pseudonym concealed the identity of an Italian physician called Morelli, who died in 1891 with the rank of Senator of the Kingdom of Italy. It seems to me that his method of inquiry is closely related to the technique of psycho-analysis. It, too, is accustomed to divine secret and concealed things from unconsidered or unnoticed details, from the rubbish-heap, as it were, of our observations.

Now in two places in the figure of Moses there are certain details which have hitherto not only escaped notice—but, in fact, have not even been properly described. These are the attitude of his right hand and the position of the two Tables of the Law. We may say that this hand forms a very singular, unnatural link, and one which calls for explanation, between the Tables and the wrathful hero's beard. He has been described as running his fingers through his beard and playing with its locks, while the outer edge of his hand rests on the Tables. But this is plainly not so. It is worth while examining more closely what those fingers of the right hand are doing, and describing more minutely the mighty beard with which they are in contact.<sup>1</sup>

We now quite clearly perceive the following things : the thumb of the hand is concealed and the index finger alone is in effective contact with the beard. It is pressed so deeply against the soft masses of hair that they bulge out beyond it both above and below, that is, both towards the head and towards the abdomen. The other three fingers are propped upon the wall of his chest and are bent at the upper joints ; they are barely touched by the extreme right-hand lock of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the illustration.

beard which falls past them. They have, as it were, withdrawn themselves from the beard. It is therefore not correct to say that the right hand is playing with the beard or plunged in it ; the simple truth is that the index finger is laid over a part of the beard and makes a deep trough in it. To press one's beard with one finger is assuredly an extraordinary gesture and one not easy to understand.

The much-admired beard of Moses flows from his cheeks, chin and upper lip in a number of waving strands which are kept distinct from one another all the way down. One of the strands on the extreme right, growing from the cheek, flows down to the inward-pressing index finger, where it stops. We may assume that it resumes its course between that finger and the concealed thumb. The corresponding strand on the left side falls practically unimpeded far down over his breast. What has received the most unusual treatment is the thick mass of hair on the inside of this latter strand, the part between it and the middle line. It is not suffered to follow the turn of the head to the left ; it is forced to roll over loosely and form part of a kind of scroll which lies across and over the strands on the inner right side of the beard. This is because it is held fast by the pressure of the right index finger, although it grows from the left side of the face and is, in fact, the main portion of the whole left side of the beard. Thus, the main mass of the beard is thrown to the right of the figure, whereas the head is sharply turned to the left. At the place where the right index finger is pressed in, a kind of whorl of hairs is formed ; strands of hair coming from the left lie over strands coming from the right, both caught in by that despotic finger. It is only beyond this place that the masses of hair, deflected from their course, flow freely once more, and now they fall vertically until their ends are gathered up in Moses' left hand as it lies open on his lap.

I have no illusions as to the clarity of my description, and venture no opinion whether the sculptor

really does invite us to solve the riddle of that knot in the beard of his statue. But apart from this, the fact remains that the pressure of the *right* index-finger affects mainly the strands of hair from the *left* side; and that this oblique hold prevents the beard from accompanying the turn of the head and eyes to the left. Now we may be allowed to ask what this arrangement means and to what motives it owes its existence. Were they indeed considerations of linear and spatial design which caused the sculptor to draw the downward-streaming wealth of hair across to the right of the figure which is looking to its left, how strangely unsuitable as a means appears the pressure of a single finger! And what man who, for some reason or other, has drawn his beard over to the other side, would take it into his head to hold down the one half across the other by the pressure of a single finger? Yet may not these minute particulars mean nothing in reality, and may we not be racking our brains about things which were of no moment to their creator?

Let us proceed on the assumption that even these details have significance. There is a solution which will remove our difficulties and afford a glimpse of a new meaning. If the *left* side of Moses' beard lies under the pressure of his *right* finger, we may perhaps take this pose as the last stage of some connection between his right hand and the left half of his beard, a connection which was a much more intimate one at some moment before that chosen for representation. Perhaps his hand had seized his beard with far more energy, had reached across to its left edge, and, in returning to that position in which the statue shows it, had been followed by a part of his beard which now testifies to the movement which has just taken place. The loop of the beard would thus be an indication of the path taken by this hand.

Thus we shall have inferred that there had been a retreating motion of the right hand. This one assumption necessarily brings others with it. In imagination

we complete the scene of which this movement, established by the evidence of the beard, is a part ; and we are brought back quite naturally to the hypothesis according to which the resting Moses is startled by the clamour of the people and the spectacle of the Golden Calf. He was sitting there calmly, we will suppose, his head with its flowing beard facing forward, and his hand in all probability not near it at all. Suddenly the clamour strikes his ear ; he turns his head and eyes in the direction from which the disturbance comes, sees the scene and takes it in. Now wrath and indignation seize him ; and he would fain leap up and punish the wrongdoers, annihilate them. His rage, distant as yet from its object, is meanwhile directed in a gesture against his own body. His impatient hand, ready to act, clutches at his beard which has moved with the turn of his head, and shuts it down with his fingers between the thumb and the palm in an iron grasp—it is a gesture whose power and vehemence remind us of other creations of Michelangelo's. But now an alteration takes place, as yet we do not know how or why. The hand that had been put forward and had sunk into his beard is hastily withdrawn and unclasped, and the fingers let go their hold ; but so deeply have they been plunged in that in their withdrawal they drag a great piece of the left side of the beard across to the right, and this piece remains lodged over the hair of the right under the weight of one finger, the longest and uppermost one of the hand. And this new position, which can only be understood with reference to the former one, is now retained.

It is time now to pause and reflect. We have assumed that the right hand was, to begin with, away from the beard ; that then it reached across to the left of the figure in a moment of great emotional tension and seized the beard ; and that it was finally drawn back again, taking a part of the beard with it. We have disposed of this right hand as though we had the free use of it. But may we do this ? Is the hand

indeed so free? Must it not hold or support the Tables? Are not such mimetic evolutions as these prohibited by its important function? And furthermore, what could have occasioned its withdrawal if such a powerful motive caused its first displacement?

Here are indeed fresh difficulties. It is undeniable that the right hand is responsible for the Tables; and also that we have no motive to account for the withdrawal we have ascribed to it. But what if both difficulties could be solved together, then and then only presenting a clear and connected sequence of events? What if it is precisely something which is happening to the Tables that explains the movements of the hand?

If we look at the drawing in Fig. D we shall see that the Tables present one or two notable features hitherto not deemed worthy of remark. It has been said that the right hand rests upon the Tables; or again that it supports them. And we can see at once that the two apposed, rectangular tablets are standing on edge. If we look closer we shall notice that the lower edge is a different shape from the upper one, which is obliquely inclined forward. The top edge is straight, whereas the bottom one has a protuberance like a horn on the part nearest to us, and the Tables touch the stone seat precisely with this protuberance. What can be the meaning of this detail?<sup>1</sup> It can hardly be doubted that this projection is meant to mark the actual upper side of the Tables, as regards the writing. It is only the upper edge of rectangular tablets of this kind that is curved or notched. Thus we see that the Tables are upside-down. This is a singular way to treat such sacred objects. They are stood on their heads and practically balanced on one corner. What consideration of form could have led to such an attitude? Or was this detail, too, of no importance to the artist Michelangelo?

<sup>1</sup> Which, by the way, is quite incorrectly reproduced in a large plaster cast in the collection of the Vienna Academy of Plastic Arts.

The view begins to form in us that the Tables also have arrived at their present position as the result of a previous movement ; that this movement depended on the inferred change of place of the right hand and then in its turn compelled that hand to make its subsequent retreat. The movements of the hand and of the Tables can be co-ordinated in this way : at first the figure of Moses, while it was still sitting quietly, carried



Fig. D.



Fig. 1.

the Tables upright under its right arm. Its right hand grasped their bottom edge and found a hold in the projection of their front part. The greater ease thereby gained sufficiently accounts for the reversed position in which the Tables are held. Then came the moment when Moses' calm was broken by the disturbance. He turns his head in its direction, and when he sees the spectacle he lifts his foot preparatory to starting up, lets go the Tables with his hand and throws it to the

left and upwards into his beard, as though to turn his vehemence against his own body. The Tables were now consigned to the pressure of his arm, which had to squeeze them against his side. But this support was not sufficient and the Tables began to slip in a forward and downward direction. The upper edge, which had been held horizontally, now began to face forwards



Fig. 2.



Fig. 3.

and downwards; and the lower edge, deprived of its stay, was nearing the stone seat with its front corner. Another instant and the Tables would have pivoted upon this new point of support, have hit the ground with the upper edge foremost, and been shattered to pieces. It is to *prevent this* that the right hand retreats, lets go the beard, a part of which is drawn back with it unintentionally, comes against the top edge of the Tablets in time and grips them near the hind corner,



which has now come uppermost. Thus the singularly constrained air of the whole—beard, hand and tilted Tables—can be traced to that one passionate movement of the hand and its natural consequences. If we wish to reverse the effects of those stormy movements, we must raise the upper front corner of the Tables and push it back, thus lifting their lower front corner (the one with the protuberance) from the stone seat ; and then lower the right hand and bring it under the now horizontal bottom edge of the Tables.

I have procured from the hand of an artist three drawings to illustrate my meaning. Fig. 3 reproduces the statue as it actually is ; Figs. 1 and 2 represent the preceding stages according to my hypothesis—the first that of calm, the second that of highest tension, in which the figure is preparing to spring up and has abandoned its hold of the Tables, so that these are beginning to slip down. Now it is remarkable how the two postures in the supplementary drawings vindicate the incorrect descriptions of earlier writers. Condivi, a contemporary of Michelangelo's, says : 'Moses, the captain and leader of the Hebrews, is seated in the attitude of a contemplative sage, holding the Tables of the Law under his right arm, and leaning his chin on his left hand (!), as one who is weary and full of care.' No such attitude is to be seen in Michelangelo's statue, but it describes almost exactly the view on which the first drawing is based. Lübke writes, together with other critics : 'Profoundly shaken, he grasps with his right hand his magnificent, streaming beard.' This is incorrect if we look at the reproduction of the actual statue, but it is true of the second sketch (Fig. 2). Justi and Knapp have observed, as we have seen, that the Tables are about to slip down and are in danger of being broken. Thode set them right and showed that the Tables were securely held by the right hand ; yet they would have been correct if they had been describing not the statue itself but the middle stage of our reconstructed action. It almost

seems as if they had emancipated themselves from the visual image of the statue and had unconsciously begun an analysis of the motive forces behind it, and that that analysis had led them to make the same claim as we, more consciously and more explicitly, have done.

### III

We may now, I believe, permit ourselves to reap the fruits of our endeavours. We have seen how many of those who have felt the influence of this statue have been impelled to interpret it as representing Moses agitated by the spectacle of his people fallen from grace and dancing round an idol. But this interpretation had to be given up, for it made us expect to see him spring up in the next moment, break the Tables and accomplish the work of vengeance. Such a conception, however, would fail to harmonize with the design of making this figure, together with three or five more seated figures, a part of the tomb of Julius II. We may now take up again the abandoned interpretation, for the Moses we have reconstructed will neither leap up nor cast the Tables from him. What we see before us is not the inception of a violent action but the remains of a movement that has already taken place. In his first transport of fury, Moses desired to act, to spring up and take vengeance and forget the Tables; but he has overcome the temptation, and he will now remain seated and still in his frozen wrath and in his pain mingled with contempt. Nor will he throw away the Tables so that they will break on the stones, for it is on their especial account that he has controlled his anger; it was to preserve them that he kept his passion in check. In giving way to his rage and indignation, he had to neglect the Tables, and the hand which upheld them was withdrawn. They began to slide down and were in danger of being broken. This brought him to himself. He remembered his mission and renounced for its sake an indulgence of his feelings. His hand

returned and saved the unsupported Tables before they had actually fallen to the ground. In this attitude he remained immobilized, and in this attitude Michelangelo has portrayed him as the guardian of the tomb.

Viewed from above downwards, the figure exhibits three distinct emotional strata. The lines of the face reflect the feelings which have become predominant ; the middle of the figure shows the traces of suppressed movement ; and the foot still retains the attitude of the projected action. It is as though the controlling influence had proceeded downwards from above. No mention has been made so far of the left arm, and it seems to claim a share in our interpretation. The hand is laid in his lap in a mild gesture and holds as though in a caress the end of his flowing beard. It seems as if it is meant to counteract the violence with which the other hand had misused the beard a few moments ago.

But here it will be objected that after all this is not the Moses of the Bible. For that Moses did actually fall into a fit of rage and did throw away the Tables and break them. This Moses must be a quite different man, a new Moses of the artist's conception ; so that Michelangelo must have had the presumption to emend the sacred text and to falsify the character of that holy man. Can we think him capable of a boldness which might almost be said to approach an act of blasphemy ?

The passage in the Holy Scriptures which describes Moses' action at the scene of the Golden Calf is as follows : (Exodus xxxii. 7) 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down ; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves : (8) They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them : they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of

Egypt. (9) And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people : (10) Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them ; and I will make of thee a great nation. (11) And Moses besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand ? . . .

' (14) And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people. (15) And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony were in his hand : the tables were written on both their sides ; on the one side and on the other were they written. (16) And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables. (17) And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. (18) And he said, It is not the voice of them that shout for mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome ; but the noise of them that sing do I hear. (19) And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing : and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. (20) And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it. . . .

' (30) And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin : and now I will go up unto the Lord ; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. (31) And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh ! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold ! (32) Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin— ; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. (33) And the Lord said unto Moses,

Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. (34) Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee. Behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them. (35) And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf which Aaron made.

It is impossible to read the above passage in the light of modern criticism of the Bible without finding evidence that it has been clumsily put together from various sources. In verse 8 the Lord Himself tells Moses that his people have fallen away and made themselves an idol; and Moses intercedes for the wrongdoers. And yet he speaks to Joshua as though he knew nothing of this (18), and is suddenly aroused to wrath as he sees the scene of the worshipping of the Golden Calf (19). In verse 14 he has already gained a pardon from God for his erring people, yet in verse 31 he returns into the mountains to implore this forgiveness, tells God about his people's sin and is assured of the postponement of the punishment. Verse 35 speaks of a visitation of his people by the Lord about which nothing more is told us; whereas the verses 20-30 describe the punishment which Moses himself dealt out. It is well known that the historical parts of the Bible, dealing with the Exodus, are crowded with still more glaring incongruities and contradictions.

The age of the Renaissance had naturally no such critical attitude towards the text of the Bible, but had to accept it as a consistent whole, with the result that the passage in question was not a very good subject for representation. According to the Scriptures Moses was already instructed about the idolatry of his people and had ranged himself on the side of mildness and forgiveness; nevertheless, when he saw the Golden Calf and the dancing crowd, he was overcome by a sudden frenzy of rage. It would therefore not surprise us to find that the artist, in depicting the reaction of

his hero to that painful surprise, had deviated from the text from inner motives. Moreover, such deviations from the scriptural text on a much slighter pretext were by no means unusual or disallowed to artists. A celebrated picture by Parmigiano possessed by his native town depicts Moses sitting on the top of a mountain and hurling the Tables to the ground, although the Bible expressly says that he broke them 'beneath the mount'. Even the representation of a seated Moses finds no support in the text, and seems rather to bear out those critics who maintain that Michelangelo's statue is not meant to record any particular moment in the prophet's life.

More important than his infidelity to the text of the Scriptures is the alteration which Michelangelo has, in our supposition, made in the character of Moses. The Moses of legend and tradition had a hasty temper and was subject to fits of passion. It was in a transport of divine wrath of this kind that he slew an Egyptian who was maltreating an Israelite, and had to flee out of the land into the wilderness; and it was in a similar passion that he broke the Tables of the Law, inscribed by God Himself. Tradition, in recording such a characteristic, is unbiased, and preserves the impression of a great personality who once lived. But Michelangelo has placed a different Moses on the tomb of the Pope, one superior to the historical or traditional Moses. He has modified the theme of the broken Tables; he does not let Moses break them in his wrath, but makes him be influenced by the danger that they will be broken and calm that wrath, or at any rate prevent it from becoming an act. In this way he has added something new and more than human to the figure of Moses; so that the giant frame with its tremendous physical power becomes only a concrete expression of the highest mental achievement that is possible in a man, that of struggling successfully against an inward passion for the sake of a cause to which he has devoted himself.

We have now completed our interpretation of the statue of Moses. It can still be asked what motives prompted the sculptor to select the figure of Moses, and a so much altered Moses, as an ornament for the tomb of Julius II. In the opinion of many these motives are to be found in the character of the Pope and in Michelangelo's relations with him. Julius II. was akin to Michelangelo in this, that he attempted to realize great and mighty ends, especially designs on a large scale. He was a man of action and he had a definite purpose, which was to unite Italy under the Papal supremacy. He desired to bring about single-handed what was not to happen for several centuries, and then only through the conjunction of many alien forces; and he worked alone, with impatience, in the short span of sovereignty allowed him, and used violent means. He could appreciate Michelangelo as a man of his own kind, but he often made him smart under his sudden anger and his utter lack of consideration for others. The artist felt the same violent force of will in himself, and, as the more introspective thinker, may have had a premonition of the failure to which they were both doomed. And so he carved his Moses on the Pope's tomb, not without a reproach against the dead pontiff, as a warning to himself, thus rising in self-criticism superior to his own nature.

In 1863 an Englishman, Watkiss Lloyd, devoted a little book to the Moses of Michelangelo.<sup>1</sup> I succeeded in getting hold of this short essay of forty-six pages, and read it with mixed feelings. I once more had occasion to experience in myself what unworthy and puerile motives enter into our thoughts and acts even in a serious cause. My first feeling was one of regret that the author should have anticipated so much of my thought, which seemed precious to me because it was the result of my own efforts; and it was only in the second instance that I was able to get pleasure from its unexpected confirmation of my opinion.

<sup>1</sup> W. Watkiss Lloyd, *The Moses of Michelangelo*.

Our views, however, diverge on one very important point.

It was Lloyd who first remarked that the usual descriptions of the figure are incorrect, and that Moses is not in the act of rising up<sup>1</sup>—that the right hand is not grasping the beard, but that the index-finger alone is resting upon it.<sup>2</sup> Lloyd has also recognized, and this is much more important, that the attitude portrayed can only be explained by postulating a foregoing one, which is not represented, and that the drawing of the left lock of the beard across to the right signifies that the right hand and the left side of the beard have been in closer and more natural contact before. But he suggests another way of reconstructing that logically inferred earlier contact. According to him, it was not the hand which had been plunged into the beard, but the beard which had been where the hand now is. We must, he says, imagine that the head of the statue was turned far round to its right just before the sudden interruption and rose right over the hand which, then as now, was holding the Tables of the Law. The pressure (of the Tables) against the palm of the hand caused the fingers to open naturally beneath the flowing locks of the beard, and the sudden turn of the head to the other side had the result that a part of the beard was detained for an instant by the motionless hand and formed that loop of hair which is to be looked on as a mark of the course it has taken—its 'wake', to use Lloyd's own word.

In rejecting the other possibility, that of the right hand having previously been in contact with the left side of the beard, Lloyd allows himself to be influenced by a consideration which shows how near he came to

<sup>1</sup> But he is not rising or preparing to rise; the bust is fully upright, not thrown forward for the alteration of balance preparatory for such a movement. . . . (p. 10).

<sup>2</sup> 'Such a description is altogether erroneous; the fillets of the beard are detained by the right hand but they are not held, nor grasped, enclosed or taken hold of. They are even detained but momentarily—momentarily engaged, they are on the point of being free for disengagement' (p. 11).



our interpretation. He says that it was not possible for the prophet, even in very great agitation, to have put out his hand to draw his beard across to the right. For in that case his fingers would have been in an entirely different position; and, moreover, such a movement would have allowed the Tables to slip down, since they are only supported by the pressure of the right arm—unless, in Moses' endeavour to save them at the last moment, we think of them as being 'clutched by a gesture so awkward that to imagine it is profanation'.

It is easy to see what the writer overlooked. He has correctly interpreted the anomalies of the beard as indicating a movement that has gone before, but he has omitted to apply the same explanation to the no less unnatural details in the position of the Tables. He examines only the data connected with the beard and not those connected with the Tables, whose position he assumes to be the original one. In this way he closes the door to a conception like ours which, by examining certain insignificant details, has arrived at an unexpected interpretation of the meaning and aim of the figure as a whole.

But what if we have both strayed on to a wrong path? What if we have taken too serious and profound a view of details which were nothing to the artist, details which he had introduced quite arbitrarily or for some purely formal reasons with no hidden intention behind? What if we have shared the fate of so many interpreters who have thought to see quite clearly things which the artist did not intend either consciously or unconsciously? I cannot tell. I cannot say whether it is reasonable to credit Michelangelo—that artist in whose works there is so much thought striving for expression—with such an elementary want of precision, especially whether this could be assumed in regard to the striking and singular features of the statue under discussion. And finally we may be allowed to point out, in all modesty, that the artist is

no less responsible than his interpreters for the obscurity which surrounds his work. In his creations Michelangelo has often enough gone to the utmost limit of what is expressible in art ; and perhaps in his statue of Moses he has not completely succeeded, if his design was to trace the passage of a violent gust of passion in the signs left by it on the ensuing calm.

## XVII

### THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES ON WAR AND DEATH<sup>1</sup>

(1915)

#### I

##### THE DISILLUSIONMENT OF THE WAR

**S**WEPT as we are into the vortex of this war-time, our information one-sided, ourselves too near to focus the mighty transformations, which have already taken place or are beginning to take place, and without a glimmering of the inchoate future, we are incapable of apprehending the significance of the thronging impressions, and know not what value to attach to the judgements we form. We are constrained to believe that never has any event been destructive of so much that is valuable in the common wealth of humanity, nor so misleading to many of the clearest intelligences, nor so debasing to the highest that we know. Science herself has lost her passionless impartiality; in their deep embitterment her servants seek for weapons from her with which to contribute towards the defeat of the enemy. The anthropologist is driven to declare the opponent inferior and degenerate; the psychiatrist to publish his diagnosis of the enemy's disease of mind or spirit. But probably our sense of these immediate evils is disproportionately strong, and we are not entitled to compare them with the evils of other times of which we have not undergone the experience.

The individual who is not himself a combatant—and so a wheel in the gigantic machinery of war—feels

<sup>1</sup> First published early in 1915 in *Imago*, Bd. V.; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by E. Colburn Mayne.]

conscious of disorientation, and of an inhibition in his powers and activities. I believe that he will welcome any indication, however slight, which may enable him to find out what is wrong with himself at least. I propose to distinguish two among the most potent factors in the mental distress felt by non-combatants, against which it is such a heavy task to struggle, and to treat of them here: the disillusionment which this war has evoked; and the altered attitude towards death which this—like every other war—imposes on us.

When I speak of disillusionment, everyone at once knows what I mean. One need not be a sentimentalist; one may perceive the biological and psychological necessity of suffering in the economics of human life, and yet condemn war both in its means and in its aims, and devoutly look forward to the cessation of all wars. True, we have told ourselves that wars can never cease so long as nations live under such widely differing conditions, so long as the value of individual life is in each nation so variously computed, and so long as the animosities which divide them represent such powerful instinctual forces in the mind. And we were prepared to find that wars between the primitive and the civilized peoples, between those races whom a colour-line divides, nay, wars with and among the undeveloped nationalities of Europe or those whose culture has perished—that for a considerable period such wars would occupy mankind. But we permitted ourselves to have other hopes. We had expected the great ruling powers among the white nations upon whom the leadership of the human species has fallen, who were known to have cultivated world-wide interests, to whose creative powers were due our technical advances in the direction of dominating nature, as well as the artistic and scientific acquisitions of the mind—peoples such as these we had expected to succeed in discovering another way of settling misunderstandings and conflicts of interest. Within each of these nations there prevailed high standards of accepted custom for the

individual, to which his manner of life was bound to conform if he desired a share in communal privileges. These ordinances, frequently too stringent, exacted a great deal from him, much self-restraint, much renunciation of instinctual gratification. He was especially forbidden to make use of the immense advantages to be gained by the practice of lying and deception in the competition with his fellow-men. The civilized state regarded these accepted standards as the basis of its existence ; stern were its proceedings when an impious hand was laid upon them ; frequent the pronouncement that to subject them even to examination by a critical intelligence was entirely impracticable. It could be assumed, therefore, that the state itself would respect them, nor would contemplate undertaking any infringement of what it acknowledged as the basis of its own existence. To be sure, it was evident that within these civilized states were mingled remnants of certain other races who were universally unpopular and had therefore been only reluctantly, and even so not to the fullest extent, admitted to participation in the common task of civilization, for which they had shown themselves suitable enough. But the great nations themselves, it might have been supposed, had acquired so much comprehension of their common interests, and enough tolerance for the differences that existed between them, that 'foreigner' and 'enemy' could no longer, as still in antiquity, be regarded as synonymous.

Relying on this union among the civilized races, countless people have exchanged their native home for a foreign dwelling-place, and made their existence dependent on the conditions of intercourse between friendly nations. But he who was not by stress of circumstances confined to one spot, could also confer upon himself, through all the advantages and attractions of these civilized countries, a new, a wider fatherland, wherein he moved unhindered and unsuspected. In this way he enjoyed the blue sea, and the grey ; the

beauty of the snow-clad mountains and of the green pasture-lands ; the magic of the northern forests and the splendour of the southern vegetation ; the emotion inspired by landscapes that recall great historical events, and the silence of nature in her inviolate places. This new fatherland was for him a museum also, filled with all the treasures which the artists among civilized communities had in the successive centuries created and left behind. As he wandered from one gallery to another in this museum, he could appreciate impartially the varied types of perfection that miscegenation, the course of historical events, and the special characteristics of their mother-earth had produced among his more remote compatriots. Here he would find a cool inflexible energy developed to the highest point ; there, the gracious art of beautifying existence ; elsewhere, the sense of order and fixed law—in short, any and all of the qualities which have made mankind the lords of the earth.

Nor must we forget that each of these citizens of culture had created for himself a personal ' Parnassus ' and ' School of Athens '. From among the great thinkers and artists of all nations he had chosen those to whom he conceived himself most deeply indebted for what he had achieved in enjoyment and comprehension of life, and in his veneration had associated them with the immortals of old as well as with the more familiar masters of his own tongue. None of these great figures had seemed to him alien because he had spoken another language—not the incomparable investigator of the passions of mankind, nor the intoxicated worshipper of beauty, nor the vehement and threatening prophet, nor the subtle mocking satirist ; and never did he on this account rebuke himself as a renegade towards his own nation and his beloved mother-tongue.

The enjoyment of this fellowship in civilization was from time to time disturbed by warning voices, which declared that as a result of long-prevailing differences

wars were unavoidable, even among the members of a fellowship such as this. We refused to believe it ; but if such a war indeed must be, what was our imaginary picture of it? We saw it as an opportunity for demonstrating the progress of mankind in communal feeling since the era when the Greek Amphictyones had proclaimed that no city of the league might be demolished, nor its olive-groves hewn down, nor its water cut off. As a chivalrous crusade, which would limit itself to establishing the superiority of one side in the contest, with the least possible infliction of dire sufferings that could contribute nothing to the decision, and with complete immunity for the wounded who must of necessity withdraw from the contest, as well as for the physicians and nurses who devoted themselves to the task of healing. And of course with the utmost precautions for the non-combatant classes of the population—for women who are debarred from war-work, and for the children who, grown older, should be enemies no longer but friends and co-operators. And again, with preservation of all the international undertakings and institutions in which the mutual civilization of peace-time had been embodied.

Even a war like this would have been productive of horrors and sufferings enough ; but it would not have interrupted the development of ethical relations between the greater units of mankind, between the peoples and the states.

Then the war in which we had refused to believe broke out, and brought—disillusionment. Not only is it more sanguinary and more destructive than any war of other days, because of the enormously increased perfection of weapons of attack and defence ; but it is at least as cruel, as embittered, as implacable as any that has preceded it. It sets at naught all those restrictions known as International Law, which in peace-time the states had bound themselves to observe ; it ignores the prerogatives of the wounded and the medical service, the distinction between civil and

military sections of the population, the claims of private property. It tramples in blind fury on all that comes in its way, as though there were to be no future and no goodwill among men after it has passed. It rends all bonds of fellowship between the contending peoples, and threatens to leave such a legacy of embitterment as will make any renewal of such bonds impossible for a long time to come.

Moreover, it has brought to light the almost unbelievable phenomenon of a mutual comprehension between the civilized nations so slight that the one can turn with hate and loathing upon the other. Nay, more—that one of the great civilized nations is so universally unpopular that the attempt can actually be made to exclude it from the civilized community as ‘barbaric’, although it long has proved its fitness by the most magnificent co-operation in the work of civilization. We live in the hope that the impartial decision of history will furnish the proof that precisely this nation, this in whose tongue we now write, this for whose victory our dear ones are fighting, was the one which least transgressed the laws of civilization—but at such a time who shall dare present himself as the judge of his own cause?

Nations are in a measure represented by the states which they have formed; these states, by the governments which administer them. The individual in any given nation has in this war a terrible opportunity to convince himself of what would occasionally strike him in peace-time—that the state has forbidden to the individual the practice of wrong-doing, not because it desired to abolish it, but because it desires to monopolize it, like salt and tobacco. The warring state permits itself every such misdeed, every such act of violence, as would disgrace the individual man. It practises not only the accepted stratagems, but also deliberate lying and deception against the enemy; and this, too, in a measure which appears to surpass the usage of former wars. The state exacts the utmost degree of obedience



and sacrifice from its citizens, but at the same time treats them as children by maintaining an excess of secrecy, and a censorship of news and expressions of opinion that renders the spirits of those thus intellectually oppressed defenceless against every unfavourable turn of events and every sinister rumour. It absolves itself from the guarantees and contracts it had formed with other states, and makes unabashed confession of its rapacity and lust for power, which the private individual is then called upon to sanction in the name of patriotism.

Nor may it be objected that the state cannot refrain from wrong-doing, since that would place it at a disadvantage. It is no less disadvantageous, as a general rule, for the individual man to conform to the customs of morality and refrain from brutal and arbitrary conduct; and the state but seldom proves able to indemnify him for the sacrifices it exacts. It cannot be a matter for astonishment, therefore, that this relaxation of all the moral ties between the greater units of mankind should have had a seducing influence on the morality of individuals; for our conscience is not the inflexible judge that ethical teachers are wont to declare it, but in its origin is 'dread of the community' and nothing else. When the community has no rebuke to make, there is an end of all suppression of the baser passions, and men perpetrate deeds of cruelty, fraud, treachery and barbarity so incompatible with their civilization that one would have held them to be impossible.

Well may that civilized cosmopolitan, therefore, of whom I spoke, stand helpless in a world grown strange to him—his all-embracing patrimony disintegrated, the common estates in it laid waste, the fellow-citizens embroiled and debased!

In criticism of his disillusionment, nevertheless, certain things must be said. Strictly speaking, it is not justified, for it consists in the destruction of—an illusion! We welcome illusions because they spare us

emotional distress, and enable us instead to indulge in gratification. We must not then complain if now and again they come into conflict with some portion of reality, and are shattered against it.

Two things in this war have evoked our sense of disillusionment: the destitution shown in moral relations externally by the states which in their interior relations pose as the guardians of accepted moral usage, and the brutality in behaviour shown by individuals, whom, as partakers in the highest form of human civilization, one would not have credited with such a thing.

Let us begin with the second point and endeavour to formulate, as succinctly as may be, the point of view which it is proposed to criticize. How do we imagine the process by which an individual attains to a higher plane of morality? The first answer is sure to be: He is good and noble from his very birth, his very earliest beginnings. We need not consider this any further. A second answer will suggest that we are concerned with a developmental process, and will probably assume that this development consists in eradicating from him the evil human tendencies and, under the influence of education and a civilized environment, replacing them by good ones. From that standpoint it is certainly astonishing that evil should show itself to have such power in those who have been thus nurtured.

But this answer implies the thesis from which we propose to dissent. In reality, there is no such thing as 'eradicating' evil tendencies. Psychological—more strictly speaking, psycho-analytic—investigation shows instead that the inmost essence of human nature consists of elemental instincts, which are common to all men and aim at the satisfaction of certain primal needs. These instincts in themselves are neither good nor evil. We but classify them and their manifestations in that fashion, according as they meet the needs and demands of the human community. It is admitted that all

those instincts which society condemns as evil—let us take as representatives the selfish and the cruel—are of this primitive type.

These primitive instincts undergo a lengthy process of development before they are allowed to become active in the adult being. They are inhibited, directed towards other aims and departments, become mingled, alter their objects, and are to some extent turned back upon their possessor. Reaction-formations against certain instincts take the deceptive form of a change in content, as though egoism had changed into altruism, or cruelty into pity. These reaction-formations are facilitated by the circumstance that many instincts are manifested almost from the first in pairs of opposites, a very remarkable phenomenon—and one strange to the lay public—which is termed the 'ambivalence of feeling'. The most easily observable and comprehensible instance of this is the fact that intense love and intense hatred are so often to be found together in the same person. Psycho-analysis adds that the conflicting feelings not infrequently have the same person for their object.

It is not until all these 'vicissitudes to which instincts are subject' have been surmounted that what we call the character of a human being is formed, and this, as we know, can only very inadequately be classified as 'good' or 'bad'. A human being is seldom altogether good or bad; he is usually 'good' in one relation and 'bad' in another, or 'good' in certain external circumstances and in others decidedly 'bad'. It is interesting to learn that the existence of strong 'bad' impulses in infancy is often the actual condition for an unmistakable inclination towards 'good' in the adult person. Those who as children have been the most pronounced egoists may well become the most helpful and self-sacrificing members of the community; most of our sentimentalists, friends of humanity, champions of animals, have been evolved from little sadists and animal-tormentors.

The transformation of 'bad' instincts is brought about by two co-operating factors, an internal and an external. The internal factor consists in an influence on the bad—say, the egoistic—instincts exercised by erotism, that is, by the human need for love, taken in its widest sense. By the admixture of *erotic* components the egoistic instincts are transmuted into *social* ones. We learn to value being loved as an advantage for which we are willing to sacrifice other advantages. The external factor is the force exercised by up-bringing, which advocates the claims of our cultural environment, and this is furthered later by the direct pressure of that civilization by which we are surrounded. Civilization is the fruit of renunciation of instinctual satisfaction, and from each new-comer in turn it exacts the same renunciation. Throughout the life of the individual there is a constant replacement of the external compulsion by the internal. The influences of civilization cause an ever-increasing transmutation of egoistic trends into altruistic and social ones, and this by an admixture of erotic elements. In the last resort it may be said that every internal compulsion which has been of service in the development of human beings was originally, that is, in the evolution of the human race, nothing but an external one. Those who are born to-day bring with them as an inherited constitution some degree of a tendency (disposition) towards transmutation of egoistic into social instincts, and this disposition is easily stimulated to achieve that effect. A further measure of this transformation must be accomplished during the life of the individual himself. And so the human being is subject not only to the pressure of his immediate environment, but also to the influence of the cultural development attained by his forefathers.

If we give the name of *cultural adaptability* to a man's personal capacity for transformation of the egoistic impulses under the influence of the erotic, we may further affirm that this adaptability is made up

of two parts, one innate and the other acquired through experience, and that the relation of the two to each other and to that portion of the instinctual life which remains untransformed is a very variable one.

Generally speaking, we are apt to attach too much importance to the innate part, and in addition to this we run the risk of overestimating the general adaptability to civilization in comparison with those instincts which have remained in their primitive state—by which I mean that in this way we are led to regard human nature as 'better' than it actually is. For there is, besides, another factor which obscures our judgement and falsifies the issue in too favourable a sense.

The impulses of another person are naturally hidden from our observation. We deduce them from his actions and behaviour, which we trace to motives born of his instinctual life. Such a conclusion is bound to be, in many cases, erroneous. This or that action which is 'good' from the civilized point of view may in one instance be born of a 'noble' motive, in another not so. Ethical theorists class as 'good' actions only those which are the outcome of good impulses; to the others they refuse their recognition. But society, which is practical in its aims, is little troubled on the whole by this distinction; it is content if a man regulates his behaviour and actions by the precepts of civilization, and is little concerned with his motives.

We have seen that the external compulsion exercised on a human being by his up-bringing and environment produces a further transformation towards good in his instinctual life—a turning from egoism towards altruism. But this is not the regular or necessary effect of the external compulsion. Education and environment offer benefits not only in the way of love, but also employ another kind of premium system, namely, reward and punishment. In this way their effect may turn out to be that he who is subjected to their influence will choose to 'behave well' in the civilized sense of the phrase, although no ennoblement of instinct, no

transformation of egoistic into altruistic inclinations, has taken place within. The result will, roughly speaking, be the same ; only a particular concatenation of circumstances will reveal that one man always acts rightly because his instinctual inclination compels him so to do, and the other is ' good ' only in so far and for so long as such civilized behaviour is advantageous for his own egoistic purposes. But superficial acquaintance with an individual will not enable us to distinguish between the two cases, and we are certainly misled by our optimism into grossly exaggerating the number of human beings who have been transformed in a civilized sense.

Civilized society, which exacts good conduct and does not trouble itself about the impulses underlying it, has thus won over to obedience a great many people who are not thereby following the dictates of their own natures. Encouraged by this success, society has suffered itself to be led into straining the moral standard to the highest possible point, and thus it has forced its members into a yet greater estrangement from their instinctual dispositions. They are consequently subjected to an unceasing suppression of instinct, the resulting strain of which betrays itself in the most remarkable phenomena of reaction and compensation formations. In the domain of sexuality, where such suppression is most difficult to enforce, the result is seen in the reaction-phenomena of neurotic disorders. Elsewhere the pressure of civilization brings in its train no pathological results, but is shown in malformations of character, and in the perpetual readiness of the inhibited instincts to break through to gratification at any suitable opportunity. Anyone thus compelled to act continually in the sense of precepts which are not the expression of instinctual inclinations, is living, psychologically speaking, beyond his means, and might objectively be designated a hypocrite, whether this difference be clearly known to him or not. It is undeniable that our contemporary civilization is extra-

ordinarily favourable to the production of this form of hypocrisy. One might venture to say that it is based upon such hypocrisy, and that it would have to submit to far-reaching modifications if people were to undertake to live in accordance with the psychological truth. Thus there are very many more hypocrites than truly civilized persons—indeed, it is a debatable point whether a certain degree of civilized hypocrisy be not indispensable for the maintenance of civilization, because the cultural adaptability so far attained by those living to-day would perhaps not prove adequate to the task. On the other hand, the maintenance of civilization even on so questionable a basis offers the prospect of each new generation achieving a farther-reaching transmutation of instinct, and becoming the pioneer of a higher form of civilization.

From the foregoing observations we may already derive this consolation—that our mortification and our grievous disillusionment regarding the uncivilized behaviour of our world-compatriots in this war are shown to be unjustified. They were based on an illusion to which we had abandoned ourselves. In reality our fellow-citizens have not sunk so low as we feared, because they had never risen so high as we believed. That the greater units of humanity, the peoples and states, have mutually abrogated their moral restraints naturally prompted these individuals to permit themselves relief for a while from the heavy pressure of civilization and to grant a passing satisfaction to the instincts it holds in check. This probably caused no breach in the relative morality within their respective national frontiers.

We may, however, obtain insight deeper than this into the change brought about by the war in our former compatriots, and at the same time receive a warning against doing them an injustice. For the evolution of the mind shows a peculiarity which is present in no other process of development. When a village grows into a town, a child into a man, the

village and the child become submerged in the town and the man. Memory alone can trace the earlier features in the new image ; in reality the old materials or forms have been superseded and replaced by new ones. It is otherwise with the development of the mind. Here one can describe the state of affairs, which is a quite peculiar one, only by saying that in this case every earlier stage of development persists alongside the later stage which has developed from it ; the successive stages condition a co-existence, although it is in reference to the same materials that the whole series of transformations has been fashioned. The earlier mental state may not have manifested itself for years, but none the less it is so far present that it may at any time again become the mode of expression of the forces in the mind, and that exclusively, as though all later developments had been annulled, undone. This extraordinary plasticity of the evolution that takes place in the mind is not unlimited in its scope ; it might be described as a special capacity for retroversion—for regression—since it may well happen that a later and higher stage of evolution, once abandoned, cannot be reached again. But the primitive stages can always be re-established ; the primitive mind is, in the fullest meaning of the word, imperishable.

What are called mental diseases inevitably impress the layman with the idea of destruction of the life of mind and soul. In reality, the destruction relates only to later accretions and developments. The essence of mental disease lies in a return to earlier conditions of affective life and functioning. An excellent example of the plasticity of mental life is afforded by the state of sleep, which every night we desire. Since we have learnt to interpret even absurd and chaotic dreams, we know that whenever we sleep we cast off our hard-won morality like a garment, only to put it on again next morning. This divestiture is naturally unattended by any danger because we are paralysed, condemned to inactivity, by the state of sleep. Only through a



dream can we learn of the regression of our emotional life to one of the earliest stages of development. For instance, it is noteworthy that all our dreams are governed by purely egoistic motives. One of my English friends put forward this proposition at a scientific meeting in America, whereupon a lady who was present remarked that that might be the case in Austria, but she could maintain for herself and her friends that *they* were altruistic even in their dreams. My friend, although himself of English race, was obliged to contradict the lady emphatically on the ground of his personal experience in dream-analysis, and to declare that in their dreams high-minded American ladies were quite as egoistical as the Austrians.

Thus the transformations of instinct on which our cultural adaptability is based, may also be permanently or temporarily undone by the experiences of life. Undoubtedly the influences of war are among the forces that can bring about such regression; therefore we need not deny adaptability for culture to all who are at the present time displaying uncivilized behaviour, and we may anticipate that the refinement of their instincts will be restored in times of peace.

There is, however, another symptom in our world-compatriots which has perhaps astonished and shocked us no less than the descent from their ethical nobility which has so greatly distressed us. I mean the narrow-mindedness shown by the best intellects, their obduracy, their inaccessibility to the most forcible arguments, their uncritical credulity for the most disputable assertions. This indeed presents a lamentable picture, and I wish to say emphatically that in this I am by no means a blind partisan who finds all the intellectual shortcomings on one side. But this phenomenon is much easier to account for and much less disquieting than that which we have just considered. Students of human nature and philosophers have long taught us that we are mistaken in regarding our intelligence as

an independent force and in overlooking its dependence upon the emotional life. Our intelligence, they teach us, can function reliably only when it is removed from the influences of strong emotional impulses ; otherwise it behaves merely as an instrument of the will and delivers the inference which the will requires. Thus, in their view, logical arguments are impotent against affective interests, and that is why reasons, which in Falstaff's phrase are ' as plenty as blackberries ', produce so few victories in the conflict with interests. Psycho-analytic experience has, if possible, further confirmed this statement. It daily shows that the shrewdest persons will all of a sudden behave like imbeciles as soon as the needful insight is confronted by an emotional resistance, but will completely regain their wonted acuity once that resistance has been overcome. The logical infatuations into which this war has deluded our fellow-citizens, many of them the best of their kind, are therefore a secondary phenomenon, a consequence of emotional excitement, and are destined, we may hope, to disappear with it.

Having in this way come to understand once more our fellow-citizens who are now so greatly alienated from us, we shall the more easily endure the disillusionment which the nations, those greater units of the human race, have caused us, for we shall perceive that the demands we make upon them ought to be far more modest. Perhaps they are reproducing the course of individual evolution, and still to-day represent very primitive phases in the organization and formation of higher unities. It is in agreement with this that the educative factor of an external compulsion towards morality, which we found to be so effective for the individual, is barely discernible in them. True, we had hoped that the extensive community of interests established by commerce and production would constitute the germ of such a compulsion, but it would seem that nations still obey their immediate passions far more readily than their interests. Their interests

serve them, at most, as rationalizations for their passions ; they parade their interests as their justification for satisfying their passions. Actually why the national units should disdain, detest, abhor one another, and that even when they are at peace, is indeed a mystery. I cannot tell why it is. It is just as though when it becomes a question of a number of people, not to say millions, all individual moral acquirements were obliterated, and only the most primitive, the oldest, the crudest mental attitudes were left. Possibly only future stages in development will be able in any way to alter this regrettable state of affairs. But a little more truthfulness and upright dealing on all sides, both in the personal relations of men to one another and between them and those who govern them, should also do something towards smoothing the way for this transformation.

## II

### OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS DEATH

The second factor to which I attribute our present sense of estrangement in this once lovely and congenial world is the disturbance that has taken place in our attitude towards death, an attitude to which hitherto we have clung so fast.

This attitude was far from straightforward. We were of course prepared to maintain that death was the necessary outcome of life, that everyone owes a debt to Nature and must expect to pay the reckoning—in short, that death was natural, undeniable and unavoidable. In reality, however, we were accustomed to behave as if it were otherwise. We displayed an unmistakable tendency to 'shelve' death, to eliminate it from life. We tried to hush it up ; indeed we even have the saying, 'To think of something as we think of death'.<sup>1</sup> That is our own death, of course. Our

<sup>1</sup> [The German saying is used as an equivalent for 'incredible' or 'unlikely'.—Trans.]

own death is indeed unimaginable, and whenever we make the attempt to imagine it we can perceive that we really survive as spectators. Hence the psycho-analytic school could venture on the assertion that at bottom no one believes in his own death, or to put the same thing in another way, in the unconscious every one of us is convinced of his own immortality.

As to the death of another, the civilized man will carefully avoid speaking of such a possibility in the hearing of the person concerned. Children alone disregard this restriction; unabashed they threaten one another with the eventuality of death, and even go so far as to talk of it before one whom they love, as for instance: 'Dear Mamma, it will be a pity when you are dead but then I shall do this or that.' The civilized adult can hardly even entertain the thought of another's death without seeming to himself hard or evil-hearted; unless, of course, as a physician, lawyer or something of the sort, he has to deal with death professionally. Least of all will he permit himself to think of the death of another if with that event some gain to himself in freedom, means or position is connected. This sensitiveness of ours is of course impotent to arrest the hand of death; when it has fallen, we are always deeply affected, as if we were prostrated by the overthrow of our expectations. Our habit is to lay stress on the fortuitous causation of the death—accident, disease, infection, advanced age; in this way we betray our endeavour to modify the significance of death from a necessity to an accident. A multitude of simultaneous deaths appears to us exceedingly terrible. Towards the dead person himself we take up a special attitude, something like admiration for one who has accomplished a very difficult task. We suspend criticism of him, overlook his possible misdoings, issue the command: *De mortuis nil nisi bene*, and regard it as justifiable to set forth in the funeral-oration and upon the tombstone only that which is most favourable to his memory. Consideration for the dead, who no

longer need it, is dearer to us than the truth, and certainly, for most of us, is dearer also than consideration for the living.

The culmination of this conventional attitude towards death among civilized persons is seen in our complete collapse when death has fallen on some person whom we love—a parent or a partner in marriage, a brother or sister, a child, a dear friend. Our hopes, our pride, our happiness, lie in the grave with him, we will not be consoled, we will not fill the loved one's place. We behave then as if we belonged to the tribe of the Asra, who must die too when those die whom they love.

But this attitude of ours towards death has a powerful effect upon our lives. Life is impoverished, it loses in interest, when the highest stake in the game of living, life itself, may not be risked. It becomes as flat, as superficial, as one of those American flirtations in which it is from the first understood that nothing is to happen, contrasted with a Continental love-affair in which both partners must constantly bear in mind the serious consequences. Our ties of affection, the unbearable intensity of our grief, make us disinclined to court danger for ourselves and for those who belong to us. We dare not contemplate a great many undertakings which are dangerous but quite indispensable, such as attempts at mechanical flight, expeditions to far countries, experiments with explosive substances. We are paralysed by the thought of who is to replace the son with his mother, the husband with his wife, the father with his children, if there should come disaster. The tendency to exclude death from our calculations brings in its train a number of other renunciations and exclusions. And yet the motto of the Hanseatic League declared: '*Navigare necesse est, vivere non necesse*'! (It is necessary to sail the seas, it is not necessary to live.)

It is an inevitable result of all this that we should seek in the world of fiction, of general literature and

of the theatre compensation for the impoverishment of life. There we still find people who know how to die, indeed, who are even capable of killing someone else. There alone too we can enjoy the condition which makes it possible for us to reconcile ourselves with death—namely, that behind all the vicissitudes of life we preserve our existence intact. For it is indeed too sad that in life it should be as it is in chess, when one false move may lose us the game, but with the difference that we can have no second game, no return-match. In the realm of fiction we discover that plurality of lives for which we crave. We die in the person of a given hero, yet we survive him, and are ready to die again with the next hero just as safely.

It is evident that the war is bound to sweep away this conventional treatment of death. Death will no longer be denied; we are forced to believe in him. People really are dying, and now not one by one, but many at a time, often ten thousand in a single day. Nor is it any longer an accident. To be sure, it still seems a matter of chance whether a particular bullet hits this man or that; but the survivor may easily be hit by another bullet; and the accumulation puts an end to the impression of accident. Life has, in truth, become interesting again; it has regained its full significance.

Here a distinction should be made between two groups—those who personally risk their lives in battle, and those who have remained at home and have only to wait for the loss of their dear ones by wounds, disease, or infection. It would indeed be very interesting to study the changes in the psychology of the combatants, but I know too little about it. We must stop short at the second group, to which we ourselves belong. I have said already that in my opinion the bewilderment and the paralysis of energies, now so generally felt by us, are essentially determined in part by the circumstance that we cannot maintain our former attitude towards death, and have not yet dis-

covered a new one. Perhaps it will assist us to do this if we direct our psychological inquiry towards two other relations with death—the one which we may ascribe to primitive, prehistoric peoples, and that other which in every one of us still exists, but which conceals itself, invisible to consciousness, in the deepest-lying strata of our mental life.

The attitude of prehistoric man towards death is known to us, of course, only by inferences and reconstruction, but I believe that these processes have furnished us with tolerably trustworthy information.

Primitive man assumed a very remarkable attitude towards death. It was far from consistent, was indeed extremely contradictory. On the one hand, he took death seriously, recognized it as the termination of life and used it to that end; on the other hand, he also denied death, reduced it to nothingness. This contradiction arose from the circumstance that he took up radically different attitudes towards the death of another man, of a stranger, of an enemy, and towards his own. The death of the other man he had no objection to; it meant the annihilation of a creature hated, and primitive man had no scruples against bringing it about. He was, in truth, a very violent being, more cruel and more malignant than other animals. He liked to kill, and killed as a matter of course. That instinct which is said to restrain the other animals from killing and devouring their own species we need not attribute to him.

Hence the primitive history of mankind is filled with murder. Even to-day, the history of the world which our children learn in school is essentially a series of race-murders. The obscure sense of guilt which has been common to man since prehistoric times, and which in many religions has been condensed into the doctrine of original sin, is probably the outcome of a blood-guiltiness incurred by primitive man. In my book *Totem und Tabu* (1913) I have, following clues given by W. Robertson Smith, Atkinson and Charles

Darwin, attempted to surmise the nature of this primal guilt, and I think that even the contemporary Christian doctrine enables us to deduce it. If the Son of God was obliged to sacrifice his life to redeem mankind from original sin, then by the law of the talion, the requital of like for like, that sin must have been a killing, a murder. Nothing else could call for the sacrifice of a life in expiation. And if the original sin was an offence against God the Father, the primal crime of mankind must have been a parricide, the killing of the primal father of the primitive human horde, whose image in memory was later transfigured into a deity.<sup>1</sup>

His own death was for primitive man certainly just as unimaginable and unreal as it is for any one of us to-day. But there was for him a case in which the two opposite attitudes towards death came into conflict and joined issue; and this case was momentous and productive of far-reaching results. It occurred when primitive man saw someone who belonged to him die—his wife, his child, his friend, whom assuredly he loved as we love ours, for love cannot be much younger than the lust to kill. Then, in his pain, he had to learn that one can indeed die oneself, an admission against which his whole being revolted; for each of these loved ones was, in very truth, a part of his own beloved ego. But even so, on the other hand, such deaths had a rightfulness for him, since in each of the loved persons something of the hostile stranger had resided. The law of ambivalence of feeling, which to this day governs our emotional relations with those whom we love most, had assuredly a very much wider validity in primitive periods. Thus these beloved dead had also been enemies and strangers who had aroused in him a measure of hostile feeling.<sup>2</sup>

Philosophers have declared that the intellectual enigma presented to primitive man by the picture of death was what forced him to reflection, and thus that

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Die infantile Wiederkehr des Totemismus', *Totem und Tabu*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 'Tabu und Ambivalenz', *Totem und Tabu*.



it became the starting-point of all speculation. I believe that here the philosophers think too philosophically, and give too little consideration to the primarily effective motives. I would therefore limit and correct this assertion : By the body of his slain enemy primitive man would have triumphed, without racking his brains about the enigma of life and death. Not the intellectual enigma, and not every death, but the conflict of feeling at the death of loved, yet withal alien and hated persons was what disengaged the spirit of inquiry in man. Of this conflict of feeling psychology was the direct offspring. Man could no longer keep death at a distance, for he had tasted of it in his grief for the dead ; but still he did not consent entirely to acknowledge it, for he could not conceive of himself as dead. So he devised a compromise ; he conceded the fact of death, even his own death, but denied it the significance of annihilation, which he had had no motive for contesting where the death of his enemy had been concerned. During his contemplation of his loved one's corpse he invented ghosts, and it was his sense of guilt at the satisfaction mingled with his sorrow that turned these new-born spirits into evil, dreaded demons. The changes wrought by death suggested to him the disjunction of the individuality into a body and a soul—first of all into several souls ; in this way his train of thought ran parallel with the process of disintegration which sets in with death. The enduring remembrance of the dead became the basis for assuming other modes of existence, gave him the conception of life continued after apparent death.

These subsequent modes of existence were at first no more than appendages to that life which death had brought to a close—shadowy, empty of content, and until later times but slightly valued ; they showed as yet a pathetic inadequacy. We may recall the answer made to Odysseus by the soul of Achilles :

Erst in the life on the earth, no less than a god we revered thee,  
We the Achaeans ; and now in the realm of the dead as a monarch

Here dost thou rule; then why should death thus grieve thee,  
Achilles?

Thus did I speak: forthwith then answering thus he addressed me,  
Speak not smoothly of death, I beseech, O famous Odysseus,  
Better by far to remain on the earth as the thrall of another;  
E'en of a portionless man that hath means right scanty of living,  
Rather than reign sole king in the realm of the bodiless phantoms.<sup>1</sup>

Or in the powerful, bitterly burlesque rendering by Heine, where he makes Achilles say that the most insignificant little Philistine at Stuckert-on-the-Neckar, in being alive, is far happier than he, the son of Peleus, the dead hero, the prince of shadows in the nether world.

It was not until much later that the different religions devised the view of this after-life as the more desirable, the truly valid one, and degraded the life which is ended by death to a mere preparation. It was then but consistent to extend life backward into the past, to conceive of former existences, transmigrations of the soul and reincarnation, all with the purpose of depriving death of its meaning as the termination of life. So early did the denial of death, which above we designated a convention of civilization, actually originate.

Beside the corpse of the beloved were generated not only the idea of the soul, the belief in immortality, and a great part of man's deep-rooted sense of guilt, but also the earliest inkling of ethical law. The first and most portentous prohibition of the awakening conscience was: Thou shalt not kill. It was born of the reaction against that hate-gratification which lurked behind the grief for the loved dead, and was gradually extended to unloved strangers and finally even to enemies.

This final extension is no longer experienced by civilized man. When the frenzied conflict of this war shall have been decided, every one of the victorious warriors will joyfully return to his home, his wife and his children, undelayed and undisturbed by any thought

<sup>1</sup> *Odyssey*, xi. 484-491; translated by H. B. Cotterill.

of the enemy he has slain either at close quarters or by distant weapons of destruction. It is worthy of note that such primitive races as still inhabit the earth, who are undoubtedly closer than we to primitive man, act differently in this respect, or did so act until they came under the influence of our civilization. The savage—Australian, Bushman, Tierra del Fuegan—is by no means a remorseless murderer; when he returns victorious from the war-path he may not set foot in his village nor touch his wife until he has atoned for the murders committed in war by penances which are often prolonged and toilsome. This may be presumed, of course, to be the outcome of superstition; the savage still goes in fear of the avenging spirits of the slain. But the spirits of the fallen enemy are nothing but the expression of his own conscience, uneasy on account of his blood-guiltiness; behind this superstition lurks a vein of ethical sensitiveness which has been lost by us civilized men.<sup>1</sup>

Pious souls, who cherish the thought of our remoteness from whatever is evil and base, will be quick to draw from the early appearance and the urgency of the prohibition of murder gratifying conclusions in regard to the force of these ethical stirrings, which must consequently have been implanted in us. Unfortunately this argument proves even more for the opposite contention. So powerful a prohibition can only be directed against an equally powerful impulse. What no human soul desires there is no need to prohibit; <sup>2</sup> it is automatically excluded. The very emphasis of the commandment *Thou shalt not kill* makes it certain that we spring from an endless ancestry of murderers, with whom the lust for killing was in the blood, as possibly it is to this day with ourselves. The ethical strivings of mankind, of which we need not in the least depreciate the strength and the significance, are an acquisition accompanying evolution; they have

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Totem und Tabu*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the brilliant argument of Frazer quoted in *Totem und Tabu*.

then become the hereditary possession of those human beings alive to-day, though unfortunately only in a very variable measure.

Let us now leave primitive man, and turn to the unconscious in our own mental life. Here we depend entirely upon the psycho-analytic method of investigation, the only one which plumbs such depths. We ask what is the attitude of our unconscious towards the problem of death. The answer must be: Almost exactly the same as primitive man's. In this respect, as in many others, the man of prehistoric ages survives unchanged in our unconscious. Thus, our unconscious does not believe in its own death; it behaves as if immortal. What we call our 'unconscious' (the deepest strata of our minds, made up of instinctual impulses) knows nothing whatever of negatives or of denials—contradictories coincide in it—and so it knows nothing whatever of our own death, for to that we can give only a negative purport. It follows that no instinct we possess is ready for a belief in death. This is even perhaps the secret of heroism. The rational explanation for heroism is that it consists in the decision that the personal life cannot be so precious as certain abstract general ideals. But more frequent, in my view, is that instinctive and impulsive heroism which knows no such motivation, and flouts danger in the spirit of Anzengruber's Hans the Road - Mender: 'Nothing can happen to *me*.' Or else that motivation serves but to clear away the hesitation which might delay an heroic reaction in accord with the unconscious. The dread of death, which dominates us oftener than we know, is on the other hand something secondary, being usually the outcome of the sense of guilt.

On the other hand, for strangers and for enemies, we do acknowledge death, and consign them to it quite as readily and unthinkingly as did primitive man. Here there does, indeed, appear a distinction which in practice shows for a decisive one. Our unconscious does not carry out the killing; it merely thinks it and

wishes it. But it would be wrong entirely to depreciate this psychical reality as compared with actual reality. It is significant and pregnant enough. In our unconscious we daily and hourly deport all who stand in our way, all who have offended or injured us. The expression: 'Devil take him!' which so frequently comes to our lips in joking anger, and which really means 'Death take him!' is in our unconscious an earnest deliberate death-wish. Indeed, our unconscious will murder even for trifles; like the ancient Athenian law of Draco, it knows no other punishment for crime than death; and this has a certain consistency, for every injury to our almighty and autocratic ego is at bottom a crime of *lèse-majesté*.

And so, if we are to be judged by the wishes in our unconscious, we are, like primitive man, simply a gang of murderers. It is well that all these wishes do not possess the potency which was attributed to them by primitive men;<sup>1</sup> in the cross-fire of mutual maledictions mankind would long since have perished, the best and wisest of men and the loveliest and fairest of women with the rest.

Psycho-analysis finds little credence among laymen for assertions such as these. They reject them as calumnies which are confuted by conscious experience, and adroitly overlook the faint indications through which the unconscious is apt to betray itself even to consciousness. It is therefore relevant to point out that many thinkers who could not have been influenced by psycho-analysis have quite definitely accused our unspoken thoughts of a readiness, heedless of the murder-prohibition, to get rid of anyone who stands in our way. From many examples of this I will choose one very famous one:

In *Le Père Goriot*, Balzac alludes to a passage in the works of J. J. Rousseau where that author asks the reader what he would do if—without leaving Paris and of course without being discovered—he could kill, with

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'Allmacht der Gedanken', *Totem und Tabu*.

great profit to himself, an old mandarin in Peking by a mere act of the will. Rousseau implies that he would not give much for the life of this dignitary. '*Tuer son mandarin*' has passed into a proverb for this secret readiness even on the part of ourselves to-day.

There is as well a whole array of cynical jests and anecdotes which testify in the same sense, such as, for instance, the remark attributed to a husband: 'If one of us dies, I shall go and live in Paris.' Such cynical jokes would not be possible unless they contained an unacknowledged verity which could not be countenanced if seriously and baldly expressed. In joke, as we know, even the truth may be told.

As for primitive man, so also for us in our unconscious, there arises a case in which the two contrasted attitudes towards death, that which acknowledges it as the annihilation of life and the other which denies it as ineffectual to that end, conflict and join issue—and this case is the same as in primitive ages—the death, or the endangered life, of one whom we love, a parent or partner in marriage, a brother or sister, a child or dear friend. These loved ones are on the one hand an inner possession, an ingredient of our personal ego, but on the other hand are partly strangers, even enemies. With the exception of only a very few situations, there adheres to the tenderest and closest of our affections a vestige of hostility which can excite an unconscious death-wish. But this conflict of ambivalence does not now, as it did then, find issue in theories of the soul and of ethics, but in neuroses, which afford us deep insight into normal mental life as well. How often have those physicians who practise psycho-analysis had to deal with the symptom of an exaggeratedly tender care for the well-being of relatives, or with entirely unfounded self-reproaches after the death of a loved person. The study of these cases has left them in no doubt about the extent and the significance of unconscious death-wishes.

The layman feels an extraordinary horror at the

possibility of such feelings, and takes this repulsion as a legitimate ground for disbelief in the assertions of psycho-analysis. I think, mistakenly. No depreciation of our love is intended, and none is actually contained in it. It is indeed foreign to our intelligence as also to our feelings thus to couple love and hate, but Nature, by making use of these twin opposites, contrives to keep love ever vigilant and fresh, so as to guard it against the hate which lurks behind it. It might be said that we owe the fairest flowers of our love-life to the reaction against the hostile impulse which we divine in our breasts.

To sum up : Our unconscious is just as inaccessible to the idea of our own death, as murderously minded towards the stranger, as divided or ambivalent towards the loved, as was man in earliest antiquity. But how far we have moved from this primitive state in our conventionally civilized attitude towards death !

It is easy to see the effect of the impact of war on this duality. It strips us of the later accretions of civilization, and lays bare the primal man in each of us. It constrains us once more to be heroes who cannot believe in their own death ; it stamps the alien as the enemy, whose death is to be brought about or desired ; it counsels us to rise above the death of those we love. But war is not to be abolished ; so long as the conditions of existence among the nations are so varied, and the repulsions between peoples so intense, there will be, must be, wars. The question then arises : Is it not we who must give in, who must adapt ourselves to them ? Is it not for us to confess that in our civilized attitude towards death we are once more living psychologically beyond our means, and must reform and give truth its due ? Would it not be better to give death the place in actuality and in our thoughts which properly belongs to it, and to yield a little more prominence to that unconscious attitude towards death which we have hitherto so carefully suppressed ? This hardly seems indeed a greater achievement, but rather

a backward step in more than one direction, a regression ; but it has the merit of taking somewhat more into account the true state of affairs, and of making life again more endurable for us. To endure life remains, when all is said, the first duty of all living beings. Illusion can have no value if it makes this more difficult for us.

We remember the old saying : *Si vis pacem, para bellum*. If you desire peace, prepare for war.

It would be timely thus to paraphrase it : *Si vis vitam, para mortem*. If you would endure life, be prepared for death.



## XVIII

### SOME CHARACTER-TYPES MET WITH IN PSYCHO-ANALYTIC WORK <sup>1</sup>

(1915)

**W**HEN the physician is carrying out psycho-analytic treatment of a neurotic, his interest is by no means primarily directed to the patient's character. He is far more desirous to know what the symptoms signify, what instinctual impulses lurk behind them and are satisfied by them, and by what transitions the mysterious path has led from those impulses to these symptoms. But the technique which he is obliged to follow soon constrains him to direct his immediate curiosity towards other objectives. He observes that his investigation is threatened by resistances set up against him by the patient, and these resistances he may justly attribute to the latter's character, which now acquires the first claim on his interest.

What opposes itself to the physician's labours is not always those traits of character which the patient recognizes in himself and which are attributed to him by those around him. Peculiarities in the patient which he had seemed to possess only in a modest degree are often displayed in surprising intensity, or attitudes reveal themselves in him which in other relations of life would not have been betrayed. The following pages will be devoted to describing and tracing back to their origin some of these astonishing traits of character.

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Imago*, Bd. IV., 1915-16; reprinted in *Samm- lung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by E. Colburn Mayne.]

## I

## THE ' EXCEPTIONS '

The psycho-analytic worker is continually confronted with the task of inducing the patient to renounce an immediate and directly attainable source of pleasure. He need not renounce all pleasure ; that one could probably expect of no human being, and even religion is obliged to support its ordinance that earthly pleasure shall be set aside by the promise of an incomparably greater degree of more inestimable bliss in another world. No, the patient need merely renounce such gratifications as will inevitably be detrimental to him ; he need only temporarily abjure, only learn to exchange an immediate source of pleasure for one better assured though longer delayed. Or, in other words, under the physician's guidance he must make that advance from the pleasure-principle to the reality-principle by which the mature human being is distinguished from the child. In this educative process, the clearer insight of the physician plays but an insignificant part ; as a rule, he can say to his patient only what the latter's own reason can say to him. But it is not the same thing to know a thing in oneself and to hear it from someone outside oneself ; the physician takes the part of this significant outsider ; he makes use of the influence which one human being can exercise over another. Or—remembering that the practice of psycho-analysis is to replace etiolated derivatives by the original and fundamental—let us say that the physician in his educative work makes use of one of the components of love. In this work of after-education, he probably does no more than repeat the process which first of all made training of any kind possible. By the side of the necessities of existence, love is the great teacher ; and it is by his love for those nearest him that the incomplete human being is induced to respect the decrees of necessity and to spare himself the punishment attendant on any infringement of it.

Thus, when one exacts from the patient a provisional renunciation of any source of pleasure, a sacrifice, a readiness to accept some temporary suffering in view of a better end, or even only the resolve to submit to a necessity which applies to all human beings, one will come upon individuals who resist such an appeal on special grounds. They say that they have renounced enough and suffered enough, and have a claim to be spared any further exactions; they will submit no longer to disagreeable necessity, for they are *exceptions* and intend to remain so too. In one patient of the kind this claim had grown into the conviction that a special providence watched over him, which would protect him from any painful sacrifices of the sort. Against an inner confidence expressing itself thus strongly the arguments of the physician will achieve nothing; even his influence, indeed, is powerless at first, and it becomes clear to him that he must find out the sources which are feeding the injurious prepossession.

Now it is surely indubitable that everyone would fain consider himself an 'exception' and claim privileges over others. But precisely because of this there must be a particular reason, and one not universally available, if any individual actually proclaims himself an exception and behaves as such. This reason may be of more than one kind; in the cases I investigated I succeeded in tracing it to a common peculiarity in the earlier experiences of these patients' lives. Their neuroses were connected with an event or painful experience from which they had suffered in their earliest childhood, one in respect of which they knew themselves to be guiltless, and which they could look upon as an unjust injury inflicted upon them. The privileges that they claimed as a result of this injustice, and the rebelliousness it engendered, had contributed not a little to intensifying the conflicts leading to the outbreak of neurosis. In one of these patients, a woman, the attitude in question developed when she learnt that a painful organic trouble, which had hindered her from

attaining the aim of her life, was of congenital origin. So long as she looked upon this trouble as an accidental acquisition during later life, she bore it patiently; as soon as she knew it was part of her congenital inheritance, she became rebellious. The young man who believed himself watched over by a special providence had been in infancy the victim of an accidental infection from his wet-nurse, and had lived his whole later life on the 'insurance-dole', as it were, of his claims to compensation, without having any idea on what he based those claims. In his case the analysis, which reconstructed this event out of obscure glimmerings of memory and interpretations of the symptoms, was confirmed objectively by information from the family.

For reasons which will be easily understood I cannot communicate very much about these and other case-histories. Nor do I propose to go into the obvious analogy between deformities of character resulting from protracted sickness in childhood and the behaviour of whole nations whose past history has been full of suffering. Instead, however, I will take the opportunity of pointing to that figure in the creative work of the greatest of poets in whose character the claim to be an exception is closely bound up with and motivated by the circumstance of congenital injury.

In the opening soliloquy to Shakespeare's *Richard III.*, Gloucester, who subsequently becomes King, says:

But I, that am not shaped for sportive tricks,  
 Nor made to court an amorous looking-glass;  
 I, that am rudely stamp'd, and want love's majesty  
 To strut before a wanton ambling nymph;  
 I, that am curtail'd of this fair proportion,  
 Cheated of feature by dissembling Nature,  
 Deform'd, unfinish'd, sent before my time  
 Into this breathing world, scarce half made up,  
 And that so lamely and unfashionable,  
 That dogs bark at me as I halt by them;

\* \* \* \* \*

And therefore, since I cannot prove a lover,  
 To entertain these fair well-spoken days,  
 I am determin'd to prove a villain,  
 And hate the idle pleasures of these days.

At a first glance this tirade will possibly seem unrelated to our present theme. Richard seems to say nothing more than 'I find this idle way of life tedious, and I want to enjoy myself. As I cannot play the lover on account of my deformity, I will play the villain; I will intrigue, murder, do anything I please.' So wanton a cause of action could not but stifle any stirring of sympathy in the audience, if it were not a screen for something much more serious. And besides, the play would be psychologically impossible, for the writer must know how to furnish us with a secret background of sympathy for his hero, if we are to admire his boldness and adroitness without some inward protest; and such sympathy can only be based on understanding or on a sense of a possible inner fellowship with him.

I think, therefore, that Richard's soliloquy does not say everything; it merely gives a hint, and leaves us to fill up the indications. When we complete it, however, the appearance of wantonness vanishes, the bitterness and minuteness with which Richard has depicted his deformity make their full effect, and we clearly perceive the bond of fellowship which constrains us to sympathy with the miscreant. The soliloquy then signifies: 'Nature has done me a grievous wrong in denying me that beauty of form which wins human love. Life owes me reparation for this, and I will see that I get it. I have a right to be an exception, to overstep those bounds by which others let themselves be circumscribed. I may do wrong myself, since wrong has been done to me'—and now we feel that we ourselves could be like Richard, nay, that we are already a little like him. Richard is an enormously magnified representation of something we can all discover in ourselves. We all think we have reason to reproach nature and our destiny for congenital and infantile disadvantages; we all demand reparation for early wounds to our narcissism, our self-love. Why did not nature give us the golden curls of Balder or the

strength of Siegfried or the lofty brow of genius or the noble profile of aristocracy? Why were we born in a middle-class dwelling instead of in a royal palace? We could as well carry off beauty and distinction as any of those whom now we cannot but envy.

It is, however, a subtle economy of art in the poet not to permit his hero to give complete expression to all his secret springs of action. By this means he obliges us to supplement, he engages our intellectual activity, diverts it from critical reflections, and keeps us closely identified with his hero. A bungler in his place would deliberately express all that he wishes to reveal to us, and would then find himself confronted by our cool, untrammelled intelligence, which would preclude any great degree of illusion.

We will not, however, dismiss the 'exceptions' without pointing out that the claim of women to privileges and to exemption from so many of the importunities of existence rests upon the same foundation. As we learn from psycho-analytic work, women regard themselves as wronged from infancy, as undeservedly cut short and set back; and the embitterment of so many daughters against their mothers derives, in the last analysis, from the reproach against her of having brought them into the world as women instead of as men.

## II

### THOSE WRECKED BY SUCCESS

Psycho-analytic work has furnished us with the rule that people fall ill of a neurosis as a result of *frustration*. The frustration meant is that of satisfaction for their libidinal desires and a long circumlocution is necessary before the law becomes comprehensible. That is to say, for a neurosis to break out there must be a conflict between the libidinal desires of a person and that part of his being which we

call his ego, the expression of his instinct of self-preservation, which also contains his ideals of his own character. A pathogenic conflict of this kind takes place only when the libido is desirous of pursuing paths and aims which the ego has long overcome and despised, and has therefore henceforth proscribed ; and this the libido never does until it is deprived of the possibility of an ideal satisfaction consistent with the ego. Hence, privation, frustration of a real satisfaction, is the first condition for the outbreak of a neurosis, although, indeed, it is far from being the only one.

So much the more surprising, indeed bewildering, must it appear when as a physician one makes the discovery that people occasionally fall ill precisely because a deeply-rooted and long-cherished wish has come to fulfilment. It seems then as though they could not endure their bliss, for of the causative connection between this fulfilment and the falling-ill there can be no question. I had an opportunity in this way of obtaining insight into a woman's story, which I propose to describe as typical of these tragic occurrences.

Well-born and well-brought-up, as a quite young girl she could not restrain her zest for life ; she ran away from home and roved adventurously till she made the acquaintance of an artist who could appreciate her feminine charms but could also divine, despite her degradation, the finer qualities she possessed. He took her to live with him, and she proved a faithful and devoted companion, apparently needing only social rehabilitation for complete happiness. After many years of life together, he succeeded in getting his family to recognize her, and was then prepared to make her his legal wife. At this critical moment she began to go to pieces. She neglected the house whose rightful mistress she was now about to become, imagined herself persecuted by his relatives, who wanted to take her into the family, debarred her lover, through senseless jealousy, from all social intercourse, hindered him

in his artistic work, and soon fell into incurable mental illness.

On another occasion I observed a most respectable man who, himself professor at a university, had for many years cherished the natural wish to succeed the master who had initiated him into the life of learning. When this elder man retired, and the other's colleagues intimated that it was he whom they desired as successor, he began to hesitate, depreciated his own merits, declared himself unworthy to fill the position designed for him, and fell into a state of melancholy which unfitted him for all activity for some years after.

Different as these two cases are, they yet coincide on this one point—that illness followed close upon the wish-fulfilment, and annihilated all enjoyment of it.

The contradiction between such experiences and the rule that frustration induces illness is not insoluble. The distinction between an *internal* and an *external* frustration dispels it. When in actuality the object in which the libido can find its satisfaction is withheld, this is an external frustration. In itself it is inoperative, not pathogenic, until an internal frustration has joined hands with it. This must proceed from the ego, and must dispute the right of the libido to the other objects that it then desires to possess. Only then does a conflict arise, and the possibility of neurotic illness, *i.e.* of a substitutive gratification proceeding circuitously by way of the repressed unconscious. The internal frustration is present, therefore, in every case, only it does not come into operation until the external, actual frustration has prepared the ground for it. In those exceptional cases where illness ensues on success, the internal frustration has operated alone—has indeed only made its appearance when an external frustration has been replaced by fulfilment of the wish. At first sight there remains something astonishing about this ; but on closer consideration we shall reflect that it is not so very unusual for the ego to tolerate a wish as harmless so long as this exists in phantasy alone and seems



remote from fulfilment, while it will defend itself hotly against such a wish as soon as it approaches fulfilment and threatens to become an actuality. The distinction between this and familiar situations in neurosis-formation is merely that usually it is internal intensifications of the libidinal cathexis which turn the phantasy, that has hitherto been thought little of and tolerated, into a dreaded opponent ; while in these cases of ours the signal for the outbreak of conflict is given by an actual external alteration in circumstances.

Analytic work soon shows us that it is forces of conscience which forbid the person to gain the long-hoped-for enjoyment from the fortunate change in reality. It is a difficult task, however, to discover the essence and origin of these censoring and punishing tendencies, which so often surprise us by their presence where we do not expect to find them. What we know or conjecture on the point I shall discuss, for the usual reasons, in relation not to cases of clinical observation, but to figures which great writers have created from the wealth of their knowledge of the soul.

A person who collapses on attaining her aim, after striving for it with single-minded energy, is Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth. In the beginning there is no hesitation, no sign of any inner conflict in her, no endeavour but that of overcoming the scruples of her ambitious and yet gentle-hearted husband. She is ready to sacrifice even her womanliness to her murderous intention, without reflecting on the decisive part which this womanliness must play when the question arises of preserving the aim of her ambition, which has been attained through a crime.

Come, you spirits  
That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here  
. . . Come to my woman's breasts,  
And take my milk for gall, you murdering ministers !  
(Act I. Sc. 5.)

. . . I have given suck, and know  
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me :

I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
 Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,  
 And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you  
 Have done to this.

(Act I. Sc. 7.)

One solitary stirring of unwillingness comes over her before the deed :

. . . Had he not resembled  
 My father as he slept, I had done it. . . .

Then, when she has become Queen by the murder of Duncan, she betrays for a moment something like disillusion, like satiety. We know not why.

. . . Nought's had, all's spent,  
 Where our desire is got without content :  
 'Tis safer to be that which we destroy,  
 Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

(Act III. Sc. 2.)

Nevertheless, she holds out. In the banquet-scene which follows on these words, she alone keeps her head, cloaks her husband's distraction, and finds a pretext for dismissing the guests. And then we see her no more ; until (in the first scene of the fifth act) we again behold her as a sleep-walker, with the impressions of that night of murder fixed on her mind. Again, as then, she seeks to put heart into her husband :

' Fie, my lord, fie ! a soldier, and afeard ? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account ? '

She hears the knocking at the door, which terrified her husband after the deed. Next, she strives to 'undo the deed which cannot be undone'. She washes her hands, which are blood-stained and smell of blood, and is conscious of the futility of the attempt. Remorse seems to have borne her down—she who had seemed so remorseless. When she dies, Macbeth, who meanwhile has become as inexorable as she had been in the beginning, can find only a brief epitaph for her :

She should have died hereafter ;  
 There would have been a time for such a word.  
 (Act V. Sc. 5.)

And now we ask ourselves what it was that broke this character which had seemed forged from the most perdurable metal? Is it only disillusion, the different aspect shown by the accomplished deed, and are we to infer that even in Lady Macbeth an originally gentle and womanly nature had been worked up to a concentration and high tension which could not long endure, or ought we to seek for such signs of a deeper motivation as will make this collapse more humanly intelligible to us?

It seems to me impossible to come to any decision. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is a *pièce d'occasion*, written for the accession of James, who had hitherto been King of Scotland. The plot was ready-made, and had been handled by other contemporary writers, whose work Shakespeare probably made use of in his customary manner. It offered remarkable analogies to the actual situation. The 'virginal' Elizabeth, of whom it was rumoured that she had never been capable of child-bearing and who had once described herself as 'a barren stock',<sup>1</sup> in an anguished outcry at the news of James's birth, was obliged by this very childlessness of hers to let the Scottish king become her successor. And he was the son of that Mary Stuart whose execution she, though reluctantly, had decreed, and who, despite the clouding of their relations by political concerns, was yet of her blood and might be called her guest.

The accession of James I. was like a demonstration of the curse of unfruitfulness and the blessings reserved for those who carry on the race. And Shakespeare's *Macbeth* develops on the theme of this same contrast.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Macbeth*, Act III. Sc. 1 :

Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,  
 And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,  
 Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,  
 No son of mine succeeding. . . .

The three Fates, the 'weird sisters', have assured him that he shall indeed be king, but to Banquo they promise that *his* children shall obtain possession of the crown. Macbeth is incensed by this decree of destiny; he is not content with the satisfaction of his own ambition, he desires to found a dynasty and not to have murdered for the benefit of strangers. This point is overlooked when Shakespeare's play is regarded only as a tragedy of ambition. It is clear that Macbeth cannot live for ever, and thus there is but one way for him to disprove that part of the prophecy which opposes his wishes—namely, to have children himself, children who can succeed him. And he seems to expect them from his vigorous wife :

Bring forth men-children only !  
 For thy undaunted mettle should compose  
 Nothing but males. . . .

(Act I. Sc. 7.)

And equally it is clear that if he is deceived in this expectation he must submit to destiny; otherwise his actions lose all purpose and are transformed into the blind fury of one doomed to destruction, who is resolved to destroy beforehand all that he can reach. We watch Macbeth undergo this development, and at the height of the tragedy we hear that shattering cry from Macduff, which has often ere now been recognized to have many meanings and possibly to contain the key to the change in Macbeth :

He has no children !

(Act IV. Sc. 3.)

Undoubtedly that signifies 'Only because he is himself childless could he murder my children'; but more may be implied in it, and above all it might be said to lay bare the essential motive which not only forces Macbeth to go far beyond his own true nature, but also assails the hard character of his wife at its only weak place. If one looks back upon *Macbeth* from the culmination reached in these words of Macduff's, one

sees that the whole play is sown with references to the father-and-children relation. The murder of the kindly Duncan is little else than parricide ; in Banquo's case, Macbeth kills the father while the son escapes him ; and he kills Macduff's children because the father has fled from him. A bloody child, and then a crowned one, are shown him by the witches in the conjuration-scene ; the armed head seen previously is doubtless Macbeth's own. But in the background arises the sinister form of the avenger, Macduff, who is himself an exception to the laws of generation, since he was not born of his mother but ripp'd from her womb.

It would be a perfect example of poetic justice in the manner of the talion if the childlessness of Macbeth and the barrenness of his Lady were the punishment for their crimes against the sanctity of geniture—if Macbeth could not become a father because he had robbed children of their father and a father of his children, and if Lady Macbeth had suffered the unsexing she had demanded of the spirits of murder. I believe one could without more ado explain the illness of Lady Macbeth, the transformation of her callousness into penitence, as a reaction to her childlessness, by which she is convinced of her impotence against the decrees of nature, and at the same time admonished that she has only herself to blame if her crime has been barren of the better part of its desired results.

In the *Chronicle* of Holinshed (1577), whence Shakespeare took the plot of *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth is only once mentioned as the ambitious wife who instigates her husband to murder that she may herself be queen. Of her subsequent fate and of the development of her character there is no word at all. On the other hand, it would seem that there the change in Macbeth to a sanguinary tyrant is motivated just in the way we have suggested. For in Holinshed ten years pass between the murder of Duncan, whereby Macbeth becomes king, and his further misdeeds ; and in these ten years he is shown as a stern but righteous ruler.

It is not until after this period that the change begins in him, under the influence of the tormenting apprehension that the prophecy to Banquo will be fulfilled as was that of his own destiny. Then only does he contrive the murder of Banquo, and, as in Shakespeare, is driven from one crime to another. Holinshed does not expressly say that it was his childlessness which urged him to these courses, but there is warrant enough—both time and occasion—for this probable motivation. Not so in Shakespeare. Events crowd breathlessly on one another in the tragedy, so that to judge by the statements made by the persons in the play about one week represents the duration of time assigned to it.<sup>1</sup> This acceleration takes the ground from under our attempts at reconstructing the motives for the change in the characters of Macbeth and his wife. There is no time for a long-drawn disappointment of their hopes of offspring to enervate the woman and drive the man to an insane defiance; and it remains impossible to resolve the contradiction that so many subtle inter-relations in the plot, and between it and its occasion, point to a common origin of them in the motive of childlessness, and that yet the period of time in the tragedy expressly precludes a development of character from any but a motive contained in the play.

What, however, these motives can have been which in so short a space of time could turn the hesitating, ambitious man into an unbridled tyrant, and his steely-hearted instigator into a sick woman gnawed by remorse, it is, in my view, impossible to divine. I think we must renounce the hope of penetrating the triple obscurity of the bad preservation of the text, the unknown intention of the dramatist, and the hidden purport of the legend. But I should not admit that such investigations are idle in view of the powerful effect which the tragedy has upon the spectator. The dramatist can indeed, during the representation, overwhelm us by his art and paralyse our powers of

<sup>1</sup> J. Darmstetter, *Macbeth*, Édition classique, p. lxxv., Paris, 1887.

reflection; but he cannot prevent us from subsequently attempting to grasp the psychological mechanism of that effect. And the contention that the dramatist is at liberty to shorten at will the natural time and duration of the events he brings before us, if by the sacrifice of common probability he can enhance the dramatic effect, seems to me irrelevant in this instance. For such a sacrifice is justified only when it merely affronts probability,<sup>1</sup> and not when it breaks the causal connection; besides, the dramatic effect would hardly have suffered if the time-duration had been left in uncertainty, instead of being expressly limited to some few days.

One is so unwilling to dismiss a problem like that of *Macbeth* as insoluble that I will still make another attempt, by introducing another comment which points towards a new issue. Ludwig Jekels, in a recent Shakespearean study, thinks he has divined a technical trick of the poet, which might have to be reckoned with in *Macbeth*, too. He is of opinion that Shakespeare frequently splits up a character into two personages, each of whom then appears not altogether comprehensible until once more conjoined with the other. It might be thus with Macbeth and the Lady; and then it would of course be futile to regard her as an independent personage and seek to discover her motivation without considering the Macbeth who completes her. I shall not follow this hint any further, but I would add, nevertheless, a remark which strikingly confirms the idea—namely, that the stirrings of fear which arise in Macbeth on the night of the murder, do not develop further in him, but in the Lady.<sup>2</sup> It is he who has the hallucination of the dagger before the deed, but it is she who later succumbs to mental disorder; he, after the murder, hears the cry from the house: 'Sleep no more! Macbeth does

<sup>1</sup> As in Richard III.'s wooing of Anne beside the bier of the King whom he has murdered.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Darmstetter, *loc. cit.*

murder sleep . . .', and so 'Macbeth shall sleep no more', but we never hear that King Macbeth could not sleep, while we see that the Queen rises from her bed and betrays her guilt in somnambulistic wanderings. He stands helpless with bloody hands, lamenting that not great Neptune's ocean can wash them clean again, while she comforts him: 'A little water clears us of this deed'; but later it is she who washes her hands for a quarter of an hour and cannot get rid of the blood-stains. 'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.' Thus is fulfilled in her what his pangs of conscience had apprehended; she is incarnate remorse after the deed, he incarnate defiance—together they exhaust the possibilities of reaction to the crime, like two disunited parts of the mind of a single individuality, and perhaps they are the divided images of a single prototype.

If we have been unable to give any answer to the question why Lady Macbeth should collapse after her success, we may perhaps have a better chance with the creation of another great dramatist, who loves to pursue with unrelenting rigour the task of the psychological reckoning.

Rebecca Gamvik, the daughter of a midwife, has become, under the influence of her adoptive father, Dr. West, a freethinker and a contemner of all those restrictions upon desires in life which are imposed by morality founded on religious belief. After the doctor's death she obtains a footing at Rosmersholm, the ancestral seat of an old family whose members are unacquainted with laughter and have sacrificed joy to stern fulfilment of duty. At Rosmersholm dwell Pastor Johannes Rosmer and his invalid wife, the childless Beata. Overcome by 'a wild, uncontrollable passion' for the love of the aristocratic Rosmer, Rebecca resolves to remove the wife who stands in her way, and to this end is served by her 'fearless, free-born' will, which is restrained by no ethical considerations. She contrives that Beata shall read a medical



book in which the begetting of offspring is represented as the sole aim of marriage, so that the poor woman begins to doubt whether her own union is an honourable one. Rebecca then hints that Rosmer, whose studies and ideas she shares, is about to abandon the old faith and join the party of enlightenment; and after she has thus shaken the wife's confidence in the moral uprightness of her husband, gives her finally to understand that she, Rebecca, must soon leave the house in order to conceal the consequences of illicit intercourse with Rosmer. The criminal scheme succeeds. The poor wife, who has passed for melancholic and crazy, throws herself from the path beside the mill into the mill-race, possessed by the sense of her own worthlessness and desirous of standing no longer between her beloved husband and his bliss.

For more than a year Rebecca and Rosmer have been living alone at Rosmersholm in a relationship which he wishes to regard as a purely intellectual and ideal friendship. But when from outside the first shadow of evil gossip falls upon this relationship, and at the same time there arise tormenting doubts in Rosmer in regard to the motives for which his wife had put an end to herself, he begs Rebecca to become his second wife, so that they may oppose to the unhappy past a new living reality (Act II.). For one instant she cries out with joy at this proposal, but immediately afterwards declares that it can never be, and that if he urges her further she will 'go the way Beata went'. Rosmer cannot at all understand this rejection; and still less can we, who know more of Rebecca's actions and designs. All we can be certain of is that her 'No' is meant in good earnest.

How has it come about that the adventuress with the fearless, freeborn will, which forged its way relentlessly to its desired goal, should now refuse to pluck the fruit which is offered her? She herself gives us the explanation in the fourth Act: '*This* is the terrible part of it: that now, when all life's happiness

is within my grasp—my heart is changed, and my own past bars my way to happiness'. That is, she has become a different being, her conscience has awakened, she has a conviction of guilt which denies her happiness.

And how has her conscience been awakened? Let us listen to her, and consider whether we can accord her our full credence: 'It is the Rosmer view of life—or your view, at any rate—that has infected my will. . . . And made it sick. Enslaved it to laws that had no power over me before. You—life with you—has ennobled my mind.'

This influence, we are further to understand, has only become effective since she has been living alone with Rosmer: 'In quiet—in solitude—when you showed me all your thoughts without reserve—every tender and delicate feeling, just as it came to you—then the great change came over me'.

Shortly before this she has lamented the other aspect of the change: 'Because Rosmersholm has sapped my strength, my old fearless will has had its wings clipped here. It is paralysed! The time is past when I had courage for anything in the world. I have lost the power of action, Rosmer.'

Rebecca makes this declaration after she has revealed herself a wrong-doer in a voluntary confession to Rosmer and Rector Kroll, the brother of the dead wife. Ibsen has made it clear by many little touches, worked in with masterly subtlety, that this Rebecca does not actually lie, but is never entirely straightforward. Just as, in spite of all her freedom from prejudice, she understated her age by a year, so is her confession to the two men not entirely complete, and through the persistence of Kroll it is supplemented on some important points. Hence it is open to us, too, to conjecture that the explanation of her refusal only exposes one motive in order to conceal another.

Assuredly we have no reason to disbelieve her when she declares that the atmosphere of Rosmersholm and her intercourse with the high-souled Rosmer have

ennobled and—paralysed her. She expresses there what she knows and has felt. But this is not necessarily all that has happened to her, nor is she necessarily competent to explain to herself that all. The influence of Rosmer might even only be a cloak which conceals another influence that was operative, and a notable indication points in this new direction.

Even after her confession, in their last interview which brings the play to an end, Rosmer again beseeches her to be his wife. He forgives her the crime committed for love of him. And now she does not answer, as she might, that no forgiveness can rid her of the consciousness of guilt incurred by her malignant deception of poor Beata; but charges herself with another reproach which affects us as coming strangely from this freethinking woman, and in no wise corresponds to the importance which Rebecca attaches to it: 'Dear—never speak of this again! It is impossible—. For you must know, Rosmer, I have—a past behind me.' She means, of course, that she has had sexual relations with another man; and we do not fail to observe that these relations, which occurred at a time when she was free and accountable to nobody, seem to her a greater hindrance to the union with Rosmer than her truly criminal action against his wife.

Rosmer refuses to hear anything about this past. We can divine what it was, though everything that refers to it in the play is, so to speak, subterranean and has to be pieced together from hints. But it is true they are hints inserted with such art that it is impossible to misunderstand them.

Between Rebecca's first refusal and her confession something occurs which has a decisive influence on her future destiny. Rector Kroll arrives one day at the house on purpose to humiliate Rebecca by telling her that he knows she is an illegitimate child, the daughter of that very Dr. West who had adopted her after her mother's death. Hate has sharpened his perceptions, yet he does not suppose that this is any news to her.

' I really did not suppose you were ignorant of this, otherwise it would have been very odd that you should have let Dr. West adopt you——' ' And then he takes you into his house—as soon as your mother dies. He treats you harshly. And yet you stay with him. You know that he won't leave you a halfpenny—as a matter of fact you got only a case of books—and yet you stay on ; you bear with him ; you nurse him to the last.' ' I attribute your care for him to the natural filial instinct of a daughter. Indeed, I believe your whole conduct is a natural result of your origin.'

But Kroll was mistaken. Rebecca had no idea at all that she could be West's daughter. When Kroll began with dark hints at her past, she could not but think he was referring to something else. After she knew what he did mean, she could still retain her composure awhile, for she was able to suppose that her enemy was basing his calculations on her age, which she had given falsely on an earlier visit of his. But when Kroll demolished this objection by saying : ' Well, so be it, but my calculation may be right, none the less ; for Dr. West was up there on a short visit the year before he got the appointment ' . . . after this new information, she loses all control. ' It is not true ! ' She walks about wringing her hands. ' It is impossible. You want to cheat me into believing it. This can never, never be true. It cannot be true. Never in this world !——' Her agitation is so extreme that Kroll cannot attribute it to his information alone.

KROLL : But, my dear Miss West—why in Heaven's name are you so terribly excited ? You quite frighten me. What am I to think—to believe——?

REBECCA : Nothing ! You are not to think anything or believe anything.

KROLL : Then you must really tell me how you can take this affair—this possibility—so terribly to heart.

REBECCA (*controlling herself*). It is perfectly simple, Rector Kroll. I have no wish to be taken for an illegitimate child.

The enigma of Rebecca's behaviour is susceptible of only one solution. The news that Dr. West was her father is the heaviest blow that can befall her, for she was not only the adopted daughter, but she had been the mistress of this man. When Kroll began to speak, she thought that he was hinting at these relations, the truth about which she would probably have admitted and justified by her emancipated ideas. But this was far from the Rector's intention; he knew nothing of the love-affair with Dr. West, as she knew nothing of West being her father. She *cannot* have had anything else in her mind when she accounted for her final rejection of Rosmer on the ground that she had a past which made her unworthy to be his wife. Probably, if Rosmer had consented to hear of this past, she would have made only a half-confession and have kept silence on the more serious part of it.

But now we do indeed understand that this past must seem to her the more serious obstacle to their union—the more serious . . . crime.

After she has learnt that she has been the mistress of her own father, she surrenders herself wholly to her now overmastering sense of guilt. She confesses to Rosmer and Kroll that she was a murderess; she rejects for ever the happiness to which she has paved the way by crime; and prepares for departure. But the true origin of her sense of guilt, which wrecks her at the moment of attainment, remains a secret. We have seen that it is something quite other than the atmosphere of Rosmersholm and the refining influence of Rosmer.

No one who has followed us so far will neglect to bring forward an objection which may justify some doubts. The first refusal of Rosmer by Rebecca occurs before the second visit of Kroll, and therefore before his exposure of her illicit origin and at a time when she as yet knows nothing of her incest—if we have rightly understood the dramatist. Yet her first refusal is given in very serious earnest. The sense of guilt which bids

her renounce the fruit of her actions is thus effective before she knows anything of her cardinal crime ; and if we grant so much it is perhaps incumbent on us to ignore the incest as the source of that sense of guilt.

Hitherto, we have treated Rebecca West as if she were a living person and not a creation of Ibsen's phantasy, one which is always subject to the most critical tests of reason. We shall attempt to meet the objection aforesaid on this same ground. It is a just objection that, before the knowledge of her incest, conscience was in some sort awakened in Rebecca. There is nothing to prevent our making the influence which is acknowledged and accused by Rebecca herself responsible for this change. But we shall not thus escape recognition of the second motive. The behaviour of Rebecca on hearing what Kroll has to tell her, the confession which is her immediate reaction, leave no doubt that now only does the stronger and more decisive motive for renunciation begin to take effect. It is in fact a case of manifold motivation, in which a deeper motive comes to the surface from beneath the superficial one. Laws of poetical economy necessitate this way of presenting the situation, for this deeper motive could not be explicitly set forth, it had to be dissimulated, kept from the direct perception of the spectator or the reader ; otherwise such serious resistances, based on most painful emotions, would have arisen that the effect of the tragedy might have been imperilled.

We have, however, a right to demand that the ostensible motive shall not be without an inherent relation to the dissimulated one, but shall appear as a mitigation of, and a derivation from, the latter. And relying on the dramatist to have arranged his conscious dramatic combination in logical accordance with unconscious possibilities, we can now try to show that he has fulfilled this demand. Rebecca's feeling of guilt finds its source in the shame of incest, even before Kroll with his analytic insight has made her aware of

it. When we fully reconstruct and supplement the past indicated by the author, we shall feel sure that she cannot have been without an inkling of the intimate relation between her mother and Dr. West. It must have made a strong impression on her when she became her mother's successor with this man ; and she thus stood under the domination of the Oedipus-complex, even though she did not know that this universal phantasy had been a reality in her case. When she came to Rosmersholm, the inward force of this first experience drove her to bring about, by definite action, the same situation which had been realized in the original instance, though not by her doing—to get rid of the wife and mother, that she might take her place with the husband and father. She describes with a convincing insistence how against her will she was obliged to proceed, step by step, to the removal of Beata.

' You think then that I was cool and calculating and self-possessed all the time ! I was not the same woman then that I am now, as I stand here telling it all. Besides, there are two sorts of will in us, I believe. I wanted Beata away by one means or another, but I never really believed that it would come to pass. As I felt my way forward, at each step I ventured, I seemed to hear something within me cry out : No farther ! Not a step farther !—And yet I could not stop. I *had* to venture the least little bit farther. And only one hair's-breadth more. And then one more—and always one more. . . . And so it happened. That is the way such things come about.'

That is no plea for extenuation, but an authentic description. Everything that befell her at Rosmersholm, the passion for Rosmer and the enmity towards his wife, was from the first a consequence of the Oedipus-complex—a compulsive replica of her relations with her mother and Dr. West.

And so the sense of guilt which first causes her to reject Rosmer's proposal is at bottom indistinguishable

from the deeper one which drives her to confession after Kroll has opened her eyes. But just as under the influence of Dr. West she had become a freethinker and contemner of religious morality, so she is transformed by her love for Rosmer into a being with a conscience and an ideal. This much of the mental processes within her she does herself understand, and so she is justified in describing Rosmer's influence as the motive of the change in her—the only one of which she could be aware.

The practising psycho-analytic physician knows how frequently, or how invariably, the girl who enters a household as servant, companion or governess, will consciously or unconsciously weave a day-dream, which derives from the Oedipus-complex, about the disappearance of the mistress of the house and the master taking the newcomer to wife in her stead. *Rosmersholm* is the greatest work of art among those which treat of this common girlish phantasy. What makes it a tragedy is the circumstance that the early history of the heroine in actual fact had completely anticipated her day-dream.<sup>1</sup>

After long lingering in the sphere of literature, we now return to clinical experience. But only to establish in a few words the complete agreement between them. Psycho-analytic work teaches that the forces of conscience which induce illness on attainment of success, as in other cases on a frustration, are closely connected with the Oedipus-complex, the relation to father and mother, as perhaps, indeed, is all our sense of guilt in general.

<sup>1</sup> An exposition of the incest-theme in *Rosmersholm* has already been made, by similar methods to my own, in the extremely comprehensive work by Otto Rank, *Das Inzest-Motiv in Dichtung und Sage*.



## III

## CRIMINALITY FROM A SENSE OF GUILT

In their narrations about their early years, particularly before puberty, people who have afterwards become very upright have told me of forbidden actions which they had formerly committed—such as thefts, frauds, and even arson. I was wont to dismiss these statements with the comment that we know the weakness of moral inhibiting influences at that time of life, and I made no attempt to give them an important place in the connected story. But eventually I was constrained to make a more fundamental study of such incidents, by reason of some glaring and more accessible cases in which the transgressions took place while the patients were under my treatment, and were people of riper age. The analytic work then afforded the surprising conclusion that such deeds are done precisely *because* they are forbidden, and because by carrying them out the doer enjoys a sense of mental relief. He suffered from an oppressive feeling of guilt, of which he did not know the origin, and after he had committed a misdeed the oppression was mitigated. The sense of guilt was at least in some way accounted for.

Paradoxical as it may sound, I must maintain that the sense of guilt was present prior to the transgression, that it did not arise from this, but contrariwise—the transgression from the sense of guilt. These persons we might justifiably describe as criminals from a sense of guilt. The pre-existence of the guilty feeling had of course to be demonstrated by a whole succession of other manifestations and effects.

But scientific work is not satisfied with establishing a departure from the norm. There are two further questions to answer: whence derives the obscure sense of guilt before the deed, and whether it is probable that this kind of causation plays a considerable part in the transgressions of mankind.

Prosecution of the former inquiry would hold out hope of some explanation regarding the source of mankind's sense of guilt in general. The invariable result of analytic work is that this obscure sense of guilt derives from the Oedipus-complex and is a reaction to the two great criminal intentions of killing the father and having sexual relations with the mother. In comparison with these two, to be sure, the crimes committed in order to account for the sense of guilt were comparatively light ones for the sufferer to bear. We must remember in this connection that parricide and incest with the mother are the two greatest crimes man can commit, the only ones which in primitive communities are avenged and abhorred as such. And we must remember, too, that other investigations have caused us to entertain the hypothesis that the conscience of mankind, which now appears as an inherited power in the mind, was originally acquired from the Oedipus-complex.

The answer to the second question lies outside the scope of psycho-analytic work. With children, it is easy to perceive that they are often 'naughty' on purpose to provoke punishment, and are quiet and contented after the chastisement. Later analytic investigation can often find a trace of the guilty feeling which bid them seek for punishment. Among adult criminals one must probably except those who transgress without any sense of guilt, who either have developed no moral inhibitions or consider themselves justified in their deed by their conflict with society. But in the majority of other criminals, those for whom punitive measures are really designed, such a motivation towards crime might very well be present, casting light on many obscure points in the psychology of the criminal, and furnishing punishment with a new psychological basis.

A friend has recently called my attention to the fact that the 'criminal from a sense of guilt' was recognized by Nietzsche. The pre-existence of the

guilty consciousness, and the efficacy of the deed in rationalizing this feeling, gleam forth from the dark discourse of Zarathustra 'On the Pale Criminal'. Let us leave to future research the decision how many criminals are to be reckoned among these 'pale' ones.

## XIX

### A MYTHOLOGICAL PARALLEL TO A VISUAL OBSESSION <sup>1</sup>

(1916)

**I**N a patient of about twenty-one years of age the unconscious mental activity expressed itself consciously not only in obsessive thoughts but also in obsessive visual images. The two could accompany each other or appear independently of each other. At one particular time, whenever he saw his father coming into the room, there came into his mind in close connection with each other an obsessive word and an obsessive picture. The word was 'father-arse'; the accompanying picture represented the lower part of a trunk, nude and provided with arms and legs, but without the head or chest, and this was the father. The genitals were not shown, and the facial features were represented on the abdomen.

In endeavouring to explain this unusually crazy symptom-formation, it must be noted that the patient, who is a man of highly developed intellect and lofty moral ideals, manifested a very lively anal erotism in the most various ways until after his tenth year. After this was overcome, his sexual life was again forced back to the anal plane by the later struggle against genital erotism. He loved and respected his father greatly, and also feared him not a little; from the standpoint of his high ideals in regard to asceticism and suppression of the instincts, however, his father seemed to him a debauchee who sought enjoyment in material things.

'Father-arse' was soon explained as a jocular

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Zeitschrift*, Bd. IV., 1916; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by C. M. J. Hubback.]

Teutonizing of the honourable title 'patriarch'.<sup>1</sup> The obsessive picture is an obvious caricature. It recalls other representations that derogatorily replace a whole person by one of their organs, e.g. the genitals; it reminds us, too, of unconscious phantasies leading to the identification of the genitals with the whole person, and also of joking expressions, such as 'I am all ears'.

The rendering of the facial features on the abdomen of the caricature struck me at first as most extraordinary. Soon afterwards, however, I remembered having seen the same thing in French caricatures.<sup>2</sup> Chance then brought to my notice an antique instance of it which showed complete correspondence with my patient's obsessive image.

According to Greek legend Demeter came to Eleusis in search of her daughter who had been abducted, and was taken in and housed by Dysaules and his wife Baubo; but in her great sorrow she refused to touch food or drink. By suddenly lifting up her clothes and exposing her body, however, the hostess Baubo made her laugh. A discussion of this anecdote, which is probably to be explained as a no longer intelligible magic ceremonial, is to be found in the fourth volume of Salomon Reinach's work, *Cultes, Mythes, et Religions*, 1912. In the same passage mention is also made of terracottas found in excavations at Priene in Asia Minor, which represent Baubo. They show the body of a woman without head or bosom, and with a face drawn on the abdomen: the lifted clothing frames this face like a crown of hair.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> [German for 'father' is *Vater*, for 'arse', *arsch*; hence *Vaterarsch*, *Patriarch*.—Trans.]

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 'Das unanständige Albion', a caricature of England in 1901, by Jean Veber, reproduced in E. Fuchs' *Das erotische Element in der Karikatur*, 1904.

<sup>3</sup> S. Reinach, *loc. cit.*, p. 117.

## XX

### ONE OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF PSYCHO-ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

(1917)

I WILL say at once that it is not an intellectual difficulty I am thinking of, not anything that makes psycho-analysis hard for the hearer or reader to understand, but an affective one—something that alienates the feelings of those who come into contact with it, so that they become less inclined to believe in it or take an interest in it. As may be observed, the two kinds of difficulty amount to the same thing in the end. Where sympathy is lacking, understanding will not come very easily.

My present readers are, I take it, as yet unconcerned with the subject and I shall be obliged, therefore, to go back some distance. Out of a great number of individual observations and impressions something like a theory has at last shaped itself in psycho-analysis, and this is known by the name of the 'libido-theory'. As is known, psycho-analysis is concerned with the explanation and cure of what are called nervous disorders. A starting-point had to be found from which to approach this problem, and it was decided to look for it in the life of the instincts in the mind. Hypotheses relating to the instincts in man came to form the basis, therefore, of our conception of nervous disease.

The psychology that is taught in the schools gives us but very inadequate replies to questions concerning our mental life, but in no direction is its information so meagre as in this matter of the instincts.

<sup>1</sup> First published (in Hungarian) in the *Nyugat*, 1917, and subsequently in *Imago*, Bd. V., 1917; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Vierte Folge. [Translated by Joan Riviere.]

We are left to take the first sounding in our own way. The popular view distinguishes between hunger and love, seeing them as the two representatives of those instincts which aim at self-preservation and at reproduction of the species respectively. We acknowledge this very evident distinction, so that in psycho-analysis also we postulate a similar one between the self-preservative or ego-instincts, on the one hand, and the sexual instincts on the other; that force by which the sexual instinct is represented in the mind we call 'libido'—sexual hunger—regarding it as analogous to the force of hunger, or the will to power, and other such trends among the ego-tendencies.

With this as a starting-point we then make our first important discovery. We learn that, when we come to try to comprehend neurotic disorders, by far the most significance attaches to the sexual instincts; in fact neuroses are the specific disorders, so to speak, of the sexual function; that in general whether or not a person develops a neurosis depends upon the strength of his libido, and upon the possibility of gratifying it and of discharging it through gratification; that the form taken by the disease is determined by the path which the sexual function of the person in question takes in its development, or, as we put it, by the fixations his libido has undergone in the course of its development; and, further, that by a special, not very simple technique for influencing the mind we are able to throw light on the nature of many groups of neuroses and at the same time to resolve them. The greatest success of our therapeutic efforts has been with a certain class of neuroses proceeding from a conflict between ego-instincts and sexual instincts. For in human beings it may happen that the demands of the sexual instincts, which of course extend far beyond the individual, seem to the ego to constitute a danger menacing his self-preservation or his self-respect. The ego then takes up the defensive, denies the sexual instincts the satisfaction they claim

and forces them into those by-paths of substitutive gratification which become manifest as symptoms of a neurosis.

The psycho-analytic method of treatment is then able to subject this process of repression to revision and to bring about a better solution of the conflict, one compatible with health. Opponents who do not understand the matter accuse us of one-sidedness and of overestimating the sexual instincts: 'Human beings have other interests besides sexual things'. We have not forgotten or denied this for a moment. Our one-sidedness is like that of the chemist who traces all compounds back to the force of chemical attraction. In doing so, he does not deny the force of gravity; he leaves that to the physicist to reckon with.

During the work of treatment we have to consider the distribution of the patient's libido; we look for the objects (ideas of them) to which it is attached and free it from them, so as to place it at the disposal of the ego. In the course of this, we have come to form a very curious picture of the direction taken at the outset by the libido in man. We have had to infer that at the beginning of its development the libido (all the erotic tendencies, all capacity for love) in each individual is directed towards the self—as we say, it cathects the self. It is only later that, in association with the satisfaction of the chief natural functions, the libido flows over beyond the ego towards objects outside the self, and not till then are we able to recognize the libidinal trends as such and distinguish them from the ego-instincts. It is possible for the libido to become detached from these objects and withdrawn again into the self.

The condition in which the libido is contained within the ego is called by us 'narcissism', in reference to the Greek myth of the youth Narcissus who remained faithful to his love for his own reflection.

Thus we look upon the development of the individual as a progress from narcissism to object-love; but we



do not believe that the whole of the libido is ever transferred from the ego to objects outside itself. A certain amount of libido is always retained in the ego ; even when object-love is highly developed, a certain degree of narcissism continues. The ego is a great reservoir from which the libido that is destined for objects flows outward and into which it can flow back from those objects. Object-libido was at first ego-libido and can be again transformed into ego-libido. For complete health it is essential that the libido should not lose this full mobility. As an illustration of this state of things we may think of an amoeba, the protoplasm of which puts out pseudopodia, elongations into which the substance of the body extends but which can be retracted at any time so that the form of the protoplasmic mass is reinstated.

What I have been trying to describe in this outline is the *libido-theory* of the neuroses, upon which are founded all our conceptions of the nature of these morbid states, together with our therapeutic measures for relieving them. We naturally regard the premises of the libido-theory as valid for normal behaviour as well. We employ the term 'narcissism' in relation to little children, and it is to the excessive 'narcissism' of primitive man that we ascribe his belief in the omnipotence of his thoughts and his consequent attempts to influence the course of events in the outer world by magical practices.

After this introduction I shall describe how the general narcissism of man, the self-love of humanity, has up to the present been three times severely wounded by the researches of science.

(a) When the first promptings of curiosity about his dwelling-place, the earth, began to arise in him, man believed that it was the stationary centre of the universe, with the sun, moon and planets circling round it. With this he was naïvely following the dictates of his sense-perceptions, for he felt no movement of the earth, and wherever he had an unimpeded

view he found himself in the centre of a circle that enclosed the whole world outside him. The central position of the earth was to him a token of its sovereignty in the universe and it appeared to accord very well with his proclivity to regard himself as lord of the world.

The destruction of this narcissistic illusion is associated with the name and work of Copernicus in the sixteenth century. Long before his day the Pythagoreans had already cast doubts upon the privileged position of the earth, and in the third century B.C. Aristarchus of Samos had declared that the earth was much smaller than the sun and moved round that celestial body. Even the great discovery of Copernicus, therefore, had already been made before. But when it achieved general recognition, the self-love of humanity suffered its first blow, the *cosmological* one.

(b) In the course of his development towards culture man acquired a dominating position over his fellow-creatures in the animal kingdom. Not content with this supremacy, however, he began to place a gulf between his nature and theirs. He denied the possession of reason to them, and to himself he attributed an immortal soul, and made claims to a divine descent which permitted him to annihilate the bond of community between him and the animal kingdom. It is noteworthy that this piece of arrogance is still as foreign to the child as it is to the savage or to primitive man. It is the result of a later, more pretentious stage of development. At the level of totemism primitive man has no repugnance to tracing his descent from an animal ancestor. In myths, which contain the deposit of this ancient attitude of mind, the gods take animal shapes, and in the art of prehistoric times they are portrayed with animal's heads. A child can see no difference between his own nature and that of animals; he is not astonished at animals thinking and talking in fairy-tales; he will transfer to a dog or a horse an emotion of fear which refers to his human father,

without thereby intending any derogation of his father. Not until he is grown up does he become so far estranged from the animals as to use their names in vilification of others.

We all know that, little more than half a century ago, the researches of Charles Darwin, his collaborators and predecessors put an end to this presumption on the part of man. Man is not a being different from animals or superior to them ; he himself originates in the animal race and is related more closely to some of its members and more distantly to others. The accretions he has subsequently developed have not served to efface the evidences, both in his physical structure and in his mental dispositions, of his parity with them. This was the second, the *biological* blow to human narcissism.

(c) The third blow, which is psychological in nature, is probably the most wounding.

Although thus humbled in his external relations, man feels himself to be supreme in his own soul. Somewhere in the core of his ego he has developed an organ of observation to keep a watch on his impulses and actions and see that they accord with its demands. If they do not, they are inexorably prohibited and retracted. His inner perception, consciousness, gives the ego news of all the important occurrences in the mind's working, and the will, set in motion by these reports, carries out what the ego directs and modifies all that tends to accomplish itself independently. For this soul is not a simple thing ; on the contrary, it is a hierarchy of superordinated and subordinated agents, a labyrinth of impulses striving independently of one another towards action, corresponding with the multiplicity of instincts and of relations with the outer world, many of which are antagonistic to one another and incompatible. For proper functioning it is necessary that the highest among these agents should have knowledge of all that is going forward and that its will should penetrate

throughout to exert its influence. But the ego feels itself secure of the completeness and trustworthiness both of the reports it receives and of the channels by which it can enforce its commands.

In certain diseases, including indeed the very neuroses of which we have made special study, things are different. The ego feels uneasy ; it finds a limit to its power in its own house, the mind. Thoughts suddenly break in without the conscious mind knowing where they come from, nor can it do anything to drive them away. These unwelcome guests seem to be more powerful even than those which are at the ego's command ; they resist all the well-proven measures instituted by the will, remain unmoved by logical rebuttal, and unaffected though reality refutes them. Or else impulses make themselves felt which seem like those of a stranger, so that the ego disowns them ; yet it has to fear them and take precautions against them. The ego says to itself : ' This is an illness, a foreign invasion ' ; it increases its vigilance, but cannot understand why it feels so strangely paralysed.

Psychiatry, it is true, denies that such things mean the intrusion into the mind of evil spirits from without ; beyond this, however, it can only say with a shrug : ' Degeneracy, hereditary disposition, constitutional inferiority ! ' Psycho-analysis sets out to explain these eerie disorders ; it engages in scrupulous and laborious investigations, devises hypotheses and scientific expedients, until at length it can say to the ego : ' Nothing has entered into you from without ; a part of the activity of your own mind has been withdrawn from your knowledge and from the command of your will. That, too, is why you are so weak in your defences ; with one part of your forces you are fighting the other part and you cannot concentrate the whole of your energy as you would against an outer enemy. And it is not even the worst or least effective part of your mental powers that has thus become antagonistic to

you and independent of you. The blame, I must tell you, lies with yourself. You overestimated your strength when you thought you could do as you liked with your sexual instincts and could utterly ignore their aims. The result is that they have rebelled and have gone their own way in the dark to rid themselves of this oppression ; they have extorted their rights in a manner you cannot sanction. How they have achieved this and the paths by which they have reached their purpose, you have not learned ; only the result of their work, the symptom which you experience as suffering, has come to your knowledge. Then you do not recognize it as a product of your own rejected impulses and do not know that it is a substitutive gratification of them.

‘ The whole process, however, only becomes possible through the single circumstance that you are mistaken in another important point as well. You believe that you are informed of all that goes on in your mind if it is of any importance at all, because your consciousness then gives you news of it. And if you have heard nothing of any particular thing in your mind you confidently assume that it does not exist there. Indeed, you go so far as to regard “ the mind ” as co-extensive with “ consciousness ”, that is, with what is known to you, in spite of the most obvious evidence that a great deal more is perpetually going on in your mind than can be known to your consciousness. Come, let yourself be taught something on this one point. What is in your mind is not identical with what you are conscious of ; whether something is going on in your mind and whether you hear of it, are two different things. In the ordinary way, I will admit, the intelligence which reaches your consciousness is enough for your needs ; and you may cherish the illusion that you learn of all the more important things. But in some cases, as in that of a conflict between instincts such as I have described, the intelligence department breaks down and your will then extends no further than your

knowledge. In all cases, however, the news that reaches your consciousness is incomplete and often not to be relied on ; often enough, too, it happens that you get news of what has taken place only when it is all over and when you can no longer do anything to change it. Even if you are not ill, who can tell all that is stirring in your mind of which you know nothing or are falsely informed? You conduct yourself like an absolute sovereign who is content with the information supplied him by his highest officials and never goes among the people to hear their voice. Look into the depths of your own soul and learn first to know yourself, then you will understand why this illness was bound to come upon you and perhaps you will thenceforth avoid falling ill.'

It is thus that psycho-analysis wishes to educate the ego. But these two discoveries—that the life of the sexual instincts cannot be totally restrained, and that mental processes are in themselves unconscious and only reach the ego and come under its control through incomplete and untrustworthy perceptions—amount to a statement that *the ego is not master in its own house*. Together they represent the third wound inflicted on man's self-love, that which I call the *psychological* one. No wonder, therefore, that the ego shows no favour to psycho-analysis and persistently refuses to believe in it.

Probably but very few people have realized the momentous significance for science and life of the recognition of unconscious mental processes. It was not psycho-analysis, however, let us hasten to add, which took this first step. There are renowned names among the philosophers who may be cited as its predecessors, above all the great thinker Schopenhauer, whose unconscious 'Will' is equivalent to the instincts in the mind as seen by psycho-analysis. It was this same thinker, moreover, who in words of unforgettable impressiveness admonished mankind of the importance of their sexual craving, still so depreciated. Psycho-

analysis has only this to its credit, that it has not affirmed these two propositions that are so wounding to narcissism on an abstract basis—the importance of sexuality in the mind and the unconsciousness of mental activity—but has demonstrated them in matters that touch every individual personally and force him to take up some attitude towards these problems. It is just for this reason, however, that it brings on itself the aversion and antagonism which still keep at a respectful distance from the name of the great philosopher.

## XXI

### A CHILDHOOD RECOLLECTION FROM 'DICHTUNG UND WAHRHEIT'<sup>1</sup>

(1917)

**I**F we try to recollect what happened to us in the earliest years of childhood, it often occurs that we confound what we have heard from others with what is really our own possession from actual visual experience.' This remark is found on one of the first pages of Goethe's account of his life, which he began to write at the age of sixty. It is preceded only by some information about his own birth which 'took place on August 28, 1749, at midday on the stroke of twelve'. The stars were in a favourable conjunction and may well have been the cause of his preservation, for at his entry into the world he was 'taken for dead', and it was only after great efforts that he was brought round to life. There follows on this a short description of the house and of the place in it where the children—he and his younger sister—best liked to play. After this, however, Goethe relates in fact only one single event that one could place in the 'earliest years of childhood' (? the years up to four) and of which he seems to have preserved a real recollection.

The account of it runs as follows: 'And three brothers (von Ochsenstein by name) who lived opposite became very fond of me; they were orphan sons of the late magistrate, and they took an interest in me and used to tease me in all sorts of ways.

'My people used to like to tell of all kinds of tricks in which these men, otherwise of a serious and retiring disposition, used to encourage me. I will quote only

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Imago*, Bd. V., 1917; reprinted in *Sammlung, Vierte Folge*. [Translated by C. M. J. Hubback.]



one of these exploits. The crockery-fair was just over and not only had the kitchen been fitted up with these goods for the next season, but miniature things of the same ware had been bought for us children to play with. One fine afternoon, when all was quiet in the house, I betook myself with my dishes and pots to the garden-room (the play-place already mentioned, which looked on to the street) and, since nothing seemed to be doing, I threw a plate into the street, and was overjoyed to see it go to bits so merrily. The von Ochsensteins, who saw how delighted I was and how joyfully I clapped my hands, called out "Do it again!" I did not hesitate to sling a pot on to the paving-stones, and then, as they kept crying "Another!", one after another all my dishes, saucepans and pans. My neighbours continued to signify their approval and I was delighted to have amused them. But my stock was all used up and still they cried "Another!". So I ran off straight into the kitchen and fetched the earthenware plates, which made an even finer show as they smashed to bits: and thus I ran backwards and forwards, bringing one plate after another, as I could reach them in turn from the rack, and, as they were not content at that, I hurled everything I could find of the same sort to the same ruin. Only later did someone appear to interfere and put a stop to it all. The damage was done, and instead of so much broken earthenware there was at least an amusing story, which the rascals who had been the instigators enjoyed to the end of their lives.'

In pre-analytic days one could read this without finding occasion to stop and without surprise, but later on the analytic conscience became active. Definite opinions and expectations had been formed about recollections from early childhood and one would have been glad to claim universal application for them. It should not be a matter of indifference or entirely without meaning which detail of a child's life had escaped the general oblivion. It might rather be conjectured that what had remained in memory was the most

significant element in that whole period of life, equally so whether it had possessed such an importance at the time, or whether it had gained subsequent importance from the influence of later events.

The high value of such childish recollections was, it is true, obvious only in a few cases. Generally they seemed indifferent, worthless even, and it remained at first incomprehensible why just these memories should have resisted amnesia : nor could the person who had preserved them for long years as his own store of memory see more in them than any stranger to whom he might relate them. Before their significance could be appreciated, a certain work of interpretation was necessary, which would either show how their content must be replaced by some other, or would reveal their connection with some other unmistakably important experiences, for which they were appearing as so-called ' screen-memories '.

In every analytic work on a life-history it is always possible to explain the meaning of the earliest memories along these lines. Indeed, it usually happens that the very recollection to which the patient gives precedence, that he relates first, with which he introduces his confession, proves to be the most important, the very one that holds the key to his mental life. But in the case of this little childish episode related in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* there is too little awaiting our expectations. The ways that with our patients lead to interpretation are of course not open to us here ; the episode does not seem in itself to admit of any traceable connection with important impressions at a later date. A mischievous trick with bad results for the household economy, carried out under the spur of encouragement by strangers, is certainly not a fitting vignette for all that Goethe has to tell us of his full life. An impression of utter harmlessness and irrelevancy persists in regard to this childish memory, and we might let it be a warning not to stretch the claims of psycho-analysis too far nor to apply it in unsuitable places.

For a long time, therefore, the little problem had slipped out of my mind, when one day chance brought me a patient in whom a similar childhood-memory appeared in a clearer connection. He was a man of seven-and-twenty, highly educated and gifted, whose life at the time consisted entirely in a conflict with his mother that affected all his interests, and from the effects of which his capacity for love and his independent career had suffered greatly. This conflict went far back into childhood: certainly to his fourth year. Before that he had been a very weakly child, always ailing, and yet that time was glorified into a very paradise in his memory; for then he had had exclusive, uninterrupted possession of his mother's affection. When he was not yet four, a brother, who was still living, was born, and in his reaction to this disturbing event he became transformed into an obstinate, unmanageable boy, who perpetually provoked his mother's severity. Moreover, he never regained the right path.

When he came to me for treatment—by no means the least reason for his coming was that his bigoted mother had a horror of psycho-analysis—his jealousy of the younger brother (which had once taken the form of an attack on the infant in its cradle) had long been forgotten. He now treated his brother with great consideration; but certain curious fortuitous actions of his, such as suddenly inflicting injuries on favourite animals, like his sporting dog or birds he had carefully fostered, were probably to be understood as echoes of that hostile impulse against the little brother.

Now this patient related that, at about the time of the attack on the child he so hated, he had thrown all the crockery he could lay hands on out of the window of the villa into the road—the very same thing that Goethe relates of his childhood in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*! I may remark that my patient was of foreign nationality and was not acquainted with German literature: he had never read Goethe's autobiography.

This communication naturally suggested to me that an attempt might be made to explain Goethe's childish memory on the lines that were impossible to ignore in my patient's story. But could the necessary conditions for this explanation be shown to exist in the poet's childhood? Goethe himself, indeed, makes the eagerness of the von Ochsenstein brothers responsible for his childish trick. But from his own narrative it can be seen that the grown-up neighbours only encouraged him to go on with what he was doing. The beginning was on his own initiative, and the reason he gives for this beginning—'since nothing seemed to be doing'—is surely, without any forcing of its meaning, a confession that at the time of writing it down and probably for many years previously he was not aware of the real motive of his behaviour.

It is well known that Johann Wolfgang and his sister Cornelia were the eldest survivors of a family of very weakly children. Dr. Hanns Sachs has been so kind as to supply me with the following details referring to these brothers and sisters of Goethe, who died in childhood :

(a) Hermann Jakob, baptized Monday, November 27, 1752 ; reached the age of six years and six weeks ; buried January 13, 1759.

(b) Katharina Elisabetha, baptized Monday, September 9, 1754 ; buried Thursday, December 22, 1755 (one year, four months old).

(c) Johanna Maria, baptized Tuesday, March 29, 1757, and buried Saturday, August 11, 1759 (two years, four months old). (This was doubtless the very pretty and attractive little girl mentioned by her brother.)

(d) Georg Adolph, baptized Sunday, June 15, 1760 ; buried, eight months old, Wednesday, February 18, 1761.

Goethe's next sister, Cornelia Friederica Christiana, was born on December 7, 1750, when he was fifteen months old. This slight difference in age almost excludes the possibility of her having been an object

of jealousy. It is known that, when their passions awake, children never develop such violent reactions against the brothers and sisters they find in existence, but direct their hostility against newcomers. Nor is the scene we are endeavouring to interpret reconcilable with Goethe's tender age at the time of, or shortly after, Cornelia's birth.

At the time of the birth of the first little brother, Hermann Jakob, Johann Wolfgang was three-and-a-quarter years old. Nearly two years later, when he was about five years old, the second sister was born. Both ages come under consideration in dating the episode of the crockery-smashing: the first perhaps is to be preferred. It also would best correspond with the case of my patient, who was about three-and-three-quarter years old at the birth of his brother.

The brother Hermann Jakob, to whom we are thus led in our attempt at interpretation, did not, by the way, have so brief a sojourn in the nursery of the Goethe family as the children born afterwards. One might feel some surprise that the autobiography does not contain a word of remembrance of him.<sup>1</sup> He was over six, and Johann Wolfgang was nearly ten, when he died. Dr. Hitschmann, who was kind enough to place his notes on this subject at my disposal, says:

'Goethe, too, as a little boy saw a younger brother die without regret. At least, according to Bettina Brentano's narrative, his mother gave the following account: "It struck her as very extraordinary that he shed no tears at the death of his younger brother Jakob who was his playfellow; he seemed instead to feel annoyance at the grief of his parents and sisters;

<sup>1</sup> *Additional Note, 1924.*—I take this opportunity of withdrawing an incorrect statement which ought not to have been made. In a later passage in this first volume the younger brother is mentioned and described. It occurs together with recollections about the troublesome ailments of childhood, from which this brother also suffered 'not a little'. 'He was a delicate child, quiet and self-willed, and we never had much to do with each other. Besides, he hardly survived the years of infancy.'

he stood out against it, and when his mother asked him later if he had not been fond of his brother, he ran into his room, brought out from under the bed a heap of papers on which lessons and little stories were written, saying that he had done all this to teach his brother". The elder brother would therefore have been glad enough all the same to play the father to the younger and show him his superiority.'

We might thus form the opinion that throwing crockery out of the window is a symbolic action, or, let us say more correctly, a magical action, by which a child (both Goethe as well as my patient) violently expresses his wish to get rid of a disturbing intruder. We do not need to dispute a child's enjoyment of smashing things; if an action is pleasurable in itself, that is not a hindrance but rather an inducement to repeat it for other ends. We do not believe, however, that the pleasure in the crash of the breakages could have ensured the recollection a lasting place in the memory of the adult. Nor have we any objection to complicating the motivation of the action by a further consideration. A child who breaks crockery knows quite well that he is doing something naughty for which grown-ups will scold him, and, if he is not restrained by this knowledge, he probably has a grudge against his parents that he wants to satisfy; he wants to show that he is naughty.

The pleasure in smashing and in broken things would be satisfied, too, if the child simply threw the breakable object on the ground. The hurling them out of the window into the street would still remain unexplained. This 'Out with it!' seems to be an essential part of the magic action and to arise directly from its hidden meaning. The new baby must be *thrown out*, through the window, perhaps because he came through the window. The whole action would thus be equivalent to the familiar things said by children who are told that the stork has brought a little brother or sister. 'Then the stork is to take it away again' is the verdict.

All the same, however, we are not blind to the objections that exist—apart from any internal uncertainties—against basing the explanation of a childish act on a single analogy. For this reason I had for years kept back my theory about the little scene in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Then one day I had a patient who began his analysis with the following remarks, which I set down word for word: 'I am the eldest of a family of eight or nine children.<sup>1</sup> One of my earliest recollections is of my father sitting on the bed in his night-shirt, and telling me laughingly that I had a brother. I was then three years and three-quarters old; and that is the difference in age between me and my next brother. Then I know that a short time after (or was it a year before?)<sup>2</sup> I threw a lot of things, brushes—or was it only one brush?—shoes and other things, out of the window into the street. I have a still earlier recollection. When I was two years old, I spent a night with my parents in a hotel bedroom at Linz on the way to the Salzkammergut. I was so restless in the night and made such a noise that my father had to beat me.'

After this avowal I threw all doubts to the winds. When in analysis two things are brought out one immediately after the other, as though in one breath, we have to interpret this proximity as a connection. It was, therefore, as if the patient had said, '*Because* I found that I had got a brother, I shortly after threw these things into the street'. The act of flinging the brushes, shoes, and so on, out of the window must be recognized as a reaction to the birth of the brother. It is quite satisfactory, too, that the things thrown out in this instance were not crockery but other things, probably anything the child could reach at the moment.'

<sup>1</sup> A careless mistake of a striking character, which was undoubtedly induced by the influence of the intention, already active, to get rid of a brother. (Cf. Ferenczi, 'Transitory Symptom-Formations during Analysis'.)

<sup>2</sup> This doubt, attaching to the essential point of the communication for purposes of resistance, was spontaneously withdrawn shortly after by the patient.

Hurling them out (through the window into the street) thus proves to be the essential thing in the act, while the pleasure in the smashing, and the noise, and the kind of things on which ' execution is done ', are variable and unessential points.

Naturally, if we are concerned with tracing connections, the patient's third childish recollection cannot be left out either ; it is the earliest, though it was put at the end of the little series. It is easy to account for it. We gather that the two-year-old child was so restless because it did not like the parents being together in bed. On the journey it was probably not possible to avoid the child being a witness of this. Among the feelings which were then aroused in the jealous little one there was an embitterment against women, which persisted and permanently interfered with the development of his capacity for love.

➤ After these two observations I expressed the opinion at a meeting of the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society that occurrences of the same kind might be not infrequent among young children, whereupon Frau Dr. von Hug-Hellmuth placed two further observations at my disposal, which I append here :

## I

At the age of about three-and-a-half, little Eric quite suddenly acquired the habit of throwing everything he did not like out of the window. He did it, moreover, with things that were not in his way and did not concern him. On his father's birthday—he was three years and four-and-a-half months old—he threw a heavy rolling-pin, which he had dragged out of the kitchen into the dining-room, out of the window of a third-floor flat into the street. Some days later he sent after it the mortar-pestle, and then a pair of heavy mountaineering shoes of his father's, which he first had to take out of the cupboard.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He always chose heavy objects.



At that time his mother had a miscarriage, in the seventh or eighth month of pregnancy, and after that the child was 'sweet and quiet and so good that he seemed quite changed'. In the fifth or sixth month he repeatedly said to his mother, 'Mother, I am jumping on your tummy'—or, 'Mother, I am pushing in your tummy!'. And shortly before the miscarriage, in October, he said, 'If I must have a brother, at least I don't want it till after Christmas'.

## II

A young lady of nineteen gave her earliest recollection spontaneously as follows: 'I can see myself frightfully naughty, sitting under the table in the dining-room, ready to creep out. On the table is my mug of coffee—I can still see the pattern of the crockery quite plainly—which I was just going to throw out of the window when grandmamma came into the room.

'In fact, no one had been bothering about me, and in the meantime a skin had formed on the coffee, which was always perfectly dreadful to me and still is.

'On that day my brother, who is two-and-a-half years younger than I, was born, and so no one had had any time for me.

'They always tell me that I was insupportable on that day: at dinner I threw my father's favourite glass on the floor, I smeared and stained my frock many times, and was in the worst temper from dawn to evening. In my rage I broke a bath-doll to bits.'

These two cases scarcely need any commentary. They establish without further analytic effort that the bitterness children feel about the expected or actual appearance of a rival finds expression in throwing objects out of the window and in other acts of naughtiness and destructiveness. In the first case the 'heavy objects' probably symbolize the mother herself, against whom the child's anger is directed so long as the new

child is not yet there. The three-and-a-half-year-old boy knows about the pregnancy of the mother and has no doubt that she is harbouring the child in her body. ' Little Hans ' <sup>1</sup> and his special dread of heavily loaded carts may be recalled here.<sup>2</sup> In the second case the very young age of the child, two-and-a-half years, is noteworthy.

If we now return to Goethe's childhood-memory and put in the place it occupies in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* what we believe we have obtained through observations of other children, a flawless connection appears which we should not otherwise have discovered. It would run thus : ' I was a child of fortune : destiny had preserved me for life, although I came into the world for dead. Even more, destiny removed my brother, so that I did not have to share my mother's love with him.' And then the train of thought goes on to someone else who died in those early days, the grandmother who lived like a quiet friendly spirit in another part of the house.

I have, however, already declared elsewhere that he who has been the undisputed darling of his mother retains throughout life that victorious feeling, that confidence in ultimate success, which not seldom brings actual success with it. And a saying such as ' My strength has its roots in my relation to my mother ' might well have been put at the head of Goethe's autobiography.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ' Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy ', COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. iii.

<sup>2</sup> Further confirmation of this pregnancy-symbolism was given me some time ago by a lady of over fifty. She had often been told that as a little child, when she could hardly talk, she used to drag her father to the window in great agitation whenever a heavy lorry was passing along the street. In view of other recollections of the houses they had inhabited, it became possible to establish that she was then younger than two-and-three-quarter years. At about that time the brother next to her was born, and in consequence of this addition to the family a move was made. At about the same time, she often had before going to sleep an alarming feeling of something monstrously large, that came up to her, and ' her hands became so thick '.

## XXII

### THE 'UNCANNY'<sup>1</sup>

(1919)

#### I

IT is only rarely that a psycho-analyst feels impelled to investigate the subject of aesthetics even when aesthetics is understood to mean not merely the theory of beauty, but the theory of feeling. He works in other planes of mental life and has little to do with those subdued emotional activities which, inhibited in their aims and dependent upon a multitude of concurrent factors, usually furnish the material for the study of aesthetics. But it does occasionally happen that he has to interest himself in some particular province of that subject; and then it usually proves to be a rather remote region of it and one that has been neglected in standard works.

The subject of the 'uncanny' is a province of this kind. It undoubtedly belongs to all that is terrible—to all that arouses dread and creeping horror; it is equally certain, too, that the word is not always used in a clearly definable sense, so that it tends to coincide with whatever excites dread. Yet we may expect that it implies some intrinsic quality which justifies the use of a special name. One is curious to know what this peculiar quality is which allows us to distinguish as 'uncanny' certain things within the boundaries of what is 'fearful'.

As good as nothing is to be found upon this subject in elaborate treatises on aesthetics, which in general prefer to concern themselves with what is beautiful, attractive and sublime, that is with feelings of a positive

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Imago*, Bd. V., 1919; reprinted in *Sammlung*, Fünfte Folge. [Translated by Alix Strachey.]

nature, with the circumstances and the objects that call them forth, rather than with the opposite feelings of unpleasantness and repulsion. I know of only one attempt in medico-psychological literature, a fertile but not exhaustive paper by E. Jentsch.<sup>1</sup> But I must confess that I have not made a very thorough examination of the bibliography, especially the foreign literature, relating to this present modest contribution of mine, for reasons which must be obvious at this time ;<sup>2</sup> so that my paper is presented to the reader without any claim to priority.

In his study of the 'uncanny', Jentsch quite rightly lays stress on the obstacle presented by the fact that people vary so very greatly in their sensitivity to this quality of feeling. The writer of the present contribution, indeed, must himself plead guilty to a special obtuseness in the matter, where extreme delicacy of perception would be more in place. It is long since he has experienced or heard of anything which has given him an uncanny impression, and he will be obliged to translate himself into that state of feeling, and to awaken in himself the possibility of it before he begins. Still, difficulties of this kind make themselves felt powerfully in many other branches of aesthetics ; we need not on this account despair of finding instances in which the quality in question will be recognized without hesitation by most people.

Two courses are open to us at the start. Either we can find out what meaning has come to be attached to the word 'uncanny' in the course of its history ; or we can collect all those properties of persons, things, sensations, experiences and situations which arouse in us the feeling of uncanniness, and then infer the unknown nature of the uncanny from what they all have in common. I will say at once that both courses lead to the same result : the 'uncanny' is that class of the terrifying which leads back to something long known

<sup>1</sup> 'Zur Psychologie des Unheimlichen.'

<sup>2</sup> [An allusion to the European War only just concluded.—Trans.]

to us, once very familiar. How this is possible, in what circumstances the familiar can become uncanny and frightening, I shall show in what follows. Let me also add that my investigation was actually begun by collecting a number of individual cases, and only later received confirmation after I had examined what language could tell us. In this discussion, however, I shall follow the opposite course.

The German word *unheimlich*<sup>1</sup> is obviously the opposite of *heimlich*, *heimisch*, meaning 'familiar'; 'native', 'belonging to the home'; and we are tempted to conclude that what is 'uncanny' is frightening precisely because it is *not* known and familiar. Naturally not everything which is new and unfamiliar is frightening, however; the relation cannot be inverted. We can only say that what is novel can easily become frightening and uncanny; some new things are frightening but not by any means all. Something has to be added to what is novel and unfamiliar to make it uncanny.

On the whole, Jentsch did not get beyond this relation of the uncanny to the novel and unfamiliar. He ascribes the essential factor in the production of the feeling of uncanniness to intellectual uncertainty; so that the uncanny would always be that in which one does not know where one is, as it were. The better orientated in his environment a person is, the less readily will he get the impression of something uncanny in regard to the objects and events in it.

It is not difficult to see that this definition is incomplete, and we will therefore try to proceed beyond the equation of *unheimlich* with unfamiliar. We will first turn to other languages. But foreign dictionaries tell us nothing new, perhaps only because we speak a different language. Indeed, we get the impression that many languages are without a word for this particular variety of what is fearful.

<sup>1</sup> [Throughout this paper 'uncanny' is used as the English translation of '*unheimlich*', literally 'unhomely'.—Trans.]

I wish to express my indebtedness to Dr. Th. Reik for the following excerpts :

LATIN : (K. E. Georges, *Deutschlateinisches Wörterbuch*, 1898). Ein *unheimlicher* Ort [an uncanny place]—locus suspectus ; in *unheimlicher* Nachtzeit [in the dismal night hours]—*intempesta nocte*.

GREEK : (Rost's and Schenk's Lexikons). ξένος—strange, foreign.

ENGLISH : (from dictionaries by Lucas, Bellow, Flügel, Muret - Sanders). Uncomfortable, uneasy, gloomy, dismal, uncanny, ghastly ; (of a house) haunted ; (of a man) a repulsive fellow.

FRENCH : (Sachs - Villatte). Inquiétant, sinistre, lugubre, mal à son aise.

SPANISH : (Tollhausen, 1889). Sospechoso, de mal aguero, lugubre, siniestro.

The Italian and the Portuguese seem to content themselves with words which we should describe as circumlocutions. In Arabic and Hebrew 'uncanny' means the same as 'daemonic', 'gruesome'.

Let us therefore return to the German language. In Daniel Sanders' *Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (1860), the following remarks<sup>1</sup> [abstracted in translation] are found upon the word *heimlich* ; I have laid stress on certain passages by italicizing them.

*Heimlich*, adj. : I. Also *heimelich*, *heimelig*, belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, tame, intimate, comfortable, homely, etc.

(a) (Obsolete) belonging to the house or the family, or regarded as so belonging (cf. Latin *familiaris*) : *Die Heimlichen*, the members of the household ; *Der heimliche Rat* [him to whom secrets are revealed] Gen. xli. 45 ; 2 Sam. xxiii. 23 ; now more usually *Geheimer Rat* [Privy Councillor], cf. *Heimlicher*.

(b) Of animals : tame, companionable to man. As opposed

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 729. *Heimlich*, a. (-keit, f. -en) : 1. auch *Heimelich*, *heimelig*, zum Hause gehörig, nicht fremd, vertraut, zahm, traut und traulich, anheimelnd etc. (a) (veralt.) zum Haus, zur Familie gehörig, oder : wie dazu gehörig betrachtet, vgl. lat. *familiaris*, vertraut : *Die Heimlichen*, die Hausgenossen ; *Der heimliche Rat*. 1. Mos. 41, 45 ; 2. Sam. 23, 23. 1 Chr. 12, 25. Weish. 8, 4., wofür jetzt : *Geheimer* (s. d. 1.) *Rat* üblich ist, s. *Heimlicher*—(b) von Tieren zahm, sich den Menschen traulich anschließend. Ggstz. wild, z. B. Tier, die weder wild

to wild, e.g. 'Wild animals . . . that are trained to be *heimlich* and accustomed to men'. 'If these young creatures are brought up from early days among men they become quite *heimlich*, friendly', etc.

(c) Friendly, intimate, homelike; the enjoyment of quiet content, etc., arousing a sense of peaceful pleasure and security as in one within the four walls of his house. 'Is it still *heimlich* to you in your country where strangers are felling your woods?' 'She did not feel all too *heimlich* with him.' 'To destroy the *Heimlichkeit* of the home.' 'I could not readily find another spot so intimate and *heimlich* as this.' 'In quiet *Heimlichkeit*, surrounded by close walls.' 'A careful housewife, who knows how to make a pleasing *Heimlichkeit* (*Häuslichkeit*)<sup>1</sup> out of the smallest means.' 'The protestant rulers do not feel . . . *heimlich* among their catholic subjects.' 'When it grows *heimlich* and still, and the evening quiet alone watches over your cell.' 'Quiet, lovely and *heimlich*, no place more fitted for her rest.' 'The in and outflowing waves of the current, dreamy and *heimlich* as a cradle-song.' Cf. in especial *Unheimlich*. Among Swabian

noch heimlich sind, etc. Eppendorf. 88; Wilde Thier . . . so man sie h. und gewohnsam um die Leute aufzuecht. 92. So diese Thierle von Jugend bei den Menschen erzogen, werden sie ganz h., freundlich etc., Stumpf 608a etc.—So noch: So h. ist's (das Lamm) und frißt aus meiner Hand. Hölty; Ein schöner, heimelicher (s. c) Vogel bleibt der Storch immerhin. Linck, Schl. 146. s. Häuslich. 1 etc.—(c) traut, traulich anheimelnd; das Wohlgefühl stiller Befriedigung etc., behaglicher Ruhe u. sichern Schutzes, wie das umschlossene wohnliche Haus erregend (vgl. Geheuer): Ist dir's h. noch im Lande, wo die Fremden deine Wälder roden? Alexis H. 1, 1, 289; Es war ihr nicht allzu h. bei ihm. Brentano Wehm. 92; Auf einem hohen h—en Schattenpfade . . . längs dem rieselnden rauschenden und plätschernenden Waldbach. Forster B. 1, 417. Die H—keit der Heimath zerstören. Gervinus Lit. 5, 375. So vertraulich und heimlich habe ich nicht leicht ein Plätzchen gefunden. G. 14, 14; Wir dachten es uns so bequem, so artig, so gemütlich und h. 15, 9; In stiller H—keit, umzielt von engen Schranken. Haller: Einer sorglichen Hausfrau, die mit dem Wenigsten eine vergnügliche H—keit (Häuslichkeit) zu schaffen versteht. Hartmann Unst. 1, 188; Desto h—er kam ihm jetzt der ihm erst kurz noch so fremde Mann vor. Kerner 540; Die protestantischen Besitzer fühlen sich . . . nicht h. unter ihren katholischen Unterthanen. Kohl. Irl. 1, 172; Wenns h. wird und leise/die Abendstille nur an deiner Zelle lauscht. Tiedge 2, 39; Still und lieb und h., als sie sich/zum Ruhen einen Platz nur wünschen möchten. W. 11, 144; Es war ihm garnicht h. dabei 27. 170, etc.—Auch: Der Platz war so still, so einsam, so schatten-h. Scherr Pilg. 1, 170; Die ab- und zuströmenden Fluthwellen, träumend und wiegenlied-h. Körner, Sch. 3, 320, etc.—Vgl. namentl. Un-h.—Namentl. bei schwäb., schwzr.

<sup>1</sup> [From *Haus* = house; *Häuslichkeit* = domestic life.—Trans.]

and Swiss authors in especial, often as a trisyllable: 'How *heimelich* it seemed again of an evening, back at home'. 'The warm room and the *heimelig* afternoon.' 'Little by little they grew at ease and *heimelig* among themselves.' 'That which comes from afar . . . assuredly does not live quite *heimelig* (*heimatlich* [at home], *freundnachbarlich* [in a neighbourly way]) among the people.' 'The sentinel's horn sounds so *heimelig* from the tower, and his voice invites so hospitably.' *This form of the word ought to become general in order to protect the word from becoming obsolete in its good sense through an easy confusion with II.* [see below]. "'The Zecks [a family name] are all 'heimlich'.'" "'Heimlich'? What do you understand by 'heimlich'?" "Well, . . . they are like a buried spring or a dried-up pond. One cannot walk over it without always having the feeling that water might come up there again." "Oh, we call it 'unheimlich'; you call it 'heimlich'. Well, what makes you think that there is something secret and untrustworthy about this family?'" Gutzkow.

II. Concealed, kept from sight, so that others do not get to know about it, withheld from others. cf. *geheim* [secret];

Schriftst. oft dreisilbig: Wie 'heimelich' war es dann Ivo Abends wieder, als er zu Hause lag. Auerbach, D. 1, 249; In dem Haus ist mir's so heimelig gewesen. 4. 307; Die warme Stube, der heimelige Nachmittag. Gotthelf, Sch. 127, 148; Das ist das wahre Heimelig, wenn der Mensch so von Herzen fühlt, wie wenig er ist, wie groß der Herr ist. 147; Würde man nach und nach recht gemächlich und heimelig mit einander. U. 1, 297; Die trauliche Heimeligkeit. 380, 2, 86; Heimelicher wird es mir wohl nirgends werden als hier. 327; Pestalozzi 4, 240; Was von ferne herkommt . . . lebt gw. nicht ganz heimelig (heimatlich, freundnachbarlich) mit den Leuten. 325; Die Hütte, wo/er sonst so heimelig, so froh/. . . im Kreis der Seinen oft gegessen. Reithard 20; Da klingt das Horn des Wächters so heimelig vom Thurm/da ladet seine Stimme so gastlich. 49; Es schläft sich da so lind und warm/so wunderheim'lig ein. 23, etc.—Diese Weise verdiente allgemein zu werden, um das gute Wort vor dem Veralten wegen nahe liegender Verwechslung mit z zu bewahren. vgl.: 'Die Zecks sind alle h. (2)' H . . . ? Was verstehen sie unter h . . . ?—Nun . . . es kommt mir mit ihnen vor, wie mit einem zugrabenen Brunnen oder einem ausgetrockneten Teich. Man kann nicht darüber gehen, ohne daß es Einem immer ist, als könnte da wieder einmal Wasser zum Vorschein kommen.' Wir nennen das un—h.; Sie nennen's h. Worin finden Sie denn, daß diese Familie etwas Verstecktes und Unzuverlässiges hat? etc. Gutzkow R. 2, 61\*.)—(d) (s. c) namentl. schles.: fröhlich, heiter, auch vom Wetter, s. Adlung und Weinhold.—2. versteckt, verborgen gehalten, so daß man Andre nicht davon oder darum wissen lassen, es ihnen verbergen will, vgl. Geheim (2), von welchem erst nhd. Ew. es doch zumal in der älteren Sprache, z. B. in der Bibel, wie Hiob 11, 6; 15, 8, Weish. 2, 22; 1. Kor.

\* Sperrdruck (auch im folgenden) vom Referenten.



so also *Heimlichkeit* for *Geheimnis* [secret]. To do something *heimlich*, i.e. behind someone's back; to steal away *heimlich*; *heimlich* meetings and appointments; to look on with *heimlich* pleasure at someone's discomfiture; to sigh or weep *heimlich*; to behave *heimlich*, as though there was something to conceal; *heimlich* love, love-affair, sin; *heimlich* places (which good manners oblige us to conceal). 1 Sam. v. 6; 'The *heimlich* chamber' [privy]. 2 Kings x. 27 etc.; 'To throw into pits or *Heimlichkeit*'. Led the steeds *heimlich* before Laomedon.' 'As secretive, *heimlich*, deceitful and malicious towards cruel masters . . . as frank, open, sympathetic and helpful towards a friend in misfortune.' 'The *heimlich* art' (magic). 'Where public ventilation has to stop, there *heimlich* machinations begin.' 'Freedom is the whispered watchword of *heimlich* conspirators and the loud battle-cry of professed revolutionaries.' 'A holy, *heimlich* effect.' 'I have roots that are most *heimlich*, I am grown in the deep earth.' 'My *heimlich* pranks.' (Cf. *Heimtücke* [mischief]). To discover, disclose, betray

2, 7 etc., und so auch H—keit statt Geheimnis. Math. 13, 35 etc., nicht immer genau geschieden wird: H. (hinter Jemandes Rücken) etwas thun, treiben; Sich h. davon schleichen; H—e Zusammenkünfte, Verabredungen; Mit h—er Schadenfreude zusehen; H. seufzen, weinen; H. thun, als ob man etwas zu verbergen hätte; H—e Liebe, Liebshaft, Sünde; H—e Orte (die der Wohlstand zu verhüllen gebietet), 1. Sam. 5, 6; Das h—e Gemach (Abtritt) 2. Kön. 10, 27; W. 5, 256 etc., auch: Der h—e Stuhl. Zinkgräf 1, 249; In Graben, in H—keiten werfen. 3, 75; Rollenhagen Fr. 83 etc.—Führte h. vor Laomedon / die Stuten vor. B. 161 b etc.—Ebenso versteckt, h., hinterlistig und boshaft gegen grausame Herren . . . wie offen, frei, theilnehmend und dienstwillig gegen den leidenden Freund. Burmeister g B 2, 157; Du sollst mein h. Heiligstes noch wissen. Chamisso 4, 56; Die h—e Kunst (der Zauberei). 3, 224; Wo die öffentliche Ventilation aufhören muß, fängt die h—e Machination an. Forster, Br. 2, 135; Freiheit ist die leise Parole h. Verschwoener, das laute Feldgeschrei der öffentlich Umwälzenden. G. 4, 222; Ein heilig, h. Wirken. 15; Ich habe Wurzeln / die sind gar h., / im tiefen Boden / bin ich gegründet. 2, 109; Meine h—e Tücke (vgl. Heimtücke). 30, 344; Empfängt er es nicht offenbar und gewissenhaft, so mag er es h. und gewissenlos ergreifen. 39, 22; Ließ h. und geheimnisvoll achromatische Fernröhre zusammensetzen. 375; Von nun an, will ich, sei nichts H—es mehr unter uns. Sch. 369 b.—Jemandes H—keiten entdecken, offenbaren, verrathen; H—keiten hinter meinem Rücken zu brauen. Alexis. H. 2, 3, 168; Zu meiner Zeit / befiß man sich der H—keit. Hagedorn 3, 92; Die H—keit und das Gepusche unter der Hand. Immermann, M. 3, 289; Der H—keit (des verborgnen Golds) unmächtigen Bann / kann nur die Hand der Einsicht lösen. Novalis. 1, 69; / Sag an, wo du sie verbirgst . . . in welches Ortes verschwiegener H. Schr. 495 b; Ihr Bienen, die ihr knetet / der H—keiten Schloß (Wachs zum Siegel). Tieck, Cymb. 3, 2; Erfahren in seltnen H—keiten (Zauberkünsten). Schlegel Sh. 6, 102 etc. vgl. Geheimnis L. 10 : 291 ff.

someone's *Heimlichkeiten*; 'to concoct *Heimlichkeiten* behind my back'. Cf. *Geheimnis*.

Compounds and especially also the opposite follow meaning I. (above): *Unheimlich*, uneasy, eerie, blood-curdling; 'Seeming almost *unheimlich* and ghostly to him'. 'I had already long since felt an *unheimlich*, even gruesome feeling.' 'Feels an *unheimlich* horror.' '*Unheimlich* and motionless like a stone-image.' 'The *unheimlich* mist called hill-fog.' 'These pale youths are *unheimlich* and are brewing heaven knows what mischief.' "'*Unheimlich*" is the name for everything that ought to have remained . . . hidden and secret and has become visible', Schelling. 'To veil the divine, to surround it with a certain *Unheimlichkeit*.'—*Unheimlich* is not often used as opposite to meaning II. (above).

What interests us most in this long extract is to find that among its different shades of meaning the word *heimlich* exhibits one which is identical with its opposite, *unheimlich*. What is *heimlich* thus comes to be *unheimlich*. (Cf. the quotation from Gutzkow: 'We call it *unheimlich*; you call it *heimlich*'.) In general we are reminded that the word *heimlich* is not unambiguous, but belongs to two sets of ideas, which without being contradictory are yet very different: on the one hand, it means that which is familiar and congenial, and on the other, that which is concealed and kept out of sight. The word *unheimlich* is only used customarily, we are told, as the contrary of the first signification, and not of the second. Sanders tells us nothing concerning a possible genetic connection between these two sets of meanings. On the other hand, we notice that Schelling says something which throws quite a new light on the

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Zsstzg. s. 1 c, so auch nam. der Ggstz. : Un- : unbehagliches, banges Grauen erregend: Der schier ihm un-h., gespenstisch erschien. Chamisso 3, 238; Der Nacht un-h. bange Stunden. 4, 148; Mir war schon lang' un-h., ja graulich zu Mute. 242; Nun fängts mir an, un-h. zu werden. Gutzkow R. 2, 82; Empfíndet ein u—es Grauen. Verm. 1, 51; Un-h. und starr wie ein Steinbild. Reis, 1, 10; Den u—en Nebel, Haarrauch geheißen. Immermann M., 3, 299; Diese blassen Jungen sind un-h. und brauen Gott weiß was Schlimmes. Laube, Band 1, 119; Un-h. nennt man Alles, was im Geheimnis, im Verborgnen . . . bleiben sollte und hervorgetreten ist. Schelling, 2, 2, 649 etc.—Das Göttliche zu verhüllen, mit einer gewissen U—keit zu umgeben 658, etc.—Unüblich als Ggstz. von (2), wie es Campe ohne Beleg anführt.

concept of the 'uncanny', one which we had certainly not awaited. According to him everything is uncanny that ought to have remained hidden and secret, and yet comes to light.

Some of the doubts that have thus arisen are removed if we consult Grimm's dictionary.<sup>1</sup>

We read :

*Heimlich*; adj. and adv. *vernaculus, occultus*; MHG. *heimelich, heimlich*.

P. 874. In a slightly different sense: 'I feel *heimlich*, well, free from fear. . . .

(b) *Heimlich*, also in the sense of a place free from ghostly influences . . . familiar, friendly, intimate.

4. From the idea of 'homelike', 'belonging to the house', the further idea is developed of something withdrawn from the eyes of others, something concealed, secret, and this idea is expanded in many ways. . . .

P. 876. 'On the left bank of the lake there lies a meadow *heimlich* in the wood.' Schiller, *Tell*. . . . Poetic licence, rarely so used in modern speech . . . In conjunction with a verb expressing the act of concealing: 'In the secret of his tabernacle he shall hide me (*heimlich*).' Ps. xxvii. 5 . . . *Heimlich* places in the human body, pudenda . . . 'the men that died not were smitten' (on their *heimlich* parts). I Samuel v. 12. . . .

(c) Officials who give important advice which has to be

<sup>1</sup> Grimm, Jakob und Wilhelm, *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, Leipzig, 1877, IV./2, p. 874 *et seq.*

*Heimlich*; adj. und adv. *vernaculus, occultus*; mhd. *heimelich, heimlich*.

S. 874: In etwas anderem sinne: es ist mir heimlich, wohl, frei von furcht. . . .

(b) heimlich ist auch der von gespensterhaften freie ort . . .

S. 875: (ß) vertraut; freundlich, zutraulich.

4. aus dem heimatlichen, häuslichen entwickelt sich weiter der begriff des fremden augen entzogenen, verborgenen, geheimen, eben auch in mehrfacher beziehung ausgebildet . . .

S. 876: links am see

liegt eine matthe heimlich im gehölz'.

Schiller, *Tell* I., 4.

. . . frei und für den modernen Sprachgebrauch ungewöhnlich . . . heimlich ist zu einem verbum des verbergens gestellt: er verbirgt mich heimlich in seinem gezelt. ps. 27, 5. (. . . heimliche orte am menschlichen Körper, pudenda . . . welche leute nicht stürben, die wurden geschlagen an heimlichen orten. I Samuel 5, 12 . . .

(c) Beamtete, die wichtige und geheim zu haltende ratschläge in

kept secret in matters of state are called *heimlich* councillors ; the adjective, according to modern usage, having been replaced by *geheim* [secret]. . . . 'Pharaoh called Joseph's name "him to whom secrets are revealed"' (*heimlich* councillor). Gen. xli. 45.

P. 878. 6. *Heimlich*, as used of knowledge, mystic, allegorical: a *heimlich* meaning, *mysticus, divinus, occultus, figuratus*.

P. 878. *Heimlich* in a different sense, as withdrawn from knowledge, unconscious: . . . *Heimlich* also has the meaning of that which is obscure, inaccessible to knowledge: . . . 'Do you not see? They do not trust me; they fear the *heimlich* face of the Duke of Friedland.' *Wallensteins Lager*, Act 2.

9. *The notion of something hidden and dangerous, which is expressed in the last paragraph, is still further developed, so that 'heimlich' comes to have the meaning usually ascribed to 'unheimlich'*. Thus: 'At times I feel like a man who walks in the night and believes in ghosts; every corner is *heimlich* and full of terrors for him'. Klinger.

Thus *heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*. *Unheimlich* is in some way or other a sub-species of *heimlich*. Let us retain this discovery, which we do not yet properly understand, alongside of Schelling's definition of the 'uncanny'. Then if we examine individual instances of uncanniness, these indications will become comprehensible to us.

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staatssachen ertheilen, heißen heimliche räthe, das adjektiv nach heutigem sprachgebrauch durch geheim (s.d.) ersetzt: . . . (Pharao) nennet ihn (Joseph) den heimlichen rath. 1. Mos. 41, 45;

S. 878. 6. *Heimlich* für die erkenntnis, mystisch, allegorisch: heimliche bedeutung, *mysticus, divinus, occultus, figuratus*.

S. 878. Anders ist heimlich im folgenden, der erkenntnis entzogen, unbewusst: . . .

Dann aber ist heimlich auch verschlossen, undurchdringlich in bezug auf erforschung: . . .

'Merkst du wohl? sie trauen mir nicht,  
fürchten des Friedländers heimlich gesicht.'

Wallensteins lager, 2. aufz.

9. die bedeutung des versteckten, gefährlichen, die in der vorigen nummer hervortritt, entwickelt sich noch weiter, so daß heimlich den sinn empfängt, den sonst unheimlich (gebildet nach heimlich, 3b sp. 874) hat: 'mir ist zu zeiten wie dem menschen der in nacht wandelt und an gespenster glaubt, jeder winkel ist ihm heimlich und schauerhaft'. Klinger, theater, 3 298.

## II

In proceeding to review those things, persons, impressions, events and situations which are able to arouse in us a feeling of the uncanny in a very forcible and definite form, the first requirement is obviously to select a suitable example to start upon. Jentsch has taken as a very good instance 'doubts whether an apparently animate being is really alive; or conversely, whether a lifeless object might not be in fact animate'; and he refers in this connection to the impression made by wax-work figures, artificial dolls and automatons. He adds to this class the uncanny effect of epileptic seizures and the manifestations of insanity, because these excite in the spectator the feeling that automatic, mechanical processes are at work, concealed beneath the ordinary appearance of animation. Without entirely accepting the author's view, we will take it as a starting-point for our investigation because it leads us on to consider a writer who has succeeded better than anyone else in producing uncanny effects.

Jentsch says: 'In telling a story, one of the most successful devices for easily creating uncanny effects is to leave the reader in uncertainty whether a particular figure in the story is a human being or an automaton; and to do it in such a way that his attention is not directly focussed upon his uncertainty, so that he may not be urged to go into the matter and clear it up immediately, since that, as we have said, would quickly dissipate the peculiar emotional effect of the thing. Hoffmann has repeatedly employed this psychological artifice with success in his fantastic narratives.'

This observation, undoubtedly a correct one, refers primarily to the story of 'The Sand-Man' in Hoffmann's *Nachtstücken*,<sup>1</sup> which contains the original of Olympia,

<sup>1</sup> Hoffmann's *Sämtliche Werke*, Grisebach Edition, vol. iii.

the doll in the first act of Offenbach's opera, *Tales of Hoffmann*. But I cannot think—and I hope that most readers of the story will agree with me—that the theme of the doll, Olympia, who is to all appearances a living being, is by any means the only element to be held responsible for the quite unparalleled atmosphere of uncanniness which the story evokes; or, indeed, that it is the most important among them. Nor is this effect of the story heightened by the fact that the author himself treats the episode of Olympia with a faint touch of satire and uses it to make fun of the young man's idealization of his mistress. The main theme of the story is, on the contrary, something different, something which gives its name to the story, and which is always re-introduced at the critical moment: it is the theme of the 'Sand-Man' who tears out children's eyes.

This fantastic tale begins with the childhood-recollections of the student Nathaniel: in spite of his present happiness, he cannot banish the memories associated with the mysterious and terrifying death of the father he loved. On certain evenings his mother used to send the children to bed early, warning them that 'the Sand-Man was coming'; and sure enough Nathaniel would not fail to hear the heavy tread of a visitor with whom his father would then be occupied that evening. When questioned about the Sand-Man, his mother, it is true, denied that such a person existed except as a form of speech; but his nurse could give him more definite information: 'He is a wicked man who comes when children won't go to bed, and throws handfuls of sand in their eyes so that they jump out of their heads all bleeding. Then he puts the eyes in a sack and carries them off to the moon to feed his children. They sit up there in their nest, and their beaks are hooked like owls' beaks, and they use them to peck up naughty boys' and girls' eyes with.'

Although little Nathaniel was sensible and old enough not to believe in such gruesome attributes to

the figure of the Sand-Man, yet the dread of him became fixed in his breast. He determined to find out what the Sand-Man looked like; and one evening, when the Sand-Man was again expected, he hid himself in his father's study. He recognized the visitor as the lawyer Coppelius, a repulsive person of whom the children were frightened when he occasionally came to a meal; and he now identified this Coppelius with the dreaded Sand-Man. Concerning the rest of the scene, Hoffmann already leaves us in doubt whether we are witnessing the first delirium of the panic-stricken boy, or a succession of events which are to be regarded in the story as being real. His father and the guest begin to busy themselves at a hearth with glowing flames. The little eavesdropper hears Coppelius call out, 'Here with your eyes!' and betrays himself by screaming aloud; Coppelius seizes him and is about to drop grains of red-hot coal out of the fire into his eyes, so as to cast them out on to the hearth. His father begs him off and saves his eyes. After this the boy falls into a deep swoon; and a long illness followed upon his experience. Those who lean towards a rationalistic interpretation of the Sand-Man will not fail to recognize in the child's phantasy the continued influence of his nurse's story. The grains of sand that are to be thrown into the child's eyes turn into red-hot grains of coal out of the flames; and in both cases they are meant to make his eyes jump out. In the course of another visit of the Sand-Man's, a year later, his father was killed in his study by an explosion. The lawyer Coppelius vanished from the place without leaving a trace behind.

Nathaniel, now a student, believes that he has recognized this childhood's phantom of horror in an itinerant optician, an Italian called Giuseppe Coppola. This man had offered him barometers for sale in his university town, and when Nathaniel refused had added: 'Eh, not barometers, not barometers—also got fine eyes, beautiful eyes'. The student's terror

was allayed on finding that the proffered eyes were only harmless spectacles, and he bought a pocket-telescope from Coppola. With its aid he looks across into Professor Spalanzani's house opposite and there spies Spalanzani's beautiful, but strangely silent and motionless daughter, Olympia. He soon falls in love with her so violently that he quite forgets his clever and sensible betrothed on her account. But Olympia was an automaton whose works Spalanzani had made, and whose eyes Coppola, the Sand-Man, had put in. The student surprises the two men quarrelling over their handiwork. The optician carries off the wooden, eyeless doll; and the mechanician, Spalanzani, takes up Olympia's bleeding eye-balls from the ground and throws them at Nathaniel's breast, saying that Coppola had stolen them from him (Nathaniel). Nathaniel succumbs to a fresh attack of madness, and in his delirium his recollection of his father's death is mingled with this new experience. He cries, 'Faster—faster—faster—rings of fire—rings of fire! Whirl about, rings of fire—round and round! Wooden doll, ho! lovely wooden doll, whirl about——', then falls upon the professor, Olympia's so-called father, and tries to strangle him.

Rallying from a long and serious illness, Nathaniel seemed at last to have recovered. He was going to marry his betrothed with whom he was reconciled. One day he was walking through the town and market-place, where the high tower of the Town-Hall threw its huge shadow. On the girl's suggestion they mounted the tower, leaving her brother, who was walking with them, down below. Up there, Clara's attention is drawn to a curious object coming along the street. Nathaniel looks at this thing through Coppola's spy-glass, which he finds in his pocket, and falls into a new fit of madness. Shouting out, 'Whirl about, my wooden doll!' he tries to fling the girl into the depths below. Her brother, brought to her side by her cries, rescues her and hastens down to safety with her. Up



above, the raving man rushes round, shrieking 'Rings of fire, whirl about!'—words whose origin we know. Among the people who begin to gather below there comes forward the figure of the lawyer Coppelius, suddenly returned. We may suppose it was his approach, seen through the telescope, that threw Nathaniel into his madness. People want to go up and overpower the madman, but Coppelius<sup>1</sup> laughs and says, 'Wait a bit; he'll come down of himself'. Nathaniel suddenly stands still, catches sight of Coppelius, and with a wild shriek 'Yes! "Fine eyes—beautiful eyes"', flings himself down over the parapet. No sooner does he lie on the paving-stones with a shattered skull than the Sand-Man vanishes in the throng.

This short summary leaves, I think, no doubt that the feeling of something uncanny is directly attached to the figure of the Sand-Man, that is, to the idea of being robbed of one's eyes; and that Jentsch's point of an intellectual uncertainty has nothing to do with this effect. Uncertainty whether an object is living or inanimate, which we must admit in regard to the doll Olympia, is quite irrelevant in connection with this other, more striking instance of uncanniness. It is true that the writer creates a kind of uncertainty in us in the beginning by not letting us know, no doubt purposely, whether he is taking us into the real world or into a purely fantastic one of his own creation. He has admittedly the right to do either; and if he chooses to stage his action in a world peopled with spirits, demons and ghosts, as Shakespeare does in *Hamlet*, in *Macbeth* and, in a different sense, in *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, we must bow to his decision and treat his setting as though it were real for as long as we put ourselves into his hands. But this uncertainty disappears in the course of Hoffmann's

<sup>1</sup> Frau Dr. Rank has pointed out the association of the name with 'Coppella' = crucible, connecting it with the chemical operations that caused the father's death; and also with 'coppo' = eye-socket.

story, and we perceive that he means to make us, too, look through the fell Coppola's glasses—perhaps, indeed, that he himself once gazed through such an instrument. For the conclusion of the story makes it quite clear that Coppola the optician really is the lawyer Coppelius and thus also the Sand-Man.

There is no question, therefore, of any 'intellectual uncertainty'; we know now that we are not supposed to be looking on at the products of a madman's imagination behind which we, with the superiority of rational minds, are able to detect the sober truth; and yet this knowledge does not lessen the impression of uncanniness in the least degree. The theory of 'intellectual uncertainty' is thus incapable of explaining that impression.

We know from psycho-analytic experience, however, that this fear of damaging or losing one's eyes is a terrible fear of childhood. Many adults still retain their apprehensiveness in this respect, and no bodily injury is so much dreaded by them as an injury to the eye. We are accustomed to say, too, that we will treasure a thing as the apple of our eye. A study of dreams, phantasies and myths has taught us that a morbid anxiety connected with the eyes and with going blind is often enough a substitute for the dread of castration. In blinding himself, Oedipus, that mythical law-breaker, was simply carrying out a mitigated form of the punishment of castration—the only punishment that according to the *lex talionis* was fitted for him. We may try to reject the derivation of fears about the eye from the fear of castration on rationalistic grounds, and say that it is very natural that so precious an organ as the eye should be guarded by a proportionate dread; indeed, we might go further and say that the fear of castration itself contains no other significance and no deeper secret than a justifiable dread of this kind. But this view does not account adequately for the substitutive relation between the eye and the male member which is seen to exist in

dreams and myths and phantasies ; nor can it dispel the impression one gains that it is the threat of being castrated in especial which excites a peculiarly violent and obscure emotion, and that this emotion is what first gives the idea of losing other organs its intense colouring. All further doubts are removed when we get the details of their ' castration-complex ' from the analyses of neurotic patients, and realize its immense importance in their mental life.

Moreover, I would not recommend any opponent of the psycho-analytic view to select precisely the story of the Sand-Man upon which to build his case that morbid anxiety about the eyes has nothing to do with the castration-complex. For why does Hoffmann bring the anxiety about eyes into such intimate connection with the father's death ? And why does the Sand-Man appear each time in order to interfere with love ? He divides the unfortunate Nathaniel from his betrothed and from her brother, his best friend ; he destroys his second object of love, Olympia, the lovely doll ; and he drives him into suicide at the moment when he has won back his Clara and is about to be happily united to her. Things like these and many more seem arbitrary and meaningless in the story so long as we deny all connection between fears about the eye and castration ; but they become intelligible as soon as we replace the Sand-Man by the dreaded father at whose hands castration is awaited.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In fact, Hoffmann's imaginative treatment of his material has not played such havoc with its elements that we cannot reconstruct their original arrangement. In the story from Nathaniel's childhood, the figures of his father and Coppelius represent the two opposites into which the father-*imago* is split by the ambivalence of the child's feeling ; whereas the one threatens to blind him, that is, to castrate him, the other, the loving father, intercedes for his sight. That part of the complex which is most strongly repressed, the death-wish against the father, finds expression in the death of the good father, and Coppelius is made answerable for it. Later, in his student days, Professor Spalanzani and Coppola the optician reproduce this double representation of the father-*imago*, the Professor is a member of the father-series, Coppola openly identified with the lawyer Coppelius. Just as before they used to work together over the fire, so now they have jointly created the doll Olympia ; the Professor is even called

We shall venture, therefore, to refer the uncanny effect of the Sand-Man to the child's dread in relation to its castration-complex. But having gained the idea that we can take this infantile factor to account for feelings of uncanniness, we are drawn to examine whether we can apply it to other instances of uncanny things. We find in the story of the Sand-Man the other theme upon which Jentsch lays stress, of a doll that appears to be alive. Jentsch believes that a particularly favourable condition for awakening uncanny sensations is created when there is intellectual uncertainty whether an object is alive or not, and when an inanimate object becomes too much like an animate one. Now, dolls happen to be rather closely connected with infantile life. We remember that in their early

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the father of Olympia. This second occurrence of work in common shows that the optician and the mechanic are also components of the father-*imago*, that is, both are Nathaniel's father as well as Olympia's. I ought to have added that in the terrifying scene in childhood, Coppelius, after sparing Nathaniel's eyes, had screwed off his arms and legs as an experiment; that is, he had experimented on him as a mechanic would on a doll. This singular feature, which seems quite out of perspective in the picture of the Sand-Man, introduces a new castration-equivalent; but it also emphasizes the identity of Coppelius and his later counterpart, Spalanzani the mechanic, and helps us to understand who Olympia is. She, the automatic doll, can be nothing else than a personification of Nathaniel's feminine attitude towards his father in his infancy. The father of both, Spalanzani and Coppola, are, as we know, new editions, reincarnations of Nathaniel's 'two' fathers. Now Spalanzani's otherwise incomprehensible statement that the optician has stolen Nathaniel's eyes so as to set them in the doll becomes significant and supplies fresh evidence for the identity of Olympia and Nathaniel. Olympia is, as it were, a dissociated complex of Nathaniel's which confronts him as a person, and Nathaniel's enslavement to this complex is expressed in his senseless obsessive love for Olympia. We may with justice call such love narcissistic, and can understand why he who has fallen victim to it should relinquish his real, external object of love. The psychological truth of the situation in which the young man, fixated upon his father by his castration-complex, is incapable of loving a woman, is amply proved by numerous analyses of patients whose story, though less fantastic, is hardly less tragic than that of the student Nathaniel.

Hoffmann was the child of an unhappy marriage. When he was three years old, his father left his small family, never to be united to them again. According to Grisebach, in his biographical introduction to Hoffmann's works, the writer's relation to his father was always a most sensitive subject with him.

games children do not distinguish at all sharply between living and lifeless objects, and that they are especially fond of treating their dolls like live people. In fact, I have occasionally heard a woman patient declare that even at the age of eight she had still been convinced that her dolls would be certain to come to life if she were to look at them in a particular way, with as concentrated a gaze as possible. So that here, too, it is not difficult to discover a factor from childhood; but curiously enough, while the Sand-Man story deals with the excitation of an early childhood fear, the idea of a 'living doll' excites no fear at all; the child had no fear of its doll coming to life, it may even have desired it. The source of the feeling of an uncanny thing would not, therefore, be an infantile fear in this case, but rather an infantile wish or even only an infantile belief. There seems to be a contradiction here; but perhaps it is only a complication, which may be helpful to us later on.

Hoffmann is in literature the unrivalled master of conjuring up the uncanny. His *Elixire des Teufels* [The Devil's Elixir] contains a mass of themes to which one is tempted to ascribe the uncanny effect of the narrative; but it is too obscure and intricate a story to venture to summarize. Towards the end of the book the reader is told the facts, hitherto concealed from him, from which the action springs; with the result, not that he is at last enlightened, but that he falls into a state of complete bewilderment. The author has piled up too much of a kind; one's comprehension of the whole suffers as a result, though not the impression it makes. We must content ourselves with selecting those themes of uncanniness which are most prominent, and seeing whether we can fairly trace them also back to infantile sources. These themes are all concerned with the idea of a 'double' in every shape and degree, with persons, therefore, who are to be considered identical by reason of looking alike; Hoffmann accentuates this relation by trans-

ferring mental processes from the one person to the other—what we should call telepathy—so that the one possesses knowledge, feeling and experience in common with the other, identifies himself with another person, so that his self becomes confounded, or the foreign self is substituted for his own—in other words, by doubling, dividing and interchanging the self. And finally there is the constant recurrence of similar situations, a same face, or character-trait, or twist of fortune, or a same crime, or even a same name recurring throughout several consecutive generations.

The theme of the 'double' has been very thoroughly treated by Otto Rank.<sup>1</sup> He has gone into the connections the 'double' has with reflections in mirrors, with shadows, guardian spirits, with the belief in the soul and the fear of death; but he also lets in a flood of light on the astonishing evolution of this idea. For the 'double' was originally an insurance against destruction to the ego, an 'energetic denial of the power of death', as Rank says; and probably the 'immortal' soul was the first 'double' of the body. This invention of doubling as a preservation against extinction has its counterpart in the language of dreams, which is fond of representing castration by a doubling or multiplication of the genital symbol; the same desire spurred on the ancient Egyptians to the art of making images of the dead in some lasting material. Such ideas, however, have sprung from the soil of unbounded self-love, from the primary narcissism which holds sway in the mind of the child as in that of primitive man; and when this stage has been left behind the double takes on a different aspect. From having been an assurance of immortality, he becomes the ghastly harbinger of death.

The idea of the 'double' does not necessarily disappear with the passing of the primary narcissism, for it can receive fresh meaning from the later stages of development of the ego. A special faculty is slowly

<sup>1</sup> 'Der Doppelgänger.'

formed there, able to oppose the rest of the ego, with the function of observing and criticizing the self and exercising a censorship within the mind, and this we become aware of as our 'conscience'. In the pathological case of delusions of being watched this mental institution becomes isolated, dissociated from the ego, and discernible to a physician's eye. The fact that a faculty of this kind exists, which is able to treat the rest of the ego like an object—the fact, that is, that man is capable of self-observation—renders it possible to invest the old idea of a 'double' with a new meaning and to ascribe many things to it, above all, those things which seem to the new faculty of self-criticism to belong to the old surmounted narcissism of the earliest period of all.<sup>1</sup>

But it is not only this narcissism, offensive to the ego-criticizing faculty, which may be incorporated in the idea of a double. There are also all those unfulfilled but possible futures to which we still like to cling in phantasy, all those strivings of the ego which adverse external circumstances have crushed, and all our suppressed acts of volition which nourish in us the illusion of Free Will.<sup>2</sup>

But, after having thus considered the manifest motivation of the figure of a 'double', we have to admit that none of it helps us to understand the extraordinarily strong feeling of something uncanny that pervades the conception; and our knowledge of

<sup>1</sup> I cannot help thinking that when poets complain that two souls dwell within the human breast, and when popular psychologists talk of the splitting of the ego in an individual, they have some notion of this division (which relates to the sphere of ego-psychology) between the critical faculty and the rest of the ego, and not of the antithesis discovered by psycho-analysis between the ego and what is unconscious and repressed. It is true that the distinction is to some extent effaced by the circumstance that derivatives of what is repressed are foremost among the things apprehended by the ego-criticizing faculty.

<sup>2</sup> In Ewers' *Der Student von Prag*, which furnishes the starting-point of Rank's study on the 'double', the hero has promised his beloved not to kill his antagonist in a duel. But on his way to the duelling-ground he meets his 'double', who has already killed his rival.

pathological mental processes enables us to add that nothing in the content arrived at could account for that impulse towards self-protection which has caused the ego to project such a content outward as something foreign to itself. The quality of uncanniness can only come from the circumstance of the 'double' being a creation dating back to a very early mental stage, long since left behind, and one, no doubt, in which it wore a more friendly aspect. The 'double' has become a vision of terror, just as after the fall of their religion the gods took on daemonic shapes.<sup>1</sup>

It is not difficult to judge, on the same lines as his theme of the 'double', the other forms of disturbance in the ego made use of by Hoffmann. They are a harking-back to particular phases in the evolution of the self-regarding feeling, a regression to a time when the ego was not yet sharply differentiated from the external world and from other persons. I believe that these factors are partly responsible for the impression of the uncanny, although it is not easy to isolate and determine exactly their share of it.

That factor which consists in a recurrence of the same situations, things and events, will perhaps not appeal to everyone as a source of uncanny feeling. From what I have observed, this phenomenon does undoubtedly, subject to certain conditions and combined with certain circumstances, awaken an uncanny feeling, which recalls that sense of helplessness sometimes experienced in dreams. Once, as I was walking through the deserted streets of a provincial town in Italy which was strange to me, on a hot summer afternoon, I found myself in a quarter the character of which could not long remain in doubt. Nothing but painted women were to be seen at the windows of the small houses, and I hastened to leave the narrow street at the next turning. But after having wandered about for a while without being directed, I suddenly found myself back in the same street, where my

<sup>1</sup> Heine, *Die Götter im Exil*.



presence was now beginning to excite attention. I hurried away once more, but only to arrive yet a third time by devious paths in the same place. Now, however, a feeling overcame me which I can only describe as uncanny, and I was glad enough to abandon my exploratory walk and get straight back to the piazza I had left a short while before. Other situations having in common with my adventure an involuntary return to the same situation, but which differ radically from it in other respects, also result in the same feeling of helplessness and of something uncanny. As, for instance, when one is lost in a forest in high altitudes, caught, we will suppose, by the mountain mist, and when every endeavour to find the marked or familiar path ends again and again in a return to one and the same spot, recognizable by some particular landmark. Or when one wanders about in a dark, strange room, looking for the door or the electric switch, and collides for the hundredth time with the same piece of furniture—a situation which, indeed, has been made irresistibly comic by Mark Twain, through the wild extravagance of his narration.

Taking another class of things, it is easy to see that here, too, it is only this factor of involuntary repetition which surrounds with an uncanny atmosphere what would otherwise be innocent enough, and forces upon us the idea of something fateful and unescapable where otherwise we should have spoken of 'chance' only. For instance, we of course attach no importance to the event when we give up a coat and get a cloak-room ticket with the number, say, 62; or when we find that our cabin on board ship is numbered 62. But the impression is altered if two such events, each in itself indifferent, happen close together, if we come across the number 62 several times in a single day, or if we begin to notice that everything which has a number—addresses, hotel-rooms, compartments in railway-trains—always has the same one, or one which at least contains the same figures.

We do feel this to be 'uncanny', and unless a man is utterly hardened and proof against the lure of superstition he will be tempted to ascribe a secret meaning to this obstinate recurrence of a number, taking it, perhaps, as an indication of the span of life allotted to him. Or take the case that one is engaged at the time in reading the works of Hering, the famous physiologist, and then receives within the space of a few days two letters from two different countries, each from a person called Hering; whereas one has never before had any dealings with anyone of that name. Not long ago an ingenious scientist attempted to reduce coincidences of this kind to certain laws, and so deprive them of their uncanny effect.<sup>1</sup> I will not venture to decide whether he has succeeded or not.

How exactly we can trace back the uncanny effect of such recurrent similarities to infantile psychology is a question I can only lightly touch upon in these pages; and I must refer the reader instead to another pamphlet,<sup>2</sup> now ready for publication, in which this has been gone into in detail, but in a different connection. It must be explained that we are able to postulate the principle of a *repetition-compulsion* in the unconscious mind, based upon instinctual activity and probably inherent in the very nature of the instincts—a principle powerful enough to overrule the pleasure-principle, lending to certain aspects of the mind their daemonic character, and still very clearly expressed in the tendencies of small children; a principle, too, which is responsible for a part of the course taken by the analyses of neurotic patients. Taken in all, the foregoing prepares us for the discovery that whatever reminds us of this inner *repetition-compulsion* is perceived as uncanny.

Now, however, it is time to turn from these aspects of the matter, which are in any case difficult to decide upon, and look for undeniable instances of the

<sup>1</sup> P. Kammerer, *Das Gesetz der Serie*.

<sup>2</sup> [*Beyond the Pleasure-Principle*.—Trans.]

uncanny, in the hope that analysis of them will settle whether our hypothesis is a valid one.

In the story of 'The Ring of Polycrates,' the guest turns away from his friend with horror because he sees that his every wish is at once fulfilled, his every care immediately removed by kindly fate. His host has become 'uncanny' to him. His own explanation, that the too fortunate man has to fear the envy of the gods, seems still rather obscure to us; its meaning is veiled in mythological language. We will therefore turn to another example in a less grandiose setting. In the case history of an obsessional neurotic,<sup>1</sup> I have described how the patient once stayed in a hydropathic establishment and benefited greatly by it. He had the good sense, however, to attribute his improvement not to the therapeutic properties of the water, but to the situation of his room, which immediately adjoined that of a very amiable nurse. So on his second visit to the establishment he asked for the same room but was told that it was already occupied by an old gentleman, whereupon he gave vent to his annoyance in the words 'Well, I hope he'll have a stroke and die'. A fortnight later the old gentleman really did have a stroke. My patient thought this an 'uncanny' experience. And that impression of uncanniness would have been stronger still if less time had elapsed between his exclamation and the untoward event, or if he had been able to produce innumerable similar coincidences. As a matter of fact, he had no difficulty in producing coincidences of this sort, but then not only he but all obsessional neurotics I have observed are able to relate analogous experiences. They are never surprised when they invariably run up against the person they have just been thinking of, perhaps for the first time for many months. If they say one day 'I haven't had news of so-and-so for a long time', they will be sure to get a letter from him the next morning. And an accident

<sup>1</sup> Freud, 'Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis', COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. iii.

or a death will rarely take place without having cast its shadow before on their minds. They are in the habit of mentioning this state of affairs in the most modest manner, saying that they have 'presentiments' which 'usually' come true.

One of the most uncanny and wide-spread forms of superstition is the dread of the evil eye.<sup>1</sup> There never seems to have been any doubt about the source of this dread. Whoever possesses something at once valuable and fragile is afraid of the envy of others, in that he projects on to them the envy he would have felt in their place. A feeling like this betrays itself in a look even though it is not put into words; and when a man attracts the attention of others by noticeable, and particularly by unattractive, attributes, they are ready to believe that his envy is rising to more than usual heights and that this intensity in it will convert it into effective action. What is feared is thus a secret intention of harming someone, and certain signs are taken to mean that such an intention is capable of becoming an act.

These last examples of the uncanny are to be referred to that principle in the mind which I have called 'omnipotence of thoughts', taking the name from an expression used by one of my patients. And now we find ourselves on well-known ground. Our analysis of instances of the uncanny has led us back to the old, animistic conception of the universe, which was characterized by the idea that the world was peopled with the spirits of human beings, and by the narcissistic overestimation of subjective mental processes (such as the belief in the omnipotence of thoughts, the magical practices based upon this belief, the carefully proportioned distribution of magical powers or 'mana' among various outside persons and things), as well as by all those other figments of the imagination with which man, in the unrestricted narcissism of that

<sup>1</sup> Seligmann, the Hamburg ophthalmologist, has made a thorough study of this superstition in his *Der böse Blick und Verwandtes*.

stage of development, strove to withstand the inexorable laws of reality. It would seem as though each one of us has been through a phase of individual development corresponding to that animistic stage in primitive men, that none of us has traversed it without preserving certain traces of it which can be re-activated, and that everything which now strikes us as 'uncanny' fulfils the condition of stirring those vestiges of animistic mental activity within us and bringing them to expression.<sup>1</sup>

This is the place now to put forward two considerations which, I think, contain the gist of this short study. In the first place, if psycho-analytic theory is correct in maintaining that every emotional affect, whatever its quality, is transformed by repression into morbid anxiety, then among such cases of anxiety there must be a class in which the anxiety can be shown to come from something repressed which *recurs*. This class of morbid anxiety would then be no other than what is uncanny, irrespective of whether it originally aroused dread or some other affect. In the second place, if this is indeed the secret nature of the uncanny, we can understand why the usage of speech has extended *das Heimliche* into its opposite *das Unheimliche*; <sup>2</sup> for this uncanny is in reality nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression. This reference to the factor of repression enables us, furthermore, to understand Schelling's definition of the uncanny as something which ought to have been kept concealed but which has nevertheless come to light.

It only remains for us to test our new hypothesis on one or two more examples of the uncanny.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my book *Totem und Tabu*, part iii., 'Animismus, Magie und Allmacht der Gedanken'; also the footnote on p. 7 of the same book: 'It would appear that we invest with a feeling of uncanniness those impressions which lend support to a belief in the omnipotence of thoughts, and to the animistic attitude of mind, at a time when our judgement has already rejected these same beliefs'.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. abstract on p. 377.

Many people experience the feeling in the highest degree in relation to death and dead bodies, to the return of the dead, and to spirits and ghosts. As we have seen, many languages in use to-day can only render the German expression 'an *unheimliches* house' by 'a *haunted* house'. We might indeed have begun our investigation with this example, perhaps the most striking of all, of something uncanny, but we refrained from doing so because the uncanny in it is too much mingled with and in part covered by what is purely gruesome. There is scarcely any other matter, however, upon which our thoughts and feelings have changed so little since the very earliest times, and in which discarded forms have been so completely preserved under a thin disguise, as that of our relation to death. Two things account for our conservatism: the strength of our original emotional reaction to it, and the insufficiency of our scientific knowledge about it. Biology has not yet been able to decide whether death is the inevitable fate of every living being or whether it is only a regular but yet perhaps avoidable event in life. It is true that the proposition 'All men are mortal' is paraded in text-books of logic as an example of a generalization, but no human being really grasps it, and our unconscious has as little use now as ever for the idea of its own mortality. Religions continue to dispute the undeniable fact of the death of each one of us and to postulate a life after death; civil governments still believe that they cannot maintain moral order among the living if they do not uphold this prospect of a better life after death as a recompense for earthly existence. In our great cities, placards announce lectures which will tell us how to get into touch with the souls of the departed; and it cannot be denied that many of the most able and penetrating minds among our scientific men have come to the conclusion, especially towards the close of their lives, that a contact of this kind is not utterly impossible. Since practically all of us still think as savages do on

this topic, it is no matter for surprise that the primitive fear of the dead is still so strong within us and always ready to come to the surface at any opportunity. Most likely our fear still contains the old belief that the deceased becomes the enemy of his survivor and wants to carry him off to share his new life with him. Considering our unchanged attitude towards death, we might rather inquire what has become of the repression, that necessary condition for enabling a primitive feeling to recur in the shape of an uncanny effect. But repression is there, too. All so-called educated people have ceased to believe, officially at any rate, that the dead can become visible as spirits, and have hedged round any such appearances with improbable and remote circumstances; their emotional attitude towards their dead, moreover, once a highly dubious and ambivalent one, has been toned down in the higher strata of the mind into a simple feeling of reverence.<sup>1</sup>

We have now only a few more remarks to add, for animism, magic and witchcraft, the omnipotence of thoughts, man's attitude to death, involuntary repetition and the castration-complex comprise practically all the factors which turn something fearful into an uncanny thing.

We also call a living person uncanny, usually when we ascribe evil motives to him. But that is not all; we must not only credit him with bad intentions but must attribute to these intentions capacity to achieve their aim in virtue of certain special powers. A good instance of this is the 'Gettatore', that uncanny figure of Roman superstition which Schaeffer, with intuitive poetic feeling and profound psycho-analytic knowledge, has transformed into a sympathetic figure in his *Josef Montfort*. But the question of these secret powers brings us back again to the realm of animism. It is her intuition that he possesses secret power of this kind that makes Mephistopheles so

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Totem und Tabu*: 'Das Tabu und die Ambivalenz'.

uncanny to the pious Gretchen. 'She divines that I am certainly a spirit, even the devil himself perchance'.<sup>1</sup>

The uncanny effect of epilepsy and of madness has the same origin. The ordinary person sees in them the workings of forces hitherto unsuspected in his fellow-man but which at the same time he is dimly aware of in a remote corner of his own being. The Middle Ages quite consistently ascribed all such maladies to daemonic influences, and in this their psychology was not so far out. Indeed, I should not be surprised to hear that psycho-analysis, which is concerned with laying bare these hidden forces, has itself become uncanny to many people for that very reason. In one case, after I had succeeded—though none too rapidly—in effecting a cure which had lasted many years in a girl who had been an invalid, the patient's own mother confessed to this attitude long after the girl's recovery.

Dismembered limbs, a severed head, a hand cut off at the wrist,<sup>2</sup> feet which dance by themselves<sup>3</sup>—all these have something peculiarly uncanny about them, especially when, as in the last instance, they prove able to move of themselves in addition. As we already know, this kind of uncanniness springs from its association with the castration-complex. To many people the idea of being buried alive while appearing to be dead is the most uncanny thing of all. And yet psycho-analysis has taught us that this terrifying phantasy is only a transformation of another phantasy which had originally nothing terrifying about it at all, but was filled with a certain lustful pleasure—the phantasy, I mean, of intra-uterine existence.

\* \* \* \*

There is one more point of general application I should like to add, though, strictly speaking, it has

<sup>1</sup> 'Sie ahnt, dass ich ganz sicher ein Genie, Vielleicht sogar der Teufel bin.'

<sup>2</sup> Cf. a fairy-tale of Hauff's.

<sup>3</sup> As in Schaeffer's book mentioned above.



been included in our statements about animism and mechanisms in the mind that have been surmounted ; for I think it deserves special mention. This is that an uncanny effect is often and easily produced by effacing the distinction between imagination and reality, such as when something that we have hitherto regarded as imaginary appears before us in reality, or when a symbol takes over the full functions and significance of the thing it symbolizes, and so on. It is this element which contributes not a little to the uncanny effect attaching to magical practices. The infantile element in this, which also holds sway in the minds of neurotics, is the over-accentuation of psychical reality in comparison with physical reality—a feature closely allied to the belief in the omnipotence of thoughts. In the midst of the isolation of war-time a number of the *English Strand Magazine* fell into my hands ; and, amongst other not very interesting matter, I read a story about a young married couple, who move into a furnished flat in which there is a curiously shaped table with carvings of crocodiles on it. Towards evening they begin to smell an intolerable and very typical odour that pervades the whole flat ; things begin to get in their way and trip them up in the darkness ; they seem to see a vague form gliding up the stairs—in short, we are given to understand that the presence of the table causes ghostly crocodiles to haunt the place, or that the wooden monsters come to life in the dark, or something of that sort. It was a thoroughly silly story, but the uncanny feeling it produced was quite remarkable.

To conclude this collection of exemplès, which is certainly not complete, I will relate an instance taken from psycho-analytical experience ; if it does not rest upon mere coincidence, it furnishes a beautiful confirmation of our theory of the uncanny. It often happens that male patients declare that they feel there is something uncanny about the female genital organs. This *unheimlich* place, however, is the entrance

to the former *heim* [home] of all human beings, to the place where everyone dwelt once upon a time and in the beginning. There is a humorous saying: 'Love is home-sickness'; and whenever a man dreams of a place or a country and says to himself, still in the dream, 'this place is familiar to me, I have been there before', we may interpret the place as being his mother's genitals or her body. In this case, too, the *unheimlich* is what was once *heimisch*, home-like, familiar; the prefix 'un' is the token of repression.

### III

Having followed the discussion as far as this the reader will have felt certain doubts arising in his mind about much that has been said; and he must now have an opportunity of collecting them and bringing them forward.

It may be true that the uncanny is nothing else than a hidden, familiar thing that has undergone repression and then emerged from it, and that everything that is uncanny fulfils this condition. But these factors do not solve the problem of the uncanny. For our proposition is clearly not convertible. Not everything that fulfils this condition—not everything that is connected with repressed desires and archaic forms of thought belonging to the past of the individual and of the race—is therefore uncanny.

Nor would we, moreover, conceal the fact that for almost every example adduced in support of our hypothesis some other analogous one may be found which rebuts it. The story of the severed hand in Hauff's fairy-tale certainly has an uncanny effect, and we have derived that effect from the castration-complex. But in the story in Herodotus of the treasure of Rhampsenitus, where the master-thief leaves his brother's severed hand behind him in that of the princess who wants to hold him fast, most readers will agree with me that the episode has no trace

of uncanniness. Again, the instant fulfilment of the king's wishes in 'The Ring of Polycrates' undoubtedly does affect us in the same uncanny way as it did the king of Egypt. Yet our own fairy-tales are crammed with instantaneous wish-fulfilments which produce no uncanny effect whatever. In the story of 'The Three Wishes', the woman is tempted by the savoury smell of a sausage to wish that she might have one too, and immediately it lies on a plate before her. In his annoyance at her forwardness her husband wishes it may hang on her nose. And there it is, dangling from her nose. All this is very vivid but not in the least uncanny. Fairy-tales quite frankly adopt the animistic standpoint of the omnipotence of thoughts and wishes, and yet I cannot think of any genuine fairy-story which has anything uncanny about it. We have heard that it is in the highest degree uncanny when inanimate objects—a picture or a doll—come to life; nevertheless in Hans Andersen's stories the household utensils, furniture and tin soldiers are alive and nothing could perhaps be more remote from the uncanny. And we should hardly call it uncanny when Pygmalion's beautiful statue comes to life.

Catalepsy and the re-animation of the dead have been represented as most uncanny themes. But things of this sort again are very common in fairy-stories. Who would be so bold as to call it an uncanny moment, for instance, when Snow-White opens her eyes once more? And the resuscitation of the dead in miracles, as in the New Testament, elicits feelings quite unrelated to the uncanny. Then the theme that achieves such an indubitably uncanny effect, the involuntary recurrence of the like, serves, too, other and quite different purposes in another class of cases. One case we have already heard about in which it is employed to call forth a feeling of the comic; and we could multiply instances of this kind. Or again, it works as a means of emphasis, and so on. Another consideration is this: whence come the uncanny influences

of silence, darkness and solitude? Do not these factors point to the part played by danger in the aetiology of what is uncanny, notwithstanding that they are also the most frequent accompaniment of the expression of fear in infancy? And are we in truth justified in entirely ignoring intellectual uncertainty as a factor, seeing that we have admitted its importance in relation to death?

It is evident that we must be prepared to admit that there are other elements besides those set down here determining the production of uncanny feelings. We might say that these preliminary results have satisfied psycho-analytic interest in the problem of the uncanny, and that what remains probably calls for an aesthetic valuation. But that would be to open the door to doubts about the exact value of our general contention that the uncanny proceeds from something familiar which has been repressed.

One thing we may observe which may help us to resolve these uncertainties: nearly all the instances which contradict our hypothesis are taken from the realm of fiction and literary productions. This may suggest a possible differentiation between the uncanny that is actually experienced, and the uncanny as we merely picture it or read about it.

Something uncanny in *real experience* is conditioned much more simply, but is limited to much fewer occasions. We shall find, I think, that it fits in perfectly with our attempt at solution, and can be traced back without exception to something familiar that has been repressed. But here, too, we must make a certain important and psychologically significant differentiation in our material, best illustrated by turning to suitable examples.

Let us take the uncanny in connection with the omnipotence of thoughts, instantaneous wish-fulfillments, secret power to do harm and the return of the dead. The condition under which the feeling of uncanniness arises here is unmistakable. We—or our primitive forefathers—once believed in the possibility of these things and were convinced that they really

happened. Nowadays we no longer believe in them, we have *surmounted* such ways of thought; but we do not feel quite sure of our new set of beliefs, and the old ones still exist within us ready to seize upon any confirmation. As soon as something actually happens in our lives which seems to support the old, discarded beliefs we get a feeling of the uncanny; and it is as though we were making a judgement something like this: 'So, after all, it is true that one can kill a person by merely desiring his death!' or, 'Then the dead do continue to live and appear before our eyes on the scene of their former activities!', and so on. And conversely, he who has completely and finally dispelled animistic beliefs in himself, will be insensible to this type of the uncanny. The most remarkable coincidences of desire and fulfilment, the most mysterious recurrence of similar experiences in a particular place or on a particular date, the most deceptive sights and suspicious noises—none of these things will take him in or raise that kind of fear which can be described as 'a fear of something uncanny'. For the whole matter is one of 'testing reality', pure and simple, a question of the material reality of the phenomena.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Since the uncanny effect of a 'double' also belongs to this class, it is interesting to observe what the effect is of suddenly and unexpectedly meeting one's own image. E. Mach has related two such observations in his *Analyse der Empfindungen* (1900, p. 3). On the first occasion he started violently as soon as he realized that the face before him was his own. The second time he formed a very unfavourable opinion about the supposed stranger who got into the omnibus, and thought 'What a shabby-looking school-master that is getting in now'.—I can supply a similar experience. I was sitting alone in my *wagon-lit* compartment when a more than usually violent jerk of the train swung back the door of the adjoining washing-cabinet, and an elderly gentleman in a dressing-gown and a travelling cap came in. I assumed that he had been about to leave the washing-cabinet which divides the two compartments, and had taken the wrong direction and come into my compartment by mistake. Jumping up with the intention of putting him right, I at once realized to my dismay that the intruder was nothing but my own reflection in the looking-glass of the open door. I can still recollect that I thoroughly disliked his appearance. Instead, therefore, of being terrified by our doubles, both Mach and I simply failed to recognize them as such. Is it not possible, though, that our dislike of them was a vestigial trace of that older reaction which feels the double to be something uncanny?

The state of affairs is somewhat different when the uncanny proceeds from repressed infantile complexes, from the castration-complex, womb-phantasies, etc.; but experiences which arouse this kind of uncanny feeling are not of very frequent occurrence in real life. Actual occurrences of the uncanny belong for the most part to the first group; nevertheless the distinction between the two is theoretically very important. Where the uncanny comes from infantile complexes the question of external reality is quite irrelevant; its place is taken by psychical reality. What is concerned is an actual repression of some definite material and a return of this repressed material, not a removal of the *belief* in its objective reality. We might say that in the one case what had been repressed was a particular ideational content and in the other the belief in its physical existence. But this last way of putting it no doubt strains the term 'repression' beyond its legitimate meaning. It would be more correct to respect a perceptible psychological difference here, and to say that the animistic beliefs of civilized people have been *surmounted*—more or less. Our conclusion could then be stated thus: An uncanny experience occurs either when repressed infantile complexes have been revived by some impression, or when the primitive beliefs we have surmounted seem once more to be confirmed. Finally, we must not let our predilection for smooth solution and lucid exposition blind us to the fact that these two classes of uncanny experience are not always sharply distinguishable. When we consider that primitive beliefs are most intimately connected with infantile complexes, and are, in fact, based upon them, we shall not be greatly astonished to find the distinction often rather a hazy one.

The uncanny as it is depicted in *literature*, in stories and imaginative productions, merits in truth a separate discussion. To begin with, it is a much more fertile province than the uncanny in real life, for it contains the whole of the latter and something more besides,

something that cannot be found in real life. The distinction between what has been repressed and what has been surmounted cannot be transposed on to the uncanny in fiction without profound modification ; for the realm of phantasy depends for its very existence on the fact that its content is not submitted to the reality-testing faculty. The somewhat paradoxical result is that *in the first place a great deal that is not uncanny in fiction would be so if it happened in real life ; and in the second place that there are many more means of creating uncanny effects in fiction than there are in real life.*

The story-teller has this licence among many others, that he can select his world of representation so that it either coincides with the realities we are familiar with or departs from them in what particulars he pleases. We accept his ruling in every case. In fairy-tales, for instance, the world of reality is left behind from the very start, and the animistic system of beliefs is frankly adopted. Wish-fulfilments, secret powers, omnipotence of thoughts, animation of lifeless objects, all the elements so common in fairy-stories, can exert no uncanny influence here ; for, as we have learnt, that feeling cannot arise unless there is a conflict of judgement whether things which have been 'surmounted' and are regarded as incredible are not, after all, possible ; and this problem is excluded from the beginning by the setting of the story. And thus we see that such stories as have furnished us with most of the contradictions to our hypothesis of the uncanny confirm the first part of our proposition—that in the realm of fiction many things are not uncanny which would be so if they happened in real life. In the case of the fairy-story there are other contributory factors, which we shall briefly touch upon later.

The story-teller can also choose a setting which, though less imaginary than the world of fairy tales, does yet differ from the real world by admitting superior spiritual entities such as daemonic influences or

departed spirits. So long as they remain within their setting of poetic reality their usual attribute of uncanniness fails to attach to such beings. The souls in Dante's *Inferno*, or the ghostly apparitions in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* or *Julius Caesar*, may be gloomy and terrible enough, but they are no more really uncanny than is Homer's jovial world of gods. We order our judgement to the imaginary reality imposed on us by the writer, and regard souls, spirits and spectres as though their existence had the same validity in their world as our own has in the external world. And then in this case too we are spared all trace of the uncanny.

The situation is altered as soon as the writer pretends to move in the world of common reality. In this case he accepts all the conditions operating to produce uncanny feelings in real life; and everything that would have an uncanny effect in reality has it in his story. But in this case, too, he can increase his effect and multiply it far beyond what could happen in reality, by bringing about events which never or very rarely happen in fact. He takes advantage, as it were, of our supposedly surmounted superstitiousness; he deceives us into thinking that he is giving us the sober truth, and then after all oversteps the bounds of possibility. We react to his inventions as we should have reacted to real experiences; by the time we have seen through his trick it is already too late and the author has achieved his object; but it must be added that his success is not unalloyed. We retain a feeling of dissatisfaction, a kind of grudge against the attempted deceit; I have noticed this particularly after reading Schnitzler's *Die Weissagung* and similar stories which flirt with the supernatural. The writer has then one more means he can use to escape our rising vexation and at the same time to improve his chances of success. It is this, that he should keep us in the dark for a long time about the precise nature of the conditions he has selected for the world he writes about, or that he should cunningly and ingeniously avoid any definite informa-



tion on the point at all throughout the book. Speaking generally, however, we find a confirmation of the second part of our proposition—that fiction presents more opportunities for creating uncanny sensations than are possible in real life.

Strictly speaking, all these complications relate only to that class of the uncanny which proceeds from forms of thought that have been surmounted. The class which proceeds from repressed complexes is more irrefragable and remains as powerful in fiction as in real experience, except in one point. The uncanny belonging to the first class—that proceeding from forms of thought that have been surmounted—retains this quality in fiction as in experience so long as the setting is one of physical reality ; but as soon as it is given an arbitrary and unrealistic setting in fiction, it is apt to lose its quality of the uncanny.

It is clear that we have not exhausted the possibilities of poetic licence and the privileges enjoyed by story-writers in evoking or in excluding an uncanny feeling. In the main we adopt an unvarying passive attitude towards experience and are acted upon by our physical environment. But the story-teller has a peculiarly directive influence over us ; by means of the states of mind into which he can put us and the expectations he can rouse in us, he is able to guide the current of our emotions, dam it up in one direction and make it flow in another, and he often obtains a great variety of effects from the same material. All this is nothing new, and has doubtless long since been fully taken into account by professors of aesthetics. We have drifted into this field of research half involuntarily, through the temptation to explain certain instances which contradicted our theory of the causes of the uncanny. And accordingly we will now return to the examination of a few instances.

We have already asked why it is that the severed hand in the story of the treasure of Rhampsenitus has no uncanny effect in the way that Hauff's story

of the severed hand has. The question seems to us to have gained in importance now that we have recognized that class of the uncanny which proceeds from repressed complexes to be the more durable of the two. The answer is easy. In the Herodotus story our thoughts are concentrated much more on the superior cunning of the master-thief than on the feelings of the princess. The princess may well have had an uncanny feeling, indeed she very probably fell into a swoon; but we have no such sensations, for we put ourselves in the thief's place, not in hers. In Nestroy's farce, *Der Zerrissene*, another means is used to avoid any impression of the uncanny in the scene in which the fleeing man, convinced that he is a murderer, lifts up one trap-door after another and each time sees what he takes to be the ghost of his victim rising up out of it. He calls out in despair, 'But I've only killed *one* man. Why this horrid multiplication?' We know the truth and do not share the error of the *Zerrissener*, so what must be uncanny to him has an irresistibly comic effect on us. Even a 'real' ghost, as in Oscar Wilde's *Canterville Ghost*, loses all power of arousing at any rate an uncanny horror in us as soon as the author begins to amuse himself at its expense and allows liberties to be taken with it. Thus we see how independent emotional effects can be of the actual subject-matter in the world of fiction. In fairy-stories feelings of fear—including uncanny sensations—are ruled out altogether. We understand this, and that is why we ignore the opportunities we find there for any development of a feeling of this kind.

Concerning the factors of silence, solitude and darkness, we can only say that they are actually elements in the production of that infantile morbid anxiety from which the majority of human beings have never become quite free. This problem has been discussed from a psycho-analytical point of view in another place.

## XXIII

### DREAMS AND TELEPATHY <sup>1</sup>

(1922)

**A**T the present time, when such great interest is felt in what are called 'occult' phenomena, very definite anticipations will doubtless be aroused by the announcement of a paper with this title. I will therefore hasten to explain that there is no ground for any such anticipations. You will learn nothing from this paper of mine about the enigma of telepathy; indeed, you will not even gather whether I believe in the existence of 'telepathy' or not. On this occasion I have set myself the very modest task of examining the relation of telepathic occurrences, whatever their origin may be, to dreams, more exactly, to our theory of dreams. You will know that the connection between dreams and telepathy is commonly held to be a very intimate one; I shall propound the view that the two have little to do with each other, and that if the existence of telepathic dreams were established there would be no need to alter our conception of dreams in any way.

The material on which the present communication is based is very slight. In the first place, I must express my regret that I could make no use of my own dreams, as I did when I wrote the *Traumdeutung* (1900). But I have never had a 'telepathic' dream. Not that I have been without dreams that conveyed an impression of a certain definite occurrence taking place at some distant place, leaving it to the dreamer to decide whether the occurrence is taking place at that moment or will do so at some later time. In

<sup>1</sup> Paper read before the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society; published in *Imago*, Bd. viii., 1922. [Translated by C. J. M. Hubback.]

waking life, too, I have often become aware of pre-sentiments of distant events. But these hints, fore-tellings and forebodings have none of them 'come true', as we say; there proved to be no external reality corresponding to them, and they had therefore to be regarded as purely subjective anticipations.

For example, I once dreamt during the war that one of my sons then serving at the front had fallen. This was not directly stated in the dream, but was expressed in an unmistakable manner, by means of the well-known death-symbolism of which an account was first given by W. Stekel. (Let us not omit here to fulfil the duty, often felt to be inconvenient, of making literary acknowledgements!) I saw the young soldier standing on a landing-stage, between land and water, as it were; he looked to me very pale; I spoke to him but he did not answer. There were other unmistakable indications. He was not wearing military uniform, but a ski-ing costume that he had worn when a serious ski-ing accident had happened to him several years before the war. He stood on something like a footstool with a chest in front of him; a situation always closely associated in my mind with the idea of 'falling', through a memory of my own childhood. As a child of little more than two years old I had myself climbed on such a footstool to get something off the top of a chest—probably something good to eat—whereupon I fell and gave myself an injury, of which I can even now show the scar. My son, however, whom the dream pronounced to be dead, came home from the war unscathed.

Only a short time ago, I had another dream announcing misfortune; it was, I think, just before I decided to put together these few remarks. This time there was not much attempt at disguise: I saw my two nieces who live in England; they were dressed in black and said to me 'We buried her on Thursday'. I knew the reference was to the death of their mother, now eighty-seven years of age, the widow of my eldest brother.

A time of disagreeable anticipation followed ; there would of course be nothing surprising in so aged a woman suddenly passing away, yet it would be very unpleasant for the dream to coincide exactly with the occurrence. The next letter from England, however, dissipated this fear. For the benefit of those who are concerned for the wish-fulfilment theory of dreams I may interpolate a reassurance by saying that there was no difficulty in detecting by analysis the unconscious motives that might be presumed to exist in these death-dreams just as in others.

Do not now urge the objection that what I have just related is valueless because negative experiences prove as little here as they do in less occult matters. I am well aware of that and have not adduced these instances with any intention whatever of proving anything or of surreptitiously influencing you in any particular way. My sole purpose was to explain the paucity of my material.

Another fact certainly seems to me of more significance, namely, that during my twenty-seven years of work as an analyst I have never been in a position to observe a truly telepathic dream in any of my patients. The people among whom my practice lay certainly formed a good collection of very neurotic and 'highly sensitive' temperaments ; many of them have related to me most remarkable incidents in their previous life on which they based a belief in mysterious occult influences. Events such as accidents or illnesses of near relatives, in particular the death of one of the parents, have often enough happened during the treatment and interrupted it ; but not on one single occasion did these occurrences, eminently suitable as they were, afford me the opportunity of registering a single telepathic dream, although treatment extended over several months or even years. Anyone may explain this fact as he likes ; in any event it again limits the material at my disposal. You will see that any such explanation would not affect the subject of this paper.

Nor does it embarrass me to be asked why I have made no use of the abundant supply of telepathic dreams that have been published. I should not have had far to seek, since the publications of the English as well as of the American Society for Psychical Research are accessible to me as a member of both societies. In all these communications no attempt is ever made to subject such dreams to analytic investigation, which would be our first interest in such cases.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, you will soon perceive that for the purposes of this paper one single dream will serve well enough.

My material thus consists simply and solely of two communications which have reached me from correspondents in Germany. They are not personally known to me, but they give their names and addresses: I have not the least ground for presuming any intention to mislead on the part of the writers.

## I

With the first I had already been in correspondence; he had been good enough to send me, as many of my readers do, observations of everyday occurrences and the like. He is obviously an educated and highly intelligent man; this time he expressly places his material at my disposal if I care to turn it 'to literary account'.

His letter runs as follows:

'I consider the following dream of sufficient interest to give you some material for your researches.'

'I must first state the following facts. My daughter, who is married and lives in Berlin, was expecting her first confinement in the middle of December of this year. I intended to go to Berlin about that time with my (second) wife, my daughter's stepmother. During

<sup>1</sup> In two publications by W. Stekel (mentioned above) (*Der telepathische Traum*, no date, and *Die Sprache des Traumes*, Zweite Auflage, 1922) there are at least attempts to apply the analytic technique to alleged telepathic dreams. The author expresses his belief in the reality of telepathy.

the night of November 16-17 I dreamt, with a vividness and clearness I have never before experienced, that my wife had given birth to twins. I saw quite plainly the two healthy infants with their chubby faces lying in their cot side by side ; I was not sure of their sex : one with fair hair had distinctly my features and something of my wife's, the other with chestnut-brown hair clearly resembled her with a look of me. I said to my wife, who has red-gold hair, "Probably 'your' child's chestnut hair will also go red later on". My wife gave them the breast. In the dream she had also made some jam in a wash-basin and the two children crept about on all fours in the basin and licked up the contents.

'So much for the dream. Four or five times I had half awaked from it, asked myself if it were true that we had twins, but did not come to the conclusion with any certainty that it was only a dream. The dream lasted till I woke, and after that it was some little time before I felt quite clear about the true state of affairs. At breakfast I told my wife the dream, which much amused her. She said, "Surely Ilse (my daughter) won't have twins?" I answered, "I should hardly think so, as there have never been twins either in my family or in G.'s" (her husband). On November 18, at ten o'clock in the morning, I received a telegram from my son-in-law handed in the afternoon before, telling me of the birth of twins, boy and girl. The birth thus took place at the time when I was dreaming that my wife had twins. The confinement occurred four weeks earlier than had been expected by my daughter and her husband.

'But there is a further circumstance : the next night I dreamt that my dead wife, my daughter's own mother, had undertaken the care of forty-eight newborn infants. When the first dozen were being brought in, I protested. At that point the dream ended.

'My dead wife was very fond of children. She often talked about it, saying she would like a whole

troop round her, the more the better, and that she would do very well if she had charge of a Kindergarten and would be quite happy so. The noise children make was music to her. On one occasion she invited in a whole troop of children from the streets and regaled them with chocolates and cakes in the courtyard of our villa. My daughter must have thought at once of her mother after her confinement, especially because of the surprise of its coming on prematurely, the arrival of twins, and their difference in sex. She knew her mother would have greeted the event with the liveliest joy and sympathy. "Only think what mother would say, if she were by me now!" This thought must undoubtedly have gone through her mind. And then I dream of my dead wife, of whom I very seldom dream, and had neither spoken of nor thought of since the first dream.

'Do you think the coincidence between dream and event in both cases accidental? My daughter is much attached to me and was most certainly thinking of me during the labour, particularly because we had often exchanged letters during the pregnancy and I had constantly given her advice.'

It is easy to guess what my answer to this letter was. I was sorry to find that my correspondent's interest in analysis had been so completely killed by that in telepathy; I therefore avoided his direct question, and, remarking that the dream contained a good deal besides its connection with the birth of the twins, I asked him to let me know what information or incidents could give me a clue to the meaning of the dream.

Thereupon I received the following second letter which certainly did not give me what I wanted:

'I have not been able to answer your kind letter of the 24th until to-day. I shall be only too pleased to tell you "without omission or reserve" all the associations that occur to me. Unfortunately there is not much, more would come out in talking.



' Well then—my wife and I do not wish for any more children. We very rarely have sexual intercourse ; at any rate at the time of the dream there was certainly no " danger ". My daughter's confinement, which was expected about the middle of December, was naturally a frequent subject of conversation between us. My daughter had been examined and skiagraphed in the summer, and the doctor making the examination had made sure that the child would be a boy. My wife said at the time, " I should laugh if after all it were a girl ". At the time she also thought to herself it would be better if it were an H. rather than a G. (my son-in-law's family name) ; my daughter is handsomer and has a better figure than my son-in-law, although he has been a naval officer. I have made some study of the question of heredity and am in the habit of looking at small children to see whom they resemble. One more thing ! We have a small dog which sits with us at table in the evening to have his food and licks the plates and dishes. All this material appears in the dream.

' I am fond of small children and have often said that I should like to have the bringing up of a child once more, now that I should have so much more understanding, interest and time to devote to it, but with my wife I should not wish it, as she does not possess the necessary qualities for rearing a child judiciously. The dream makes me a present of two children—I am not sure of the sex. I see them even at this moment lying in the bed and I recognize the features, the one more like myself, the other like my wife, but each with minor traits from the other side. My wife has auburn hair, one of the children chestnut (red) brown. I say, " Yes, it will later on be red too ". Both the children crawl round a large wash-basin in which my wife has been stirring jam and lick it all over (dream). The origin of this detail is easily explicable, just as is the dream as a whole ; it would not be difficult to understand or interpret it, if it had

not coincided with the unexpectedly early arrival of my grandchildren (three weeks too soon), a coincidence of time almost to the hour (I cannot exactly say when the dream began ; my grandchildren were born at nine P.M. and a quarter past ; I went to bed at about eleven and dreamed during the night). Our knowledge too that the child would be a boy adds to the difficulty, though possibly the doubt whether this had been fully established might account for the appearance of twins in the dream. Still, all the same, there is the coincidence of the dream with the unexpected and premature appearance of my daughter's twins.

' It is not the first time that distant events have become known to me before I received the actual news. To give one instance among many. In October I had a visit from my three brothers. We had not all seen one another together for thirty years (naturally one had seen another oftener), once only at my father's funeral and once at my mother's. Both deaths were expected, and I had had no " presentiments " in either case. But, when about twenty-five years ago my youngest brother died quite suddenly and unexpectedly at the age of nine, as the postman handed me the postcard with the news of his death, before I even glanced at it, the thought came to me at once, " That is to say that your brother is dead ". He was the only one left at home, a strong healthy lad, while we four elder brothers were already fully fledged and had left the parents' house. At the time of their visit to me the talk by chance came round to this experience of mine, and, as if on the word of command, all three brothers came out with the declaration that exactly the same thing had happened to them. Whether exactly in the same way I cannot say ; at all events each one said that he had felt perfectly certain of the death in advance before the quite unexpected news had been communicated, following closely as it did on the presentiment. We are all from the mother's side of a sensitive disposition, though tall, strong men, but not one of us is in the

least inclined towards spiritism or occultism ; on the contrary, we disclaim adherence to either. My brothers are all three University men, two are schoolmasters, one a surveyor, all rather pedants than visionaries. That is all I can tell you in regard to the dream. If you can turn it to account in any of your writings, I am delighted to place it at your disposal.'

I am afraid that you will behave like the writer of these letters. You, too, will be primarily interested in the question whether this dream can really be regarded as a telepathic notification of the unexpected birth of the twin children, and you will not be disposed to submit this dream like any other to analysis. I foresee that it will always be so when psycho-analysis and occultism encounter each other. The former has, so to speak, all our instinctive prepossessions against it ; the latter is met half-way by powerful and mysterious sympathies. I am not, however, going to take up the position that I am nothing but a psycho-analyst, that the problems of occultism do not concern me : you would rightly judge that to be only an evasion of the problem. On the contrary, I maintain that it would be a great satisfaction to me if I could convince myself and others on unimpeachable evidence of the existence of telepathic processes, but I also consider that the data about this dream are altogether inadequate to justify any such pronouncement. You will observe that it does not once occur to this intelligent man, deeply interested as he is in the problem of his dream, to tell us when he had last seen his daughter or what news he had lately had from her ; he writes in the first letter that the birth was a month too soon, in the second, however, the month has become three weeks only, and in neither do we gain the information whether the birth was really premature, or whether, as so often happens, those concerned were out in their reckoning. But we should have to consider these and other details of the occurrence if we are to weigh the probability of the dreamer making unconscious estimates and

guesses. I felt too that it would be of no use even if I succeeded in getting answers to such questions. In the course of arriving at the information new doubts would constantly arise, which could only be set at rest if one had the man in front of one and could revive all the relevant memories which he had perhaps dismissed as unessential. He is certainly right in what he says at the beginning of his second letter: more would come out if he were able to talk to me.

Consider another and similar case, in which the disturbing interest of occultism has no part. You must often have been in the position to compare the anamnesis and the information about the illness given during the first sitting by any neurotic with what you have gained from him after some months of psychoanalysis. Apart from the inevitable abbreviations of the first communication, how many essentials were left out or suppressed, how many displacements made in the relation the various facts bear to one another—in fact, how much that was incorrect or untrue was related to you that first time! You will not call me hypercritical if I refuse in the circumstances to make any pronouncement whether the dream in question is a telepathic fact or a particularly subtle achievement on the part of the dreamer's unconscious or whether it is simply to be taken as a striking coincidence. Our curiosity must be allayed with the hope of some later opportunity for detailed oral examination of the dreamer. But you cannot say that this outcome of our investigation has disappointed you, for I prepared you for it; I said you would hear nothing which would throw any light on the problem of telepathy.

If we now pass on to the analytic treatment of this dream, we are obliged again to admit that we are not satisfied. The material that the dreamer associates with the manifest content of the dream is insufficient to make any analysis possible. The dream, for example, goes into great detail over the likeness of the children to the parents, discusses the colour of

their hair and the probable change of colour at a later age, and as an explanation of this much spun-out detail we only have the dry piece of information from the dreamer that he has always been interested in questions of likeness and heredity; we are certainly accustomed to push the matter rather further! But at *one* point the dream does admit of an analytic interpretation, and just at this point analysis, otherwise having no connection with occultism, comes to the aid of telepathy in a remarkable way. It is only on account of this single point that I am asking for your attention to this dream at all.

Rightly viewed, this dream has no right whatever to be called 'telepathic'. It does not inform the dreamer of anything that is taking place elsewhere—apart from what is otherwise known to him. What, on the other hand, the dream does relate is something quite different from the event reported in the telegram the second day after the night of the dream. Dream and actual occurrence diverge at a particularly important point, and only agree, apart from the coincidence of time, in another very interesting element. In the dream the dreamer's *wife* has twins. The occurrence, however, is that his *daughter* has given birth to twins in her distant home. The dreamer does not overlook this difference, he does not seem to know any way of getting over it and, as according to his own account he has no leaning towards the occult, he only asks quite tentatively whether the coincidence between dream and occurrence on the point of the twin-birth can be more than an accident. The psycho-analytic interpretation of dreams, however, does away with this difference between the dream and the event, and gives to both the same content. If we consult the association-material to this dream, it proves to us, in spite of its sparseness, that an inner bond of feeling exists between this father and daughter, a bond of feeling which is so usual and so natural that we ought to cease to be ashamed of it, one that in daily life

merely finds expression as a tender interest and only in dreams is pushed to its logical conclusion. The father knows that his daughter clings to him, he is convinced that she often thought of him during the labour, in his heart I think he grudges her to the son-in-law, about whom in one letter he makes a few disparaging remarks. On the occasion of her confinement (whether expected or communicated by telepathy) the unconscious though repressed wish becomes active: 'she ought rather to be my (second) wife'; it is this wish that has distorted the dream-thoughts and is the cause of the difference between the manifest dream-content and the event. We are entitled to replace the second wife in the dream by the daughter. If we possessed more associations with the dream, we could undoubtedly verify and deepen this interpretation.

And now I have reached the point I wish to put before you. We have endeavoured to maintain the strictest impartiality and have allowed two conceptions of the dream to rank as equally probable and equally unproved. According to the first the dream is a reaction to the telepathic message: 'your daughter has just brought twins into the world'. According to the second an unconscious chain of thought underlies the dream, which may be reproduced somewhat as follows: 'To-day is undoubtedly the day the confinement will take place if the young people in Berlin are out in their reckoning by a month, as I strongly suspect. And if my (first) wife were still alive, she certainly would not be content with one grandchild! To please her there would have to be at least twins.' If this second view is right, no new problems arise. It is simply a dream like any other. The (preconscious) dream-thoughts as outlined above are reinforced by the (unconscious) wish that no other than the daughter should be the second wife of the dreamer, and thus the manifest dream as described to us arises.

If you prefer to assume that a telepathic message about the daughter's confinement reached the sleeper,

further questions arise of the relation of such a message to the dream and of its influence on the formation of the dream. The answer is not far to seek and is not at all ambiguous. The telepathic message has been treated as a portion of the material that goes to the formation of a dream, like any other external or internal stimulus, like a disturbing noise in the street or an insistent organic sensation in the sleeper's own body. In our example it is evident how the message, with the help of a lurking repressed wish, becomes remodelled into a wish-fulfilment ; it is unfortunately less easy to show that it blends with other material that becomes active at the same time so as to make a dream. The telepathic message—if we are justified in recognizing its existence—can thus make no alteration in the structure of the dream ; telepathy has nothing to do with the essential nature of dreams. And that I may avoid the impression that I am trying to conceal a vague notion behind an abstract and fine-sounding word, I am willing to repeat : the essential nature of dreams consists in the peculiar process of the ' dream-work ' whereby the preconscious thoughts (residue from the previous day) are worked over into the manifest dream-content by means of an unconscious wish. The problem of telepathy concerns dreams as little as the problem of anxiety.

I am hoping that you will grant this, but that you will raise the objection that there are, nevertheless, other telepathic dreams in which there is no difference between the event and the dream, and in which there is nothing else to be found but the undisguised reproduction of the event. I have no knowledge of such dreams from my own experience, but I know they have often been reported. If we now assume that we have such an undisguised and unadulterated telepathic dream to deal with, another question arises. Ought we to call such a telepathic experience a ' dream ' at all ? You will certainly do so as long as you keep to popular usage, in which everything that takes place

in mental life during sleep is called a dream. You, too, perhaps say, 'I tossed about in my dream', and you are not conscious of anything incorrect when you say, 'I shed tears in my dream' or 'I felt apprehensive in my dream'. But notice that in all these cases you are using 'dream' and 'sleep' and 'state of being asleep' interchangeably, as if there were no distinction between them. I think it would be in the interests of scientific accuracy to keep 'dream' and 'state of sleep' more distinctly separate. Why should we provide a counterpart to the confusion evoked by Maeder who, by refusing to distinguish between the dream-work and the latent dream-thoughts, has discovered a new function for dreams? Supposing, then, that we are brought face to face with a pure telepathic 'dream', let us call it instead a telepathic experience in a state of sleep. A dream without condensation, distortion, dramatization, above all, without wish-fulfilment, surely hardly deserves the name. You will remind me that, if so, there are other mental products in sleep to which the right to be called 'dreams' would have to be refused. Actual experiences of the day are known to be simply repeated in sleep; reproductions of traumatic scenes in 'dreams' have led us only lately to revise the theory of dreams. There are dreams which by certain special qualities are to be distinguished from the usual type, which are, properly speaking, nothing but night-phantasies, not having undergone additions or alterations of any kind and in all other ways similar to the well-known day-dreams. It would be awkward, certainly, to exclude these imaginings from the realm of 'dreams'. But still they all come from within, are products of our mental life, whereas the very conception of the purely 'telepathic dream' lies in its being a perception of something external, in relation to which the mind remains passive and receptive.



## II

The second case I intend to bring before your notice belongs to quite another type. This is not a telepathic dream, but a dream that has recurred from childhood onwards, in a person who has had many telepathic experiences. Her letter, which I reproduce here, contains much that is remarkable about which we cannot form any judgement. Some part of it is of interest in connection with the problem of the relation of telepathy to dreams.

1. ' . . . My doctor, Herr Dr. N., advises me to give you an account of a dream that has haunted me for about thirty or thirty-two years. I am following his advice, and perhaps the dream may possess interest for you in some scientific respect. Since, in your opinion, such dreams are to be traced to an experience of a sexual nature in the first years of childhood, I relate some reminiscences of childhood, that is, experiences which even now make an impression on me and were of so marked a character as to have determined my religion for me.

' May I beg of you to send me word in what way you explain this dream and whether it is not possible to banish it from my life, for it haunts me like a ghost, and the circumstances that always accompany it—I always fall out of bed, and have inflicted on myself not inconsiderable injuries—make it particularly disagreeable and distressing.

2. ' I am thirty-seven years old, very strong and in good physical health, but in childhood I had, besides measles and scarlet fever, an attack of inflammation of the kidneys. In my fifth year I had a very severe inflammation of the eyes, which left double vision. One image slants towards the other and the edges of the image are blurred, as the scars from the ulcers affect the clearness. In the specialist's opinion there is nothing more to be done to the eyes and no chance of improvement. The left side of my face was somewhat

awry, from having screwed up my left eye to see better. By dint of practice and determination I can do the finest needlework, and similarly, when a six-year-old child, I broke myself of squinting sideways by practising in front of a looking-glass, so that now there is no external sign of the defect in vision.

'In my earliest years I was always lonely, kept apart from other children, and had visions (clairvoyance and clairaudience); I was not able to distinguish these from reality, and was often in consequence in embarrassing positions, with the result that I am a very reserved and shy person. Since as a quite small child I already knew far more than I could have learnt, I simply did not understand children of my own age. I am myself the eldest of a family of twelve.

'From six to ten years old I attended the parish school and up to sixteen the high-school of the Ursuline Nuns in B. At ten years old I had taken in as much French in four weeks, in eight lessons, as other children learn in two years. I had only to repeat it and it was just as if I had already learnt it and only forgotten it. I have never had any need to learn French, in contradistinction to English, which certainly gave me no trouble but was not known to me beforehand. The same thing happened to me with Latin as with French and I have never properly learnt it, only knowing it from ecclesiastical Latin, which is, however, quite familiar to me. If I read a French book to-day, then I immediately begin thinking in French, whereas this never happens to me with English, although I have more command of English.—My parents are peasant people who for generations have never spoken any languages except German and Polish.

'*Visions*: Sometimes reality vanishes for some moments and I see something quite different. In my house, for example, I often see an old couple and a child; and the house is then differently furnished. In a sanatorium a friend once came into my room at about four in the morning; I was awake, had the lamp

burning, and was sitting at my table reading, as I suffer much from sleeplessness. This apparition of her always means a trying time for me—as also on this occasion.

' In 1914 my brother was on active service ; I was not with my parents in B., but in C. It was ten in the morning on August 22 when I heard my brother's voice calling, "Mother! mother!". It came again ten minutes later, but I saw nothing. On August 24 I came home, found my mother greatly depressed, and in answer to my questions she said that the boy had appeared on August 22. She had been in the garden in the morning, when she had heard him call, "Mother! mother!". I tried to comfort her and said nothing about myself. Three weeks after there came a card from my brother, written on August 22 between nine and ten in the morning ; shortly after that he died.

' On September 27, 1921, while in the sanatorium, I received a message of some kind. There were violent knockings two or three times repeated on the bed of the patient who shared my room. We were both awake ; I asked if she had knocked ; she had not heard anything at all. Eight weeks later I heard that one of my friends had died in the night of September 26-27.

' Now something which is regarded as an hallucination, a matter of opinion ! I have a friend who married a widower with five children ; I got to know the husband only through my friend. Nearly every time that I have been to see her, I have seen a lady going in and out of the house. It was natural to suppose that this was the husband's first wife. I asked at some convenient opportunity for a portrait of her, but could not identify the apparition with the photograph. Seven years later I saw a picture with the features of the lady, belonging to one of the children. It was after all the first wife. In the first picture she looked in much better health : she had just been through a feeding-up treatment and that alters the appearance

of a consumptive patient.—These are only a few examples out of many.

*'The dream :* I see a tongue of land surrounded by water. The waves are driven to and fro by the surf. On this piece of land stands a palm-tree, bent somewhat towards the water. A woman has her arm wound round the stem of the palm and is bending low towards the water, where a man is trying to reach the shore. At last she lies down on the ground, holds tightly to the palm-tree with her left hand and stretches out her right hand as far as she can towards the man in the water, but without reaching him. At that point I fall out of bed and wake. I was about fifteen or sixteen years old when I realized that this woman was myself, and from that time I not only went through all the woman's apprehensions for the man but I stood there many a time as a third who was not taking part and only looked on. I dreamed this dream too in separate scenes. As the interest in men awoke in me (eighteen to twenty years old), I tried to see the man's face; it was never possible. The foam hid everything but the neck and the back of the head. I have twice been engaged to be married, but the head and build were not those of either of the two men.—Once, when I was lying in the sanatorium under the influence of paraldehyde, I saw the man's face, which I now always see in this dream. It was that of the doctor under whose care I was. I liked him as a doctor, but there was nothing more between us.

*'Memories :* Six to nine months old. I was in a perambulator. Quite close to me were two horses; one, a chestnut, is looking at me very hard and in a way full of meaning. This is the most vivid experience; I had the feeling that it was a human being.

*'One year old.* Father and I in the town-park, where a park-keeper is putting a little bird into my hand. Its eyes look into mine. I feel "That is a live creature like yourself".

*'Animals being slaughtered.* When I heard the

pigs screaming I always called for help and cried out, "You are killing a person" (four years old). I have always avoided eating meat. Pork always makes me sick. I came to eat meat during the war, but only against my will; now I have given it up again.

'*Five years old.* My mother was confined and I heard her cry out. I had the feeling, "There is a human being or an animal in the greatest distress", just as I had over the pig-killing.

'I was quite indifferent as a child to sexual matters; at ten years old I had as yet no conception of offences against chastity. Menstruation came on at the age of twelve. The woman first awakened in me at six-and-twenty, after I had given birth to a child; up to that time (six months) I constantly had violent vomiting after intercourse. This also came on whenever I was at all oppressed in mood.

'I have extraordinarily keen powers of observation, and quite exceptionally sharp hearing, also a very keen sense of smell. I can pick out by smell people I know from among a crowd with my eyes bandaged.

'I do not regard my abnormal powers of sight and hearing as pathological, but ascribe them to finer perceptions and greater quickness of thought; but I have only spoken of it to my pastor and doctor—very unwillingly to the latter, as I was afraid he would tell me that what I regarded as *plus*-qualities were *minus*-qualities, and also because from being misunderstood in childhood I am very reserved and shy.'

'The dream which the writer of the letter asks us to interpret is not hard to understand. It is a dream of saving from water, a typical birth-dream. The language of symbolism, as you are aware, knows no grammar; it is an extreme case of a language of infinitives, and even the active and passive are represented by one and the same image. If in a dream a woman pulls (or wishes to pull) a man out of the water, that may mean she wishes to be his mother (takes him for her son as Pharaoh's daughter did with Moses),

or equally she wishes him to make her into a mother, to have a son by him, a son who shall be as like him as a copy. The tree-trunk to which the woman clings is easily recognized as a phallic symbol, even though it is not standing straight up, but inclined towards the surface of the water—in the dream the word is 'bent'. The onrush and recoil of the surf brought to the mind of another dreamer who was relating a similar dream the comparison with the intermittent pains of labour, and when, knowing that she had not yet borne a child, I asked her how she knew of this characteristic of labour, she said that one imagined labour as a kind of colic, a quite unimpeachable description physiologically. She gave the association 'Waves of the Sea and Waves of Passion'.<sup>1</sup> How our dreamer at so early an age can have arrived at the finer details of the symbolism: tongue of land, palm-tree, I am naturally unable to say. We must not, however, overlook the fact that, when people maintain that they have for years been haunted by the same dream, it often turns out that the manifest content is not throughout quite the same. Only the kernel of the dream has recurred each time; the details of the content are changed or additions are made to them.

At the end of this dream, which is evidently charged with anxiety, the dreamer falls out of bed. This is a fresh representation of child-birth; analytic investigation of the fear of heights, of the dread of an impulse to throw oneself out of the window, has doubtless led you all to the same conclusion.

Who then is the man, by whom the dreamer wishes to have a child, or of whose very image she would like to be the mother? She has often tried to see his face, but the dream never allows of it; the man has to remain a mystery. We know from countless analyses what this veiling means, and the conclusion we should base on analogy is verified by another statement of

<sup>1</sup> [*Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, the title of a play by Grillparzer.—Ed.]

the dreamer's. Under the influence of paraldehyde she once recognized the face of the man in the dream as that of the hospital physician who was treating her, and who meant nothing more to her conscious emotional life. The original thus never divulged its identity, but this impression of it in 'transference' establishes the conclusion that earlier it must have always been the father. Ferenczi is undoubtedly perfectly right in pointing out that these 'dreams of the unsuspecting' are valuable sources of information confirming the conjectures of analysis. Our dreamer was the eldest of twelve children; how often must she have gone through the pangs of jealousy and disappointment when not she, but her mother, obtained from her father the longed-for child!

Our dreamer has quite correctly supposed that her first memories of childhood would be of value in the interpretation of her early and recurrent dream. In the first scene, in the first year of her life, as she sits in her perambulator she sees two horses close to her, one looking hard at her in a significant way. This she describes as her most vivid experience; she had the feeling that it was a human being. This is a feeling which we can understand only if we assume that the two horses represent, in this case as so often, man and wife, father and mother. It is, as it were, a flash of infantile totemism. If we could, we should ask the writer whether the *brown* horse who looks at her in so human a way could not be recognized by its colouring as her father. The second recollection is associatively connected with the first through the same 'understanding' gaze. 'Taking the little bird in her hand' reminds the analyst, who, by the way, has prejudices of his own at times, of a feature in the dream in which the woman's hand is again in contact with another phallic symbol.

The next two memories belong together; they make still slighter demands on the interpreter. The mother crying out during her confinement reminded

the daughter directly of the pigs screaming when they were killed and put her into the same frenzy of pity. We may also conjecture, however, that this is a violent reaction against a death-wish directed at the mother.

With these indications of tenderness for the father, of contact with his genitals, and of the death-wish against the mother, the outline of the female Oedipus-complex is sketched. The ignorance of sexual matters retained so long and the frigidity at a later period bear out these suppositions. The writer of the letter has been virtually—and for a time no doubt actually—an hysterical neurotic. The life-force has, for her own happiness, carried her along with it, has awakened in her the sexual feelings of a woman and brought her the joys of motherhood, and the capacity to work, but a portion of her libido still clings to its point of fixation in childhood; she still dreams that dream that flings her out of bed and punishes her for her incestuous object-choice by 'not inconsiderable injuries'.

And now a strange doctor's explanation, given in a letter, is to effect something that all the most important experiences of later life have failed to do. Probably a regular analysis continued for a considerable time might have some success. As things were, I was obliged to content myself with writing to her that I was convinced she was suffering from the after-effects of a strong emotional tie binding her to her father and from a corresponding identification with her mother, but that I did not myself expect that this explanation would help her at all. Spontaneous cures of neurosis usually leave scars behind, and these smart from time to time. We are very proud of our art if we achieve a cure through psycho-analysis, yet even so we cannot always prevent the formation of a painful scar in the process.

The little series of reminiscences must engage our attention for a while longer. I have on one occasion stated that such scenes of childhood are 'screen-memories' selected at a later period, put together,



and thereby not infrequently falsified. This subsequent elaboration serves a purpose that is sometimes easy to guess. In our case one can practically hear the ego of the writer glorifying or soothing itself throughout the whole series of recollections. 'I was from a tiny thing a particularly large-hearted and compassionate child. I learnt quite early that the animals have souls as we have, and could not endure cruelty to animals. The sins of the flesh were far from me and I preserved my chastity till late.' With declarations such as these she loudly contradicts the inferences that we have to make about her early childhood on the basis of our analytical experience, namely, that she had an abundance of premature sexual emotions and violent feelings of hatred for her mother and her younger brothers and sisters. (Beside the genital significance assigned to it, the little bird may also have that of a child-symbol, like all small animals; her memory also accentuates in a very insistent way that this tiny creature had the same right to exist as she herself.) The short series of recollections in fact furnishes a very nice example of a mental structure with a twofold aspect. Viewed superficially, we may find in it the expression of an abstract idea, here, as usually, with an ethical reference. In H. Silberer's nomenclature the structure has an *anagogic* content; on deeper investigation it reveals itself as a chain of phenomena belonging to the region of the repressed life of the instincts—it displays its *psycho-analytic* content. As you know, Silberer, who was among the first to issue a warning to us on no account to lose sight of the nobler side of the human soul, has put forward the view that all or nearly all dreams permit such a twofold interpretation, a purer, anagogic one beside the ordinary, psycho-analytic one. This is, however, unfortunately not so; on the contrary, a further interpretation of this kind is rarely possible; there has been no valuable example of such a dream-analysis with a double meaning published up

to the present time within my knowledge. But something of the kind can often be observed within the series of associations that our patients produce during analytic treatment. The successive ideas are linked on the one hand by an obvious and coherent association, while on the other hand you become aware of an underlying theme which is kept secret and at the same time plays a part in all these ideas. The contrast between the two themes that dominate the same series of ideas is not always one between the lofty anagogic and the common psycho-analytic, but is rather that between shocking and decent or neutral ideas—a fact that easily explains how such a chain of associations with a twofold determination arises. In our present example it is of course not accidental that the anagogic and the psycho-analytic interpretations stand in such a sharp contrast to each other ; both relate to the same material, and the later tendency is the same as that seen in the reaction-formations erected against the disowned instinctual forces.

Now why did we make such a special search for the psycho-analytic interpretation instead of contenting ourselves with the more accessible anagogic one ? The answer to this is linked up with many other problems—with the existence of neurosis itself and the explanations it inevitably demands—with the fact that virtue does not reward a man with the joy and strength in life that is expected from it, as though it brought with it too much from its original source (this dreamer, too, had not been well rewarded for her virtue), and with many other things which I need not discuss before this audience.

So far, however, in this case we have completely neglected the question of telepathy, the other point of interest in it for us ; it is time to return to it. In a sense we have here an easier task than in the case of Herr G. With a person who so easily and so early in life succumbed before reality and replaced it by the world of phantasy, the temptation is irresistible

to connect her telepathic experiences and 'visions' with her neurosis and to derive them from it, although here too we should not allow ourselves to be deceived as to the cogency of our own arguments. We shall merely replace what is unknown and unintelligible by possibilities that are at least comprehensible.

On August 22, 1914, at ten o'clock in the morning, our correspondent experienced a telepathic impression that her brother, who was at the time on active service, was calling, 'Mother! mother!'; the phenomenon was purely acoustic, it was repeated shortly after, but nothing was seen. Two days later she sees her mother and finds her much depressed because the boy had announced himself to her by repeatedly calling, 'Mother! mother!'. She immediately recalls the same telepathic message, which she had experienced at the same time, and as a matter of fact some weeks later it was established that the young soldier had died on that day at the hour stated.

It cannot be proved, but also cannot be disproved, that instead of this what happened was the following: the mother told her one day that the son had sent this telepathic message; whereupon the conviction at once arose in her mind that she had had the same experience at the same time. Such delusory memories arise in the mind with the force of an obsession, a force derived from real sources—they have, however, substituted material for psychical reality. The strength of the delusory memory lies in its being an excellent way of expressing the sister's tendency to identify herself with the mother. 'You are anxious about the boy, but I am really his mother, and his cry was meant for me; I had this telepathic message.' The sister would naturally firmly decline to consider our attempt at explanation and would hold to her belief in the authenticity of the experience. She simply cannot do otherwise; as long as the reality of the unconscious basis of it in her own mind is concealed from her she is obliged to believe in the reality of her pathological

logic. Every such delusion derives its strength and its unassailable character from its source in unconscious psychical reality. I note in passing that it is not incumbent on us here to explain the mother's experience or to investigate its authenticity.

The dead brother is, however, not only the imaginary child of our correspondent ; he represents also a rival regarded with hatred even at the time of his birth. By far the greater number of all telepathic presentiments relate to death or the possibility of death : when patients under analysis keep telling us of the frequency and infallibility of their gloomy forebodings, we can with equal regularity show them that they are fostering particularly strong death-wishes in their unconscious against their nearest relations and have therefore long suppressed them. The patient whose history I related in 1909<sup>1</sup> was an example to the point ; he was even called a 'bird of ill omen' by his relations. But when the kindly and highly intelligent man—who has since himself perished in the war—began to make progress towards recovery, he himself gave me considerable assistance in clearing up his own psychological conjuring tricks. In the same way, the account given in our first correspondent's letter, of how he and his three brothers had received the news of their youngest brother's death as a thing they had long been inwardly aware of, appears to need no other explanation. The elder brothers would all have been equally convinced of the superfluousness of the youngest arrival.

Another of our dreamer's 'visions' will probably become more intelligible in the light of analytical knowledge ! Women friends have obviously a considerable significance in her emotional life. News of the death of one of them is conveyed to her shortly after the event by knocking at night on the bed of a room-mate in the sanatorium. Another friend had many years before married a widower with several

<sup>1</sup> 'Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis', COLLECTED PAPERS, vol. iii.

(five) children. On the occasion of her visits to their house she regularly saw the apparition of a lady, whom she felt constrained to suppose to be the dead first wife ; this did not at first permit of confirmation, and only became a matter of certainty with her seven years later, on the discovery of a fresh photograph of the dead woman. This achievement in the way of a vision has the same inner dependence on the family-complex already recognized in our correspondent as her presentiment of the brother's death. By identifying herself with her friend she could in her person achieve her own wish-fulfilment ; for all eldest daughters of a numerous family build up in their unconscious the phantasy of becoming the father's second wife by the death of the mother. If the mother is ill or dies, the eldest daughter takes her place as a matter of course in relation to the younger brothers and sisters, and may even in respect to the father take over some part of the functions of the wife. The unconscious wish fills in the other part.

I am now almost at the end of what I wish to say. I might, however, add the observation that the cases of telepathic messages or occurrences which have been discussed here are clearly connected with emotions belonging to the sphere of the Oedipus-complex. This may sound startling ; I do not intend to give it out as a great discovery, however. I would rather revert to the result we arrived at through investigating the dream I considered first. Telepathy has no relation to the essential nature of dreams ; it cannot deepen in any way what we already understand of them by analysis. On the other hand, psycho-analysis may do something to advance the study of telepathy, in so far as, by the help of its interpretations, many of the puzzling characteristics of telepathic phenomena may be rendered more intelligible to us ; or other, still doubtful phenomena be for the first time definitely ascertained to be of a telepathic nature.

There remains one element of the apparently

intimate connection between telepathy and dreams which is not affected by any of these considerations : namely, the incontestable fact that sleep creates favourable conditions for telepathy. Sleep is not, it is true, indispensable to the accomplishment of the process—whether it originates in messages or in an unconscious activity of some kind. If you are not already aware of this, you will learn it from the instance given by our second correspondent, of the message coming from the boy between nine and ten in the morning. We must add, however, that no one has a right to take exception to telepathic occurrences on the ground that the event and the presentiment (or message) do not exactly coincide in astronomical time. It is perfectly conceivable that a telepathic message might arrive contemporaneously with the event and yet only penetrate to consciousness the following night during sleep (or even in waking life only after a while, during some pause in the activity of the mind). We are, as you know, of opinion that dream-formation itself does not necessarily wait for the onset of sleep to begin. Often the latent dream-thoughts may have been lying ready during the whole day, till at night they find the contact with the unconscious wish that shapes them into a dream. But if the phenomenon of telepathy is only an activity of the unconscious mind, then no fresh problem lies before us. The laws of unconscious mental life may then be taken for granted as applying to telepathy.

Have I given you the impression that I am secretly inclined to support the reality of telepathy in the occult sense? If so, I should very much regret that it is so difficult to avoid giving such an impression. In reality, however, I was anxious to be strictly impartial. I have every reason to be so, for I have no opinion ; I know nothing about it.

## XXIV

### A NEUROSIS OF DEMONIAL POSSESSION IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY<sup>1</sup>

(1923)

EXPERIENCE of neuroses amongst children goes to show that in them much is clearly visible to the naked eye which at a later age can only be discovered after painstaking research. We may anticipate that the same holds true for the neurotic manifestations characteristic of earlier centuries, provided, of course, that we are prepared to recognize them as such under other names than those of our present-day neuroses. When we consider how in our present unpsychological epoch neuroses appear in a hypochondriacal guise, masked as organic diseases, we need not be surprised to find the neuroses of olden times masquerading in a demonological shape. As is known, many authors, foremost amongst them Charcot, have recognized states of demoniacal possession and ecstasy, descriptions of which have been preserved for us in the artistic productions of those periods, to be manifestations of hysteria; had more attention been paid to the history of such cases at the time, it would have been a simple matter to find in them the same content as that of the neuroses to-day.

Despite the somatic ideology of the era of 'exact' science, the demonological theory of these dark ages has in the long run justified itself. Cases of demoniacal possession correspond to the neuroses of the present day; in order to understand these latter we have once

<sup>1</sup> First published in *Imago*, Bd. ix., 1923. [Translated by Edward Glover.]

The author wishes to add to the English translation two footnotes (which appear within square brackets), and to express his regret that they were omitted from the German version.

more had recourse to the conception of psychic forces. What in those days were thought to be evil spirits to us are base and evil wishes, the derivatives of impulses which have been rejected and repressed. In one respect only do we not subscribe to the explanation of these phenomena current in mediaeval times; we have abandoned the projection of them into the outer world, attributing their origin instead to the inner life of the patient in whom they manifest themselves.

### I. THE STORY OF CHRISTOPH HAITZMANN, THE PAINTER

I am indebted to the friendly interest of Hofrat Dr. R. Payer-Thurn, director of the former Imperial *Fideikommissbibliothek* of Vienna for the opportunity of studying one of these demonological neuroses, which occurred in the seventeenth century. This gentleman discovered in the Imperial Library a manuscript originating from Mariazell, a place of pilgrimage, in which was described in detail how a pact with the Devil had been redeemed in a wonderful manner through the interposition of the Holy Virgin Mary. His interest was aroused by the resemblance of this story to the Faust legend, and led him to undertake a comprehensive presentation of the material. Finding, however, that the person whose redemption was described had been subject to visions and convulsive seizures, Dr. Payer-Thurn turned to me for a medical opinion on the case. In the end we agreed to publish our investigations independently and apart. I wish to take this opportunity of thanking him for his suggestion and for his assistance in various ways in studying the manuscript.

The history of this demonological neurosis leads to a really valuable discovery, which can be brought to light without much interpretative work—much as a vein of pure metal may sometimes be struck when elsewhere the ore can only be extracted after laborious smelting operations.

The manuscript, an exact duplicate of which is in



my possession, consists of two parts entirely distinct from each other : one written in Latin by a monastic author or compiler, and the other a fragment from the patient's diary written in German. The former contains a preface and a description of the actual miracle ; the latter can scarcely have been of much interest to the clerics but is all the more valuable to us. It serves in large part to confirm our otherwise tentative views on the case, and we have every reason to be grateful to the reverend fathers for having preserved the document although it contributed nothing of value from their point of view ; indeed, rather the contrary.

Before summarizing the contents of this little handwritten brochure, which bears the title *Trophaeum Mariano-Cellense*, I must narrate a part of its contents which I take from the Preface.

On September 5, 1677, the painter Christoph Haitzmann, a native of Bavaria, was brought to Mariazell bearing a letter of introduction from the Pastor of Pottenbrunn (in Lower Austria), which lies not far away.<sup>1</sup> For some months he had lived in Pottenbrunn pursuing his occupation of painting ; on August 29, whilst in church, he was seized with frightful convulsions and, as these recurred in the days following, he had been interrogated by the Praefectus Domini Pottenbrunnensis, in order to discover what was oppressing him and whether he had yielded to an impulse to have illicit traffic with the Evil One.<sup>2</sup> Whereupon he confessed that nine years previously, in a state of despondency in regard to his art and of despair about his livelihood, he had succumbed to the nine-times-repeated temptation of the Evil One and had given his bond in writing to belong to the Devil body and soul at the end of nine years. On the twenty-fourth of that month

<sup>1</sup> No mention is anywhere made of the painter's age. One surmises from the context that he was between thirty and forty, probably nearer thirty. He died, as we shall hear, in 1700.

<sup>2</sup> We can only note here in passing the possibility that this cross-examination of the patient 'suggested' to him the phantasy of a pact with the Devil.

the period would expire.<sup>1</sup> The unfortunate man had rued his bargain and was convinced that only the grace of the Mother of God at Mariazell could save him, by compelling the Evil One to disgorge this Bond which was written in blood. On these grounds he (*miserum hunc hominem omni auxilio destitutum*) had been con-signed to the benevolence of the fathers of Mariazell.

So far the story of Leopoldus Braun, Pastor of Pottenbrunn, September 1, 1677.

To come now to the analysis of the Manuscript. It consists of three parts :

(1) A coloured title-page representing the scenes of the signing of the Pact and of the redemption in the shrine of Mariazell ; on the next page are eight drawings, likewise coloured, representing subsequent appearances of the Devil, with a brief legend in German attached to each. These illustrations are not original ; they are copies—exact copies, we are solemnly assured—from original paintings by Christoph Haitzmann.

(2) The actual *Trophaeum Mariano-Cellense* (in Latin), the work of a reverend compiler who signs himself at the foot P. A. E., adding four lines in verse containing his biography. It ends with a deposition by the Abbot Kilian of St. Lambert, dated September 12, 1729, which is in a different handwriting, and testifies to the exact correspondence of manuscript and illustrations with the originals preserved in the archives. The year in which the *Trophaeum* was written is not mentioned. We are at liberty to assume that it was done in the same year as that in which the Abbot Kilian made his deposition, in 1729 ; or, since 1714 is the last date mentioned in the text, we may put the work of the compiler somewhere between 1714 and 1729. The miracle which has been rescued from oblivion by means of this manuscript happened in the year 1677, that is to say, from thirty-seven to fifty-two years before.

(3) The painter's diary written in German, covering

<sup>1</sup> *Quorum et finis 24 mensis hujus futurus appropinquat.*

the period from his redemption in the shrine until January 13 in the following year, 1678. It is inserted in the text of the *Trophaeum* almost at the end.

The main part of the actual *Trophaeum* is made up of two portions, the before-mentioned letter of introduction of the Pastor of Pottenbrunn, Leopold Braun, dated September 1, 1677, and the report of the Abbot Franciscus of Mariazell and St. Lambert describing the miraculous cure, dated September 12, 1677, that is to say, only a few days after it happened. The work of the editor or compiler P. A. E. consists of a preface in which the contents of these two documents are condensed, together with some less important passages introduced to connect the two, and a report at the end on the subsequent history of the painter based on inquiries made in the year 1714.<sup>1</sup>

The painter's previous history is thus related three times over in the *Trophaeum*: (1) in the introductory letter from the Pastor of Pottenbrunn, (2) in the formal deposition of the Abbot Franciscus and (3) in the editorial preface. A comparison of these three sources discloses certain contradictions which it will be important for us to follow up.

I can now continue the story of the painter. After a prolonged period of expiation and prayer at Mariazell, the Devil appeared before him in the Holy Shrine at midnight on September 8, the birthday of the Virgin, in the form of a winged dragon, and gave him back the Pact, which was written in blood. Much to our surprise we learn at a later stage that two Pacts with the Devil are mentioned in the history of Christoph Haitzmann, an earlier one written in black ink and a later one written in blood. The one referred to in the scene of exorcism, which is also that illustrated on the title-page, is the Blood Pact, that is, the later one.

It might occur to us at this point to question the

<sup>1</sup> This would seem to indicate that the *Trophaeum* too was written in the year 1714.

credibility of these ecclesiastical reporters—a misgiving prompting us not to waste our energies on a mere product of monastic superstition. We are told that several clerics, each mentioned by name, assisted at the exorcism and were even present in the chapel during the Devil's appearance. Now had it been stated that they had also witnessed the dragon delivering to the painter this document inscribed in red (*schedam sibi porrigentem conspexisset*), we should be confronted by several disturbing possibilities, the least disagreeable of which would be that of a collective hallucination. The testimony of the Abbot Franciscus, however, dispels this misgiving. It is nowhere stated that the clergy present saw the Devil; on the contrary, it is quite frankly and soberly recorded that the painter tore himself from the arms of the fathers who were supporting him, rushed into the corner of the chapel where he saw the apparition and returned with the Bond in his hand.<sup>1</sup>

It was a wonderful miracle; the triumph of the Holy Mother over Satan was beyond all question, but unfortunately the cure was not a permanent one. It is again to the credit of the churchmen that they do not conceal this. After a brief interval the painter left Mariazell in good health and proceeded to Vienna, where he lived with a married sister. On October 11 fresh seizures occurred, some of them very severe, and these are reported in the Diary until January 13. They took the form of visions and of loss of consciousness, during which he saw and experienced all manner of things; also of convulsive seizures accompanied by extremely painful sensations; on one occasion paralysis of the lower limbs occurred; and so on. This time it was not the Devil, however, who persecuted him; on the contrary, these unwelcome attentions came from

<sup>1</sup> . . . *ipsumque Daemonem ad Aram Sac. Cellae per fenestrellam in cornu Epistolae Schedam sibi porrigentem conspexisset eo advolans e Religiosorum manibus, qui eum tenebant, ipsam Schedam ad manum obtinuit.* . . .

sacred personages, Christ and the Holy Virgin herself. It is remarkable that he suffered no less from the visitations of these heavenly persons and from the penances they imposed on him than from his former traffic with the Devil. We discover from the Diary that he regarded these fresh manifestations as Satanic apparitions too, and when in May 1678 he went back to Mariazell we find him bewailing these *maligni Spiritus manifestationes*.

He explained to the reverend fathers that he had come back in order to recover from the Devil a still earlier Pact written in ink.<sup>1</sup> Again this time the Holy Virgin and the pious fathers helped him to obtain the answer to his prayer. As to how this came about, however, the report is silent. It says briefly : *qua iuxta votum reddita*. Once again he prayed, and once again the Pact was returned to him. Afterwards he felt quite free and entered the Order of Monks Hospitallers.

We have once more to acknowledge that, despite the quite obvious tendency behind his work, the compiler has not been tempted into departing from that veracity which is a condition of a clinical history. When in 1714 inquiry is made of the Superior of the Cloister of Monks Hospitallers concerning the painter's after-history, the information obtained is not suppressed. Reverendus Pater Provincialis reports that Brother Chrysostomus had again been repeatedly tempted by the Evil One, who wished to strike a fresh Pact with him : and indeed, that this occurred only when ' he had taken somewhat more wine than usual ',<sup>2</sup> but by the grace of God it had always been possible for him to repulse these approaches. In the year 1700, in the cloister of the Order at Neustatt on Moldau, Brother Chrysostomus, ' meek in spirit and of good comfort ', died of a fever.

<sup>1</sup> This had been drawn up in September 1668, and in May 1678, nine and a half years after, would have been long overdue.

<sup>2</sup> ' Wenn er etwas mehrers von Wein getrunken.'

## II. THE MOTIVATION OF THE SATANIC PACT

When we come to consider this Bond with Satan as if it were the case-history of a neurotic, our interest is aroused in the first instance by the problem of its motivation, which is of course closely connected with the question of its exciting cause. Why does one sell oneself to the Devil? To be sure, Dr. Faust puts the contemptuous question: What hast thou to give, thou poor Devil? But he erred; the Devil, in return for the immortal soul, has much to offer that is highly treasured of man: wealth, immunity from dangers, power over mankind and over the forces of Nature, but above all these, pleasure, the enjoyment of beautiful women. Moreover, in pacts with the Devil these terms or obligations are usually specifically mentioned.<sup>1</sup> What then was Christoph Hartzmann's reason for entering into his Bond?

Remarkable to relate, it was not for any one of these very natural desires. To put the matter beyond all doubt, one has only to read the brief remarks appended by the artist to his illustrations of the apparitions of the Devil. For example, the legend appended to the Third Vision runs:

*Zum dritten ist er mir in anderthalb Jahren in disser abscheühlichen Gestalt erschienen, mit einen Buuch in der Handt, darin lauter Zauberey und schwarze Kunst war begriffen . . .*

[For the third time within one yeare and a half he hath appeared vnto me in this loathsome fhape bearing in his hand a Booke the which is full of naught but wizarerie and blacke magicke.]

We learn, however, from the legend under a later apparition that the Devil reproaches him furiously for

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Faust*, I. Study.

I'll pledge myself to be your servant *here*,  
 Ne'er at your call to slumber or be still;  
 But when together *yonder* we appear,  
 You shall submissively obey my will.

(Translation by Anna Swanwick.)

having 'burnt his aforetold Booke' and threatens to tear him to pieces if he does not bring it him back.

In the Fourth Vision he shows him a large yellow money-bag and a great ducat, promising to give him as many of these as he cares to have: the painter, however, can boast of his reply, 'but I would in no wise accept of such things'.

On another occasion the Devil demands that he should turn to pleasure and amusement, concerning which the painter remarks, '*welliches zwar auch auf sein begehren geschehen aber ich yber drey Tag nit continuirt, und gleich widerumb aussgelöst worden*' [the which on his entreatie did come to pass, yet did I not continue for more than three days and was speedilie redeemed anew].

Now since he refuses magical powers, money and pleasure when the Devil offers them, and still less makes them a condition of the Bond, it becomes really imperative to know what the painter desired of the Devil when he entered into the Pact. Some motive or other he must have had to induce him to have any such dealings at all.

On this point, too, the *Trophaeum* provides us with reliable information. He had become depressed, was unable or unwilling to paint properly and was anxious about his livelihood, that is to say, he suffered from melancholic depression with incapacity for work and (justified) anxiety about his future. It is clear that we are really dealing with a morbid state of health, and further, we are informed of the exciting cause of the disease; the painter himself, in the legends appended to his illustrations, actually describes it as a melancholia ('that I should seeke diversion and banish Melancholy'). The first of our three sources of information, the letter of introduction from the Pastor, to be sure, speaks only of the depression ('*dum artis suae progressum emolumentumque secuturum PUSILLANIMIS perpenderet*'); the second source, however, the report of the Abbot Franciscus, indicates the cause of

this despondency or depression : it runs thus : '*accepta aliqua pusillanimitate EX MORTE PARENTIS*', and in the compiler's introduction the same reason is advanced, merely the order of the wording being inverted : *ex morte parentis accepta aliqua pusillanimitate*. That is to say, his father had died and he had consequently fallen into a state of melancholia, whereupon the Devil had appeared before him, inquired the cause of his dejection and grief, and had promised 'to help him in every way and give him aid'.<sup>1</sup>

This man sold himself to the Devil, therefore, in order to be freed from a state of depression. Truly an excellent motive, in the judgement of those who can understand the torment of these states and who appreciate, moreover, how little the art of medicine can do to alleviate the malady. Yet I question if a single one of my readers who has followed the tale thus far could guess the wording of the Pact, or rather Pacts (since there are two, one written in ink and a second written about a year later in blood, both presumably still in the archives at Mariazell, and transcribed in the *Trophaeum*).

These agreements hold two great surprises in store for us. First of all there is no mention in either of them that it was for certain obligations to be fulfilled by the Devil that the painter had bartered eternal bliss : there is but one condition, which the Devil makes and the painter must observe. It strikes us as being entirely illogical and absurd that this man should barter his soul, not for something which the Devil shall afford him, but for a service which he shall himself render to the Devil. The actual agreement made by the painter sounds more extraordinary still.

The First 'Syngrapha', written in black ink :

*Ich Christoph Haitzmann vndterschreibe mich  
diesen Herrn sein leibeigener Sohn auff 9 Jahr  
1669 Jahr.*

<sup>1</sup> 'Auf alle Weiss zu helfen und an die Handt zu gehen.' The first picture on the title-page, and its legend, shows the Devil in the form of an 'ersamer Bürger' (honest burgher).



[*I Christoph Haizmann sign a deede and pledge myselfe to be vnto this lord euen as a sonne of his bodie for 9 yeares 1669 yeare*]

The Second, written in blood :

*Anno 1669 Christoph Haizmann Ich verschreibe mich dissen Satan, ich sein leibeigner Sohn zu sein, vnd in 9 Jahr ihm mein Leib und Seel zuzugeheren*

[*Anno 1669 Christoph Haizmann I give my bonde and pledge myselfe vnto this Satan for to be vnto him euen as a sonne of his bodie and after 9 yeares to belong vnto him bodie and saule*]

Our astonishment vanishes, however, when we read the text in the sense that what appears to be a service demanded of the painter by Satan is instead an obligation on the part of Satan towards the painter. This incomprehensible Pact would then acquire a straightforward meaning which might be expressed thus: The Devil binds himself for a period of nine years to take the place of his lost father to the painter. At the end of this period the latter, as was customary in such dealings, becomes the property of the Devil body and soul. The train of thought motivating this Pact seems indeed to be as follows: Owing to my father's death I am despondent and can no longer work; if I can but get a father-substitute I shall be able to regain all that I have lost.

A man who has fallen into a melancholia on account of his father's death must have loved that father deeply. The more curious then that he should have come by the idea of taking the Devil as a substitute for the loved parent.

### III. THE DEVIL AS A FATHER-SUBSTITUTE

I daresay sober-minded critics will not be prepared to admit that by reversing the sense of this Satanic Pact we have made the matter clear. Two objections to this procedure might be advanced. In the first

place, it might be said that it is unnecessary to regard the Pact as a contract in which the obligations of both parties are set forth. It might contain merely the painter's obligations, without any reference in the text to the obligations of the Devil, which would remain 'understood'. The painter, however, binds himself in two ways, first to be as a son to the Devil for nine years, and secondly, to belong to him entirely after death. In this way one of the premises on which our conclusion is based would be disposed of.

The burden of the second objection would be that there is no justification for laying stress on the expression, 'the son of his body'. This is merely a phrase current at that time, which could quite well be interpreted in the way the reverend fathers understood it. The latter did not translate into Latin the kinship laid down in the Pact, but merely say that the painter '*mancipavit*' himself to the Evil One, surrendered himself to him, had taken upon himself to lead a life of wickedness and to deny God and the Holy Trinity. Why should we hold aloof from this obvious and natural explanation? <sup>1</sup> The state of affairs would then simply be that someone in a helpless state, tortured with melancholic depression, sells himself to the Devil, in whose healing powers he reposes the greatest confidence. That the depression was caused by the father's demise would then be quite irrelevant: it could quite conceivably have been due to some other cause. This seems a forceful and reasonable objection. We hear once more the familiar criticism of psycho-analysis that it regards the simplest affairs in an unduly subtle and complicated way, discovers secrets and problems where none exist, and that it achieves this by magnifying the most insignificant

<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, when we come to consider when and for whom these Pacts were drawn up, we shall realize that the text had of necessity to read inoffensively and in comprehensible terms. It suffices for our purposes, however, that some ambiguity should be contained in them, which we can make the starting-point of our investigations.

trifles to support far-reaching and bizarre conclusions. It would be fruitless to assure our opponents that this rejection on their part involves the neglect of many striking analogies and the breaking of many delicate connecting-threads, such as we can point to in the present instance. Our opponent would merely reply that such analogies and connecting-links were non-existent, that they were artifacts introduced by ourselves, figments of our overweening sagacity.

Now I shall not preface my reply with the words, 'Let us be honest' or 'Let us be sincere,' since that one must always be able to be, and without making any preliminary flourish about it. Let me say quite simply that I am well aware that any reader who does not already believe in the soundness of the psycho-analytic mode of thought will certainly not acquire this conviction by reading the case of Christoph Haitzmann, painter in the seventeenth century. Nor is it my intention to put forward this case as a proof of the validity of psycho-analytic findings: on the contrary, I presuppose their soundness and I then make use of them to explain this painter's demonological disease. My justification for so doing lies in the success of our investigations into the nature of the neuroses in general. Speaking in all modesty, we may venture to say that even the more obtuse amongst our colleagues and contemporaries are beginning to realize that no understanding of neurotic states is to be attained without the help of psycho-analysis.

With these shafts alone can Troy be taken,

as Odysseus admits in the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles.

If we are right in regarding as a neurotic phantasy the Satanic Pact made by our painter, there is no further need to apologize for interpreting it psycho-analytically. Even trifling indications have meaning and significance, and especially as regards the causal conditions of a neurosis. To be sure, it is possible to overvalue them, just as it is to underestimate them:

it remains a matter of judgement how far one should go in relying on them. But if a person does not believe in psycho-analysis, nor even in the Devil, he must be left to make what he can of the painter's case, whether he fashion an explanation by some means of his own or whether he sees nothing at all in the case deserving of explanation.

We will come back, therefore, to our assumption that the Devil to whom the painter sells himself is a direct father-substitute. In keeping with this is the shape in which he makes his first appearance: an honest old burgher with a flowing brown beard, dressed in a red mantle with a black hat, leaning on a stick in his right hand, and beside him a black hound (Picture 1).<sup>1</sup> The forms he assumes after become ever more terrifying, one might almost say more mythological: he is decked out with horns, eagle's talons, and bat's wings; finally he appears in the shrine as a flying dragon. We shall have occasion to return later to a particular detail of his bodily shape.

It does indeed sound strange that the Devil should be chosen as a substitute for a loved father, but only when we hear of this for the first time; there are many facts at our disposal which can serve to temper our astonishment. First of all we know that God is a father-substitute, or, more correctly, an exalted father, or yet again, a reproduction of the father as seen and met with in childhood—as the individual sees him in his own childhood and as mankind saw him in prehistoric times in the father of the primal horde. Later on in life the individual acquired a different, a less exalted impression of him, but the childish image of him was preserved and it united with the inherited memory-traces of the primal father to form the idea of God. We know, too, from the inner life of individuals as disclosed in analysis, that the relation to this father was in all probability ambivalent from the outset, or at any rate it soon became so; that is to say, it

<sup>1</sup> In Goethe a black dog like this turns into the Devil himself.

comprised two sets of emotional impulses, quite opposite in nature, not merely one of fondness and submission but another of hostility and defiance. We hold that this ambivalence governs the relations of mankind to its deities. From this unresolved conflict, on the one hand of longing for the father and on the other of dread and defiance, we have explained some of the important characteristics and most epoch-making vicissitudes of religion.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the Evil Spirit, we know that he is regarded as the antithesis of God, yet as being somewhat akin to him in nature. His history has not been gone into so closely as has that of God: not all religions have adopted the Evil One, the enemy of God; and his prototype in individual life remains as yet obscure. One thing, however, is certain: gods can turn into evil spirits when new gods supplant them. When one people vanquishes another, the overthrown gods of the conquered become not infrequently the evil spirits of the victors. The evil spirit of the Christian faith, the Devil of mediaeval times, was, according to Christian mythology, himself a fallen angel of godlike nature. It requires no great analytic insight to divine that God and the Devil were originally one and the same, a single figure which was later split into two bearing opposed characteristics.<sup>2</sup> In the prehistoric age of the religions, all those terrifying features which were afterwards merged in the form of his counterpart were still borne by the god himself.

It is an example of the process, so familiar to us, by which an idea with an opposed—ambivalent—content is split into two opposites contrasting sharply. The antitheses contained in the original idea of the nature of God are but a reflection of the ambivalence governing the relation of an individual to his personal

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Freud, *Totem and Tabu*, and, in detail, Theodor Reik, *Probleme der Religionspsychologie*, Bd. I.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Theodor Reik, 'Gott und Teufel', *Der eigene und der fremde Gott* [quoting Ernest Jones, *Der Alptraum in seiner Beziehung zu gewissen Formen des mittelälterlichen Aberglaubens*. See footnote p. 436].

father. If the benevolent and righteous God is a father-substitute, it is not to be wondered at that the hostile attitude, which leads to hate, fear and accusations against him, comes to expression in the figure of Satan. The father is thus the individual prototype of both God and the Devil. The fact that the figure of the primal father was that of a being with unlimited potentialities of evil, bearing much more resemblance to the Devil than to God, must have left an indelible stamp on all religions.

To be sure, it is by no means easy to demonstrate in the mental life of the individual traces of this satanic conception of the father. When a boy takes to drawing caricatures and grotesque figures, it may be possible to prove that he is making a mock of his father; nor is it difficult, when children of both sexes are apprehensive at night about robbers and burglars, to recognize these as derivatives of the father.<sup>1</sup> The animals which play a part in the animal-phobias of children are generally father-substitutes, just as the totem animal was in primitive times. But that the Devil is an image of the father and can act as an understudy for him has never been so clearly apparent as in the case of our neurotic seventeenth-century painter. It was this that, at the beginning of this paper, led me to express my belief that a demonological record of this kind would furnish that pure metal which, in the neuroses of a later age—no longer superstitious but rather hypochondriacal—can only be extracted from the raw ore of symptoms and associations by a laborious analytic process.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In the familiar tale of the Seven Little Goats, Father Wolf appears as a burglar.

<sup>2</sup> The fact that we so seldom in analyses find the Devil figuring as a father-substitute probably indicates that, in those we analyse, the rôle of this mediaeval, mythological figure has long since been outplayed. It was just as much the duty of a pious Christian in earlier centuries to believe in the Devil as to believe in God. As a matter of fact, the Devil was necessary in order to make him cling fast to God. For various reasons the increase in scepticism has affected first and foremost the person of the Devil.

Once one brings oneself to regard this idea of the Devil in the

Closer analysis of this case will in all probability bring deeper conviction. It is no unusual thing for a man to develop melancholic depression and loss of power to work after the death of his father. We conclude that such persons have been attached to the father with bonds of deep affection and are reminded how often a severe melancholia appears as a neurotic form of grief.

So far we are undoubtedly right, but not if we suppose further that the relation has been merely one of love. On the contrary, the more ambivalent the relation had been, the more likely is the grief for the father's loss to turn into a melancholia. When we bring this ambivalence into the foreground, however, we become prepared for the possibility of the father being denigrated in such a way as comes to expression in the painter's demoniacal neurosis. If only we were in a position to learn as much about Christoph Haitzmann as we do of patients undergoing analysis, it would be a simple matter to develop this ambivalence, to bring into memory when and how he had cause to fear and hate his father, above all, to discover the accidental factors present in addition to the usual motives for father-hate which are inevitable in the natural father-son relation. The inhibition of working capacity, for example, might have had some special explanation. It is possible that the father had opposed his son's wish to become a painter; his incapacity to paint after the father's death would then, on the one hand, be an expression of the familiar 'deferred obedience'; and, on the other, by rendering him incapable of making a livelihood it would be bound to increase his longing for the father to stand between him and the cares of life. As deferred obedience it

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part of father-substitute as a phenomenon of cultural development, a fresh light dawns on the witch-trials of the Middle Ages [as has already been shown by Ernest Jones in the chapter on 'Die Hexenepidemie' in his *Der Alptraum in seiner Beziehung zu gewissen Formen des mittel-  
*älterlichen Aberglaubens*. See footnote p. 436].*

would also constitute an expression of remorse and a successful self-punishment.

Since, however, we cannot set about the personal analysis of Christoph Haitzmann, *obit* 1700, we must content ourselves with drawing special attention to such features in his clinical history as suggest typical exciting causes for the negative attitude to the father. There are not many such, nor are they particularly obvious, nevertheless such details as do exist are highly interesting.

Consider first of all the part played by the number Nine. The Bond with the Evil One was for nine years. On this point the entirely trustworthy report of the Pastor of Pottenbrunn is quite clear: *pro novem annis Syngraphen scriptam tradidit*. This letter, dated September 1, 1677, also informs us that the appointed term was about to expire in a few days: *quorum et finis 24 mensis hujus futuris appropinquat*. The Pact would therefore have been drawn up on September 24, 1668.<sup>1</sup> In the same report, indeed, yet another use is made of the number nine. *Nonies*—nine times—did the painter withstand the temptations of the Evil One before he fell. No mention is made of this detail in subsequent reports; but in the Abbot's deposition the phrase '*Post annos novem*' is used, and the compiler also repeats '*ad novem annos*' in his summary, in itself a proof that the number was not regarded as unimportant.

The number Nine has become familiar to us in neurotic phantasies. Nine is the term of the months of gestation, and reference to the number Nine, whatever its connection, directs our attention to a phantasy of pregnancy. In this case, to be sure, the number refers to years, not to months, and it might be objected that the number can be of significance in other directions. But who can say whether much of the sacrosanctity of this number is not altogether due to its relation

<sup>1</sup> The contradiction disclosed by the fact that both the Pacts transcribed bear the date 1669 will be considered later.



to pregnancy ; the change from nine months to nine years need not throw dust in our eyes. Dreams have taught us how 'unconscious mental activity' plays with numbers. If, for example, the number five occurs in a dream, this refers invariably to a five of significance in waking life ; the five may refer, however, in reality to five years' difference in age or to a company of five people, and this will appear in the dream as five pieces of money or five pieces of fruit. That is to say, the number itself is retained but the denominator is changed in accordance with the demands of condensation and displacement. Nine years in a dream could easily represent nine months in reality. The numbers of waking life are played with by the dream-work in other ways, too, as when the latter shows a lordly disregard for cyphers, not treating them as numbers at all. Five dollars in a dream may stand for fifty, five hundred, five thousand of the dollars of reality.

Another detail in the relation between the painter and the Devil also has a sexual reference. As has already been mentioned, when he first sees the Devil the latter appears in the shape of an honest burgher. On the very next occasion, however, he has already become naked, is malformed and has two pairs of breasts. Now in all of the subsequent apparitions breasts appear, sometimes singly, sometimes multiplied. On one occasion only, in addition to these breasts, the Devil has a large penis ending as a serpent. This stressing of female sexual characteristics by the introduction of great pendulous breasts (there is never any indication of the female genitalia) would appear to be an obvious contradiction of our assumption that the Devil was a father-substitute to the painter. Moreover, such a mode of representing the Devil is in itself quite unusual. Where devils are conceived of as a species, that is to say, where they appear in numbers, there is nothing extraordinary about the representation of female devils : but that *the* Devil, that mighty personage the Lord of Hell, the Adversary of God, should appear

in any other guise but as a male, a superman indeed, with horns, tail and penis-serpent, does not seem to me to have been recorded.

These two slight indications suggest the typical factors that conditioned the negative side of the painter's attitude to his father. What he is struggling against is the feminine attitude to the father, which culminates in the phantasy of bearing him a child (nine years). We know this form of resistance very well from our analyses, where it takes many remarkable forms during the transference and is exceedingly troublesome. In his mourning for the departed father, and its intensification of the longing for him, the long-since-repressed phantasy of a pregnancy is re-awakened in our painter, which he must then defend himself against by means of a neurosis and by denigrating the father.

But why does the father, now reduced to the status of Devil, exhibit one of the bodily signs of womanhood? Here is a point which would at first seem difficult to interpret: two explanations, however, present themselves, vying with each other but at the same time mutually compatible. The feminine attitude to the father became repressed as soon as the boy realized that his rivalry with the woman for the father's love implies the loss of his own male genital, that is to say, implies castration. Repudiation of the feminine attitude is therefore a result of the struggle to avoid castration; it regularly finds its most emphatic expression in the contrasting phantasy of castrating the father and turning *him* into a woman. Hence the Devil's breasts would represent a projection of the man's own femininity on to the father-substitute. The other explanation of these female appurtenances in the Devil is in terms of tenderness, not of hostility; it sees in this female shape an indication of a transference of infantile affection from the mother to the father. The suggestion is that there had previously been a strong mother-fixation, which would in itself account

in part for the hostility towards the father. The large breasts constitute the positive sexual characteristic of the mother, even at a time when the child is not familiar with the negative sign of womanhood, the absence of the penis.<sup>1</sup>

If it is his struggle against accepting castration which makes it impossible for the painter to yield to his longing for the father, it becomes entirely comprehensible that he should turn to the image of the mother for help and salvation. This is why he declares that he can only be released from the Pact by the Holy Mother of God at Mariazell and that he obtained his freedom on the Mother's birthday (September 8). Naturally we shall never know whether September 24, the day on which the Pact was executed, was not determined in some similar way.

Amongst all the observations concerning the mental life of children which psycho-analysis has made, there is hardly one which sounds so repugnant and incredible to the normal adult as the boy's feminine attitude to the father and the phantasy of pregnancy derived from it. Only since Daniel Paul Schreber, *Senatspräsident*<sup>2</sup> in Saxony, published the history of his psychotic illness and almost complete recovery, have we been able to speak of such things unconcernedly and with no need to apologize.<sup>3</sup> We learn from this invaluable book that at somewhere about the age of fifty the President became absolutely convinced that God—who incidentally had many of the characteristics of his father, the worthy physician Dr. Schreber—had formed the decision to castrate him and use him as a woman in order to produce a new race born from the spirit of Schreber. (His own marriage was childless.) In his revolt against this decision on the part of God, which seemed to him highly unjust and 'contrary to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Eine Kindheitserinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci*.

<sup>2</sup> [A Judge presiding over a Division in an Appeal Court.—Trans.]

<sup>3</sup> D. P. Schreber, *Denkwürdigkeiten eines Nervenkranken*, 1903. Cf. also 'Psycho-Analytic Notes upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia', *COLLECTED PAPERS*, vol. iii.

the order of things', he fell ill with symptoms of paranoia which, however, in the course of time died away, leaving only a few traces behind. The gifted writer could scarcely have guessed that in chronicling his own case-history he had brought to light a typical pathogenic factor.

This revolt against castration or the feminine attitude Alfred Adler has torn out of its organic context, has connected in a superficial or inaccurate way with the will to power and has represented as an independent trend, the 'masculine protest'. A neurosis, however, can never arise except from a conflict between two tendencies; hence it is just as possible to regard the masculine protest as the cause of 'all' neuroses as to regard the feminine attitude against which it protests as the cause. It is perfectly true that this masculine protest is a constant component of character-formation which in some cases plays a very large part, also that it manifests itself as a vigorous resistance during the analysis of neurotic men. Psychoanalysis has paid due attention to the masculine protest in connection with the castration-complex, but has not been able to represent it as an omnipotent or omnipresent factor in the neuroses. The most outstanding case of masculine protest, as regards manifest reactions and character-traits, which ever came to me for treatment, did so on account of an obsessional neurosis in which the unresolved conflict between a masculine and a feminine attitude (fear of and desire for castration) was quite plainly expressed. This patient, moreover, had developed masochistic phantasies which were entirely derived from the wish to experience castration; and he had even gone beyond these phantasies to actual gratification in perverse ways. The whole of his condition was—like the Adlerian theory itself—due to a repression and repudiation of early infantile love-fixations.

President Schreber's recovery took its start from his decision to abandon all opposition to his castration

and to accommodate himself to the feminine rôle designed for him by God. Following upon this, he became calm and clear in his mind, was able himself to arrange his dismissal from the asylum, and led a normal life, with the exception that he devoted some hours every day to the cultivation of his womanliness, remaining convinced that it would gradually mature to the final achievement of God's purpose.

#### IV. THE TWO PACTS

A remarkable detail in the history of our painter is the recorded circumstance that he made two separate Pacts with the Devil. The first of these, written in black ink, ran as follows <sup>1</sup> :

*I, Christoph Haitzmann, sign a deede and  
pledge myselfe to be vnto this lord euen as a sonne  
of his bodie for 9 yeares* 1669 yeare

The second, written in blood, runs :

*Anno 1669 Christoph Haizmann I give my  
bonde and pledge myselfe vnto this Satan for to  
be vnto him euen as a sonne of his bodie and  
after 9 yeares to belong vnto him bodie and saule.*

The originals of both are said to have been in the archives at Mariazell when the *Trophaeum* was written, and both bear the date 1669.

I have already made frequent reference to both these Pacts and propose now to deal with them in greater detail, although in this connection the danger of magnifying trifles seems especially imminent.

It is unusual to find a man selling himself twice to the Devil in such a way that the second bond is substituted for the first without cancelling it. Perhaps to those who are more familiar with demonological

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. pp. 445-6 for original text of these documents.—Trans.]

material it may not seem so surprising. For my own part I could only regard it as something peculiar to this case, and my suspicions were aroused when I found that precisely on this point there was some lack of correspondence in the various accounts. Close examination of these points of divergence affords us, quite unexpectedly, a deeper understanding of this clinical history.

The simplest and clearest account we have is that contained in the introductory letter from the Pastor of Pottenbrunn. Here mention is made of one Pact only, written by the painter in blood nine years before, which was due to expire a few days later, on September 24, and must therefore have been written September 24, 1668; unfortunately this last date is not expressly mentioned, although one is entitled to make the deduction.

The deposition of the Abbot Franciscus, dated, as we know, a few days later (September 12, 1677), already describes a more complicated state of affairs. It is easy to assume that in the intervening period the painter had given more precise details. The deposition describes how the painter had made two Pacts, one in the year 1668 (a date which is in keeping with the Pastor's letter), written in black ink; the other, however, *sequenti anno 1669*, written in blood. It was this latter Pact, written in blood in 1669, which he received back on the Birthday of the Holy Virgin. This does not arise out of the Abbot's deposition, since it merely goes on to say: *schedam redderet* and *schedam sibi porrigentem conspexisset*, as if there could be only one document. It does follow, however, from the subsequent course of the story and from the coloured title-page of the *Trophaeum*, where one can plainly see *red* script on the bond held by the Dragon. As has already been mentioned, the subsequent events were that the painter returned to Mariazell in May 1678, having been once more tempted by the Evil One in Vienna, and begged that the Holy Mother would

again have mercy upon him and cause the first Pact written in ink to be rendered up to him. How this came about is not so fully described as in the first instance; the report merely says *qua iuxta votum reddita*, and in another place the compiler states that this particular document was thrown to the painter by the Devil 'all crumpled up and torn in four pieces'<sup>1</sup> on May 9, 1678, at nine o'clock in the evening.

Both Pacts, however, bear the same date: the year 1669.

This contradiction is either of no significance whatever, or else it affords us the following clue:

Starting from the Abbot's description, in which most details are given, we are faced with various difficulties. When Christoph Haitzmann informed the Pastor of Pottenbrunn that he was oppressed of the Devil and that the day of reckoning was at hand, he must have had in mind (in 1677) the Pact drawn up in the year 1668: that is to say, the first, black Pact (which in the introductory letter, by the way, is described as the only one and a blood Pact). In Mariazell a few days later, however, he is only concerned to get back the later blood Pact, which is not yet due to expire (1669-1677), thus allowing the first to become overdue. This latter is not reclaimed until 1678, *i.e.* when ten years have elapsed. We must ask further why both Pacts are dated in the same year 1669, in face of the fact that the report expressly attributes one to the '*anno subsequenti*'.

The compiler must have been aware of these difficulties, for he makes an attempt to smooth them out. In his preface he adopts the Abbot's version, but modifies it in one particular. The painter, he says, made an agreement in ink with the Devil in 1669, '*deinde vero*', later, however, he made another in blood. He overrides the definite statement made in both reports that a Pact was concluded in 1668 and, in order to agree with the date written on both the

<sup>1</sup> '*zusammengeknüllt und in vier Stücke zerrissen.*'

returned Pacts, ignores the remark in the Abbot's deposition that there was a difference in date between the Pacts.

In the Abbot's deposition a paragraph appears in brackets following the words *sequenti vero anno 1669*. This runs : *sumitur hic alter annus pro nondum completo uti saepe in loquendo fieri solet, nam eundem annum indicant Syngraphae quarum atramento scripta ante praesentem attestationem nondum habita fuit*. This is clearly an interpolation on the part of the compiler ; since the Abbot, who had only seen one Pact, could not in any case have said that both bear the same date. The placing of this passage in brackets must have been intended to show that the paragraph was by a strange hand and not part of the Abbot's evidence. It is another attempt of the compiler to reconcile conflicting evidence. His view is that whilst it is indeed correct that the first Pact was drawn up in 1668, still the year was far advanced (September), hence the painter had postdated it by a year in order that both Pacts should bear the same date. His reference to a similar custom in contracts made by word of mouth may well stamp his whole attempt at reconciliation as an 'idle prevarication'.

Now I cannot tell whether my presentation of the case will have made any impression on the reader or whether it has aroused his interest sufficiently in such minutiae. For my own part, I found it impossible to explain the case in a manner which disposed of all doubt, but in the course of my study of the situation I ventured on a surmise which has the advantage of putting the events in the most natural order, even though the documentary evidence does not entirely cover it.

My view is that during his first visit to Mariazell the painter mentioned only one regular Pact, the one which was written in blood, was about to fall due and was drawn up on September 8, 1668, precisely as described by the Pastor in his introductory letter.



In Mariazell also he produced this blood Pact as the one returned to him by the Devil under compulsion by the Holy Mother. We know what happened afterwards. The painter soon left Mariazell and went to Vienna, where until the middle of October he felt much better. Then, however, he again fell ill and the apparitions which he regarded as the work of the Evil One recommenced. He once more felt in need of redemption but was faced with the difficulty of explaining why the exorcism in the Holy Shrine had not brought about permanent relief. Returning merely as a relapsed case, he could scarcely have been welcome at Mariazell. To overcome this difficulty he invented a previous Pact, which, however, should be written in ink, so that its relative insignificance in comparison with the later blood Pact might seem more plausible. Once more at Mariazell, he brought about the return of this alleged first Pact also. Then he was at last freed from the attentions of the Evil One, though he immediately did something else which serves to indicate to us what was underlying his neurosis.

The drawings he made were certainly executed on the occasion of his second sojourn at Mariazell: the title-page is of one piece and represents both Pact scenes. The attempt to make his fresh account tally with the earlier story may well have occasioned him some embarrassment. Clearly it was inconvenient that he could only invent an earlier Pact instead of a later one. So he could not avoid the awkward result that he had redeemed the one blood Pact too soon (in the eighth year) and the other black Pact too late (in the tenth year). It then happened that in dating the Pacts he blunders, making the earlier one, too, date from the year 1669, thus betraying by this sign his twofold editing of the story. This blunder may be regarded as a piece of unintentional honesty: it enables us to guess that the alleged earlier Pact was actually fabricated at a later date. The compiler, whose work was carried out certainly not before 1714

and perhaps not till 1729, was faced with the necessity of explaining away, as best he could, this conflicting evidence about details that were far from unimportant. Finding that both the Pacts in his possession were dated 1669, he had recourse to a subterfuge, the terms of which are interpolated in the Abbot's deposition.

We can easily see wherein the weakness of this otherwise engaging speculation lies. In the Abbot's deposition reference is already made to the existence of two Pacts, one black and the other written in blood. Hence I am faced with the alternative either of insinuating that the compiler here tampered with the deposition itself, in order to make it tally with his interpolated paragraph, or of admitting frankly that I cannot unravel the tangle.<sup>1</sup>

I daresay the reader will consider all this discussion as superfluous and regard the issues themselves as quite too trivial. Nevertheless, if we follow the matter

<sup>1</sup> In my opinion the compiler found himself on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, he discovered that, not only in the Pastor's introductory letter but in the Abbot's deposition, the Pact (at all events, the first one) is described as having been made in 1668; on the other hand, both Pacts preserved in the archives bore the date 1669. That two Pacts lay before him was, in his view, conclusive evidence that two had been made. Since, however, as I believe, there was mention in the Abbot's deposition of only one Pact, he felt impelled to insert in the deposition some reference to the existence of another, subsequently reconciling any contradiction by his assumption of post-dating. This textual alteration occurs immediately before the interpolated paragraph which he alone could have inserted. He was compelled to link up this paragraph to the textual alteration with the words *sequenti vero anno 1669*, since the painter had expressly written under the (much damaged) title-page illustrations:

*Nach einem Jahr würdt Er  
 . . . schrökhliche betrohungen in ab-  
 . . . gestalt Nr. 2 bezwungen sich,  
 . . . n Bluut zu verschreiben.*

(A year after He was  
 . . . horrid threatenings by the  
 . . . shape No. 2 compelled  
 . . . to give a Pact in Bloode.)

The blunder made by the painter in writing his Syngraphae, which induced me to bring forward this attempt at explanation, appears to me to be no less interesting a product of his pen than the Pacts themselves.

up in a certain direction, it will be found to acquire fresh interest.

I have already expressed my opinion that, when the painter was disagreeably overtaken by a recurrence of his illness, he invented an earlier Pact (in ink) in order to put himself right with the fathers at Mariazell. Now since I write for those who believe in psycho-analysis and not in the Devil, my readers could point out how absurd it is to bring such an accusation against the poor fellow—*hunc miserum* he is called in the introductory letter. For the blood Pact, they might say, was just as much a product of phantasy as the alleged earlier Pact written in ink. The Devil never appeared to the painter in reality at all, and the whole Satanic Pact existed only in his imagination. I quite realize this: one cannot deny the poor fellow the right to supplement his original phantasy with a new one when occasion demands.

But the matter cannot be allowed to rest here. Unlike the apparitions of the Evil One, the two Pacts are by no means products of phantasy; they were documents which, according to the assurance of the copyist and of the deposition of the Abbot Kilian, were preserved in the archives at Mariazell where they could be seen and handled by all and sundry. We are therefore in a dilemma. Either we must assume that the painter himself drew up, at the time when he stood in need of them, both the *Schedae* which he alleged were returned to him by the grace of God, or else we must, despite all solemn assurances, sealed testimony of witnesses and so on, discount the credibility of the ecclesiastics of Mariazell and St. Lambert. I must admit I am not inclined to take the latter course. To be sure, I incline to the view that the compiler, in the interests of conformity, has falsified part of the deposition of the first Abbot, but this 'secondary elaboration' does not much exceed what is quite commonly perpetrated in this direction even by lay modern historians, and at all events it was done in

good faith. In other ways these reverend fathers have established good claim on our credence. As I said before, there was nothing to prevent their suppressing the accounts of the incomplete nature of the cure and the recurrence of temptation by the Evil One: moreover, the description of the redemption-scenes in the shrine, about which one might have some anticipatory apprehensions, is in fact soberly given and inspires confidence. So there is nothing for it but to lay the accusation at the painter's door. The blood Pact he probably already had with him when he went to the shrine for the penitential prayer, and he produced it when he came back to the assembled company after his meeting with the Evil One. Moreover, this need not have been the same document that was afterwards preserved in the archives, but in accordance with our surmise may have borne the date 1668 (nine years before the exorcism).

## V. SUBSEQUENT COURSE OF THE NEUROSIS

But then it would all have been a ruse rather than a neurosis, the painter a malingerer and a cheat instead of a man sick of demoniacal possession! But the transition-stages between neurosis and malingering are, as we know, very elastic. Nor do I see any difficulty in assuming that the painter manufactured this Pact—and the later one too—and took it with him in a state comparable to that during which he saw his visions. Indeed, there was no other course open to him if he wished to realize his phantasy of a Pact with Satan and of a subsequent redemption.

The Diary written in Vienna, however, which he gave to the priests on the occasion of his second visit to Mariazell, bears the stamp of veracity. It certainly affords us deeper insight into the motivation, or we will say rather, the utilization of the neurosis.

The entries date from his successful redemption until January 13 of the following year, 1678. Until

October 11 he did very well in Vienna, where he lived with a married sister, but from that date he was taken with fresh seizures accompanied by visions, convulsions, loss of consciousness and painful sensations, which ultimately led to his return to Mariazell in May 1678.

This relapse can be divided into three phases. First of all temptation comes in the form of a gaily dressed cavalier, who tries to induce him to part with the document attesting his admission to the Brotherhood of the Holy Rosary. This temptation is successfully withstood, only to be repeated on the following day; the scene is laid in a marvellously decorated hall where high-born men are dancing with beautiful women. The same cavalier makes a proposal to him concerning painting,<sup>1</sup> promising him in return a goodly sum of money. With prayer this vision is overcome, but it is repeated a few days later in a more pressing form. On this occasion the cavalier sends one of the most beautiful of the ladies sitting at the banquet-table to persuade the painter to mingle with them, and he has some difficulty in defending himself from the wiles of the fair seducer. Most terrifying of all was the vision which occurred shortly afterwards; it took place in a still more magnificent hall in which there stood a throne 'built verie high with pieces of golde',<sup>2</sup> near which the courtiers awaited the arrival of their king. The same person who had so often importuned him now came forward and begged the painter to ascend the throne, for they 'would have him for to be their King, to honour him for ever and aye'.<sup>3</sup> This elaboration of his phantasy concludes the first, and entirely perspicuous, phase of the story of his temptation.

A reaction was now inevitable; asceticism came to the fore. On October 20 a great light appeared to

<sup>1</sup> This part is unintelligible to me.

<sup>2</sup> *Ein von 'Goldstuckh aufgerichteter Thron'.*

<sup>3</sup> *'Wollten ihn für ihren König halten und in Ewigkeit verehren.'*

him, from which came the voice of Christ commanding him to forswear this wicked world and to serve God in a desert for a period of six years. The painter clearly suffered more from these holy visions than from the earlier devilish apparitions; he came out of this seizure only after two and a half hours. On the next occasion the sacred figure enveloped in light was much more hostile, upbraided him for neglecting to obey the sacred behest, and led him into Hell that he might be duly terrified by the fate of the damned. Evidently, however, this had not the required effect, since visions of a Being enveloped in light who was supposed to be Christ recurred several times after, each seizure being accompanied by a loss of consciousness lasting some hours and by a state of ecstasy. During the most impressive of all these ecstasies, this Being led him first of all into a town whose inhabitants performed all the works of darkness in the streets, and then for contrast to quiet pastures wherein hermits led a godly life and received tangible evidence of the grace and goodness of God. There then appeared, instead of Christ, the Holy Mother herself, who reminded the painter of what she had already done on his behalf and called on him to obey Her Beloved Son's behests. 'Since he coulde not resolue so to doe',<sup>1</sup> Christ reappeared to him on the following day, rebuked him roundly and endeavoured to prevail on him with promises. Then at last he gave way, made up his mind to leave the world and to do what was required of him. The second phase ends with this decision. The painter states that from this time onward he saw no more apparitions and was never again tempted.

Nevertheless, his resolution cannot have been very strong or he must have delayed too long in carrying it out, since in the midst of his devotions on December 26, in St. Stephen's, he caught sight of a strapping wench accompanied by a well-dressed man and could

<sup>1</sup> 'Da er sich hiezu nicht recht resolviret.'

not help thinking that he might have filled the latter's shoes. On the same evening, like a bolt from the blue, punishment was meted out; he saw the flames swallowing him up and fell in a swoon. Attempts were made to rouse him, but he grovelled in the room till blood flowed from his nose and mouth; he became aware of the scorching heat and the foul fumes, and heard a voice declaring that this was the punishment for his vain and unprofitable thoughts. Later he was scourged by evil spirits with ropes and informed that the punishment would be repeated every day until he decided to enter the order of anchorites. These experiences continued up to the last entry (January 13).

We see how our unfortunate painter's phantasies of temptation were succeeded by ascetic ones and finally by those of punishment; the end we know already. In May he went to Mariazell, told the story of an earlier Pact written in black ink, to which he evidently ascribed his continued temptation by the Devil, received back this Pact and was finally healed.

During this second sojourn there he painted the pictures which are copied in the *Trophaeum*; next, however, he took a step which was in accord with the demands of the ascetic phase described in his Diary. To be sure, he did not go into the desert to live as a hermit but he joined the Order of Monks Hospitallers: *religiosus factus est*.

Perusal of the Diary gives us insight into another part of the narrative. We remember that the painter pledges himself to the Evil One because after his father's death he feels depressed, incapable of work and is apprehensive about his livelihood. These factors, depression, lack of working capacity and grief, have some connection with one another, whether it be a simple or a complex one. Perhaps the Devil is furnished so generously with breasts because he is to become a foster-father. This hope not being realized,

the patient's condition deteriorated; he could not work properly, or perhaps he was out of luck and had not sufficient work to do. The Pastor's introductory letter speaks of him as '*hunc miserum omni auxilio destitutum*'. He was thus not only in moral straits, he was literally in want. In the account of his later visions we find here and there remarks indicating, like the content of the scenes portrayed, that even after the first successful redemption nothing of this had changed. We come to realize that he was of the type which cannot make its way in the world and which inspires confidence in no one. In the first vision the cavalier asks him what he is going to do, since nobody takes any interest in him.<sup>1</sup> The first series of phantasies in Vienna corresponds entirely with the wish-phantasies of the poverty-stricken, of such as have come down in the world and hunger after pleasure: magnificent halls, high living, silver-ware and lovely women; here we find what was missing in his traffic with the Devil. At that time he had been in the depths of a melancholia which caused him to turn from all enjoyment and to ignore the most tempting offers. After his redemption the melancholia seems to have been overcome and all the longings of a worldling rise up once more.

In one of the ascetic visions he complains to his guide (Christ) that nobody has any faith in him, hence that he is unable to carry out the commands laid upon him. The reply given is unfortunately obscure. 'So inasmuch as they will not believe me yet do I know well what has happened but am vnapt to speak a worde about it.'<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, what happens when the celestial guide takes him amongst the hermits is very enlightening. He comes to a cave in which an old man has been sitting for

<sup>1</sup> '*Dieweillen ich von iedermann izt verlassen, wass ich anfangen würde.*'

<sup>2</sup> '*So fer man mir nit glaubon, wass aber geschechen, weiss ich wol, ist mir aber selbes auszusprechen unmöglich.*'



the last sixty years ; in answer to his question he is told that an angel from Heaven feeds this old man every day. He then sees for himself an angel bringing food : ' Three pannikins with food, one of bread, one of dumpling and wherewithall to drink '.<sup>1</sup> After the hermit has fed, the angel collects everything and carries it away. We realize from this the nature of the temptations presented in the pious visions : he is to be induced to adopt a mode of life in which there are no cares about sustenance. The utterances of Christ in the last vision are also worthy of note. After the threat that, should he not prove more amenable, something would come to pass (which) both he and the people would be bound (to) believe, he says directly that ' I should not heed the people even if they would persecute me or give me no succour, God would not forsake me '.<sup>2</sup>

Christoph Haitzmann was enough of an artist and a worldling to find it difficult to renounce this sinful world. Nevertheless, he did so in the end, because of the helplessness of his position. He entered a holy order, where his inner conflict as well as his material want came to an end. This outcome is reflected in the neurosis by the return of the alleged earlier Pact that puts an end to his attacks and visions. Actually, both stages of his demonological illness had the same signification. All he wanted was security in life, at first with the help of Satan but at the cost of eternal bliss ; then, when this failed and had to be abandoned, with the Church's help but at the cost of his freedom and most of the pleasures of life. Perhaps Christoph Haitzmann was only a poor devil, one of those who never have any luck ; perhaps he was too poorly gifted, too ineffective to make a living, and belonged to that well-known type, the ' eternal suckling '—to those who are unable to tear themselves away from the

<sup>1</sup> ' *Drei Schüsserl mit Speiss, ein Brot und ein Knödl und Getränk.*'

<sup>2</sup> ' *Ich solle die Leith nit achten, obwollen ich von ihnen verfolgt wurde, oder von ihnen keine hilfstaistung empfienge, Gott würde mich nit verlassen.*'

joyous haven at the mother's breast, who hold fast all through their lives to their claim to be nourished by someone else. And so in his illness our painter followed the path from his own father by way of the Devil as a father-substitute to the pious Fathers.

To superficial observation his neurosis looks like a sort of jugglery covering some part of the very serious, if banal, anxiety of the struggle for existence. This aspect of it is not, of course, an invariable one, but it is by no means rare. In analytical experience we frequently find how unsatisfactory it is to treat a business man who 'in other respects healthy, has for some time shown signs of a neurosis'. The catastrophe which he knows to be threatening his business induces the neurosis as a by-product, with the advantage that behind the symptoms the man is able to conceal his real apprehensions about his livelihood. In every other respect, however, it is more than inexpedient, since it uses up energies which would be more advantageously applied in handling the threatening situation with all possible skill.

In a far greater number of cases the neurosis is more of a thing apart, more independent of the claims of self-preservation and maintenance. The interests at stake in the conflict giving rise to neurosis are either purely libidinal, or have a close libidinal relation to those of self-preservation. In all three instances the dynamics of the neurosis are identical. Libido, dammed up and unable to secure real gratification, finds discharge through the repressed unconscious by the help of regression to old fixations. In so far as the patient's ego can extract from this process a paranoic or epinoic gain, it countenances the neurosis, although there can be no manner of doubt about the economic handicap it signifies.

Not even our painter's wretched situation in life would have induced his neurosis of demoniacal possession, had not his material necessities served to intensify a longing for his father. After his melancholia and his

relations with the Devil had been played out, there still remained the conflict between his libidinal pleasure in life and his recognition that in the interests of self-preservation he must become a stern anchorite and ascetic. It is interesting to see that the painter was well aware of the identity behind the two phases of his illness, since he attributed both the one and the other to Pacts which he had delivered to the Devil. On the other hand, he draws no sharp distinction between the machinations of the Evil One and those of Heavenly Powers ; he had but one characterization for both—manifestations of the Devil.

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## CORRIGENDA IN VOL. II

- Page 54, line 13.—For 'is literally reproduced again backwards' read 'is in fact undone'.
- Page 400, line 17 from below.—For 'asymptomatic' read 'asymptotic'.

## CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF CONTENTS, COLLECTED PAPERS, VOLS. I.-IV.<sup>1</sup>

Year.		Vol.	Paper.
1893.	On the psychical mechanism of hysterical phenomena (in collaboration with Josef Breuer) . . . . .	I.	II.
„	Some points in a comparative study of organic and hysterical paralysis . . . . .	I.	III.
„	Charcot . . . . .	I.	I.
1894.	The defence neuro-psychoses . . . . .	I.	IV.
1895.	The justification for detaching from neurasthenia a particular syndrome: the anxiety-neurosis . . . . .	I.	V.
„	A reply to criticisms on the anxiety-neurosis . . . . .	I.	VI.
„	Obsessions and phobias; their psychical mechanisms and their aetiology . . . . .	I.	VII.
„	<i>Studien über Hysterie</i> [ <i>Studies in Hysteria</i> ] (in collaboration with Josef Breuer).		
1896.	Heredity and the aetiology of the neuroses . . . . .	I.	VIII.
„	Further remarks on the defence neuro-psychoses . . . . .	I.	IX.
„	The aetiology of hysteria . . . . .	I.	X.
1898.	Sexuality in the aetiology of the neuroses . . . . .	I.	XI.
„	A paper on 'Forgetting', forming part of <i>The Psychopathology of Everyday Life</i> (1904).		
1899.	A paper on 'Screen-memories', forming part of <i>The Psychopathology of Everyday Life</i> (1904).		
1900.	<i>Die Traumdeutung</i> [ <i>The Interpretation of Dreams</i> ].		
1901.	<i>Über den Traum</i> [ <i>On Dreams</i> ].		
1904.	Freud's psycho-analytic method . . . . .	I.	XIII.
„	<i>Zur Psychopathologie des Alltagslebens</i> [ <i>The Psychopathology of Everyday Life</i> ].		
„	On psychotherapy (published 1905) . . . . .	I.	XII.

<sup>1</sup> For purposes of general interest the books published by the Author have been inserted (in italics) in this list. Since it does not include a very few minor contributions, which have not been translated, it does not represent an absolutely complete bibliography of the Author's works on Psycho-Analysis.

Year.		Vol.	Paper.
1905.	My views on the part played by sexuality in the aetiology of the neuroses . . . . .	I.	xiv.
„	Fragment of an analysis of a case of hysteria. . . . .	III.	I.
„	<i>Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewussten</i> [ <i>Wit and its Relation to the Unconscious</i> ].		
„	<i>Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie</i> [ <i>Three Contributions on the Theory of Sexuality</i> ].		
1906.	Psycho-analysis and the ascertaining of truth in courts of law . . . . .	II.	I.
1907.	Obsessive acts and religious practices . . . . .	II.	II.
„	The sexual enlightenment of children . . . . .	II.	III.
„	<i>Der Wahn und die Träume in W. Jensen's 'Gradiva'</i> [ <i>Delusion and Dreams in Jensen's 'Gradiva'</i> ].		
1908.	Character and anal erotism. . . . .	II.	IV.
„	Hysterical phantasies and their relation to bisexuality . . . . .	II.	v.
„	On the sexual theories of children . . . . .	II.	VI.
„	'Civilized' sexual morality and modern nervousness . . . . .	II.	VII.
„	The relation of the poet to day-dreaming . . . . .	IV.	IX.
1909.	General remarks on hysterical attacks . . . . .	II.	VIII.
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„	Notes upon a case of obsessional neurosis . . . . .	III.	III.
„	<i>Über Psychoanalyse</i> [Five lectures on Psycho-Analysis ; published 1910].		
1910.	Psychogenic visual disturbance according to psycho-analytical conceptions . . . . .	II.	IX.
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„	<i>Eine Kindheits Erinnerung des Leonardo da Vinci</i> [ <i>Leonardo da Vinci : a Psychosexual Study of an Infantile Reminiscence</i> ].		
1911.	Psycho-analytic notes upon an autobiographical account of a case of paranoia (dementia paranoides) . . . . .	III.	IV.
„	Formulations regarding the two principles in Mental Functioning . . . . .	IV.	I.



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"	Types of neurotic nosogenesis . . . . .	II.	X.
"	Recommendations for physicians on the psycho-analytic method of treatment . . . . .	II.	XXIX.
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1913.	À dream which bore testimony . . . . .	II.	XII.
"	Further recommendations in the technique of psycho-analysis. On beginning the treatment. The question of the first communications. The dynamics of the cure . . . . .	II.	XXXI.
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"	Fausse reconnaissance (déjà raconté) in psycho-analytic treatment . . . . .	II.	XXX.
"	<i>Totem und Tabu</i> [ <i>Totem and Taboo</i> ].		
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1916.	A connection between a symbol and a symptom . . . . .	II.	XV.
"	A mythological parallel to a visual obsession . . . . .	IV.	XIX.

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„	<i>Vorlesungen zur Einführung in die Psychoanalyse</i> [ <i>Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis</i> ; delivered 1915-16].		
1918.	From the history of an infantile neurosis. . . . .	III.	v.
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„	<i>Jenseits des Lustprinzips</i> [ <i>Beyond the Pleasure Principle</i> ].		
1921.	<i>Massenpsychologie und Ichanalyse</i> [ <i>Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego</i> ].		
1922.	Dreams and telepathy . . . . .	IV.	XXIII.
„	Certain neurotic mechanisms in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality . . . . .	II.	XIX.
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