

Standard Edition of the Complete Works of

## **Sigmund Freud**

Freud, S. (1918). From the History of an Infantile Neurosis. The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XVII (1917-1919): An Infantile Neurosis and Other Works, 1-124

**From the History of an Infantile Neurosis**



*Sigmund Freud*

*This Page Left Intentionally Blank*

- 1 -

## Editor's Note to "From the History of an Infantile Neurosis"

*James Strachey*

(a) German Editions:

**1918 Aus Der Geschichte Einer Infantilen Neurose S.K.S.N., 4, 578-717.**

**1922 Aus Der Geschichte Einer Infantilen Neurose S.K.S.N., 5, 1-140.**

**1924 Aus Der Geschichte Einer Infantilen Neurose Leipzig, Vienna and Zurich: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag. pp. 132.**

**1924 Aus Der Geschichte Einer Infantilen Neurose G.S., 8, 439-567.**

**1931 Aus Der Geschichte Einer Infantilen Neurose *Neurosenlehre und Technik*, 27-171.**

**1947 Aus Der Geschichte Einer Infantilen Neurose G.W., 12, 29-157.**

(b) English Translation:

From the History of an Infantile Neurosis 1925 *C.P.*, 3, 473-605. (Tr. A. and J. Strachey.)

A few changes were introduced into the 1924 German edition, mainly in the matter of dates; and a long footnote was added at the end. The present translation is a revision of the one published in 1925.

This is the most elaborate and no doubt the most important of all Freud's case histories. It was in February, 1910, that the wealthy young Russian who is its subject came to Freud for analysis. His first course of treatment, which is the one reported on in this paper, lasted from then until July, 1914, when Freud regarded the case as completed. He began writing the case history in October of the same year and finished it in early November.<sup>1</sup> He held back its publication, however, for four years. No changes of moment, he tells us (p. 7 *n*), were made in its final form, but two long passages were inserted. The later history of the case, after the conclusion of the first course of treatment, was described by Freud in the footnote which he added in the 1924 edition at the end of the paper (pp. 121-2).

---

<sup>1</sup> These dates are derived from Ernest Jones (1955, 312), based upon Freud's correspondence. In the footnote below, p. 7, he speaks of the winter of 1914-15.

Some still later information will also be found there, derived partly from material published subsequently by Freud himself and partly from data that have come to light since his death.

Freud made a number of references to the case of the 'Wolf Man' in works published both before and after the case history itself, and these may be worth enumerating. The first public evidence of Freud's interest in the case was a paragraph appearing over his signature in the early autumn of 1912 (*Zbl. Psychoanal.*, **2**, 680), and evidently stimulated by the wolf dream which is the central feature of the case history. It came out under the rubric 'Offener Sprechsaal' ('Open Forum') and ran as follows:

I should be glad if those of my colleagues who are practising analysts would collect and analyse carefully any of their patients' dreams whose interpretation justifies the conclusion that *the dreamers had been witnesses of sexual intercourse in their early years*. A hint is no doubt enough to make it obvious that such dreams are in more than one respect of quite special value. Only those dreams can, of course, be regarded as evidential which themselves occurred in childhood and were remembered from that period.

Freud.'

A further paragraph on the subject appeared early in 1913 (*Int. Z. Psychoanal.*, **1**, 79):

*'Children's Dreams with a Special Significance*

In the Open Forum of the *Zbl. Psychoanal.*, **2**, 680, I requested my colleagues to publish any dreams occurring in childhood whose interpretation justifies the conclusion that the dreamers had been witnesses of sexual intercourse in their early years'. I have now to thank Frau Dr. Mira Gincburg (of Breitenau-Schaffhausen) for a first contribution which seems to fulfil the conditions laid down. I prefer to postpone a critical consideration of this dream until more comparative material has been collected.

Freud.'

This note was followed by Dr. Gincburg's account of the dream in question. A similar dream was reported by Hitschmann later in the same year (*Int. Z. Psychoanal.*, **1**, 476), but there were no further communications on the subject by Freud. During the same summer, however, he published his paper on 'The Occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 18S, Page 612

Tales' (1913d), which actually reported the wolf-dream and which was in part reprinted in the case history (p. 29 ff.); and early in the next year came the paper on 'Fausse Reconnaissance in Psycho-Analytic Treatment' (1914a), describing another episode in the case. This, too, is partly reprinted here (p. 85). There is also an indirect reference to the 'Wolf Man' in a discussion of early childhood memories in 'Remembering, Repeating and Working-Through' (1914g), *Standard Edition*, 12, 149. The metapsychological paper on 'Repression' (1915d), which was published before the present work though written after it, contains a paragraph referring to the patient's wolf phobia. Many years after the publication of the case history Freud returned to the case in the course of a discussion of children's animal phobias in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926d). In Chapters IV and VII of that work the present patient's wolf phobia is compared with the horse phobia analysed in the case of 'Little Hans' (1909b). Finally, in one of his very last papers, 'Analysis Terminable and Interminable' (1937c), Freud made some critical comments on the technical innovation of setting a time-limit to the treatment, which he introduced in this case and describes on p. 11.

The primary significance of the case history in Freud's eyes at the time of its publication was clearly the support it provided for his criticisms of Adler and more especially of Jung. Here was conclusive evidence to refute any denial of infantile sexuality. But much else of high value emerged from the treatment, though some of it had already been given to the world during the four years' interval between the composition of the case history and its publication. There was, for instance, the relation between 'primal scenes' and 'primal phantasies', which led directly to the obscure problem of the possibility that the mental content of primal phantasies could be inherited. This was examined in Lecture XXIII of the *Introductory Lectures* (1916-17) but was further elaborated here in the additional passages on pp. 57 ff. and 95 ff. Again, the remarkable material in Section VII, dealing with the patient's anal erotism, was used by Freud in his paper 'On Transformations of Instinct' (1917c), p. 125 below.

Even more important was the light thrown by the present analysis on the earlier, oral, organization of the libido, which is discussed at some length on pp. 106-7 below. Freud's first *published* reference to this organization was in a paragraph added in 1915 to the third edition of his *Three Essays* (1905d), *Standard Ed.*,

7, 198. The preface to this third edition bears the date ‘October 1914’—the precise month during which he was writing his paper on the ‘Wolf Man’. It seems likely that the ‘cannibalistic’ material revealed in this analysis played an important part in preparing the way for some of the most momentous of the theories with which Freud was occupied at this period: the interconnections between incorporation, identification, the formation of an ego-ideal, the sense of guilt and pathological states of depression. Some of these theories had already been expressed in the last essay of *Totem and Taboo* (written in the middle of 1913) and his paper on narcissism (finished early in 1914). Others were to appear in his ‘Mourning and Melancholia’. This last was not published until 1917. But it was given its final shape at the beginning of May, 1915; and many of the views contained in it had been stated before the Vienna Psycho-Analytical Society on December 30, 1914, only a few weeks after the composition of this case history (Jones, 1955, 367).

Perhaps the chief clinical finding was the evidence revealed of the determining part played in the patient's neurosis by his *primary* feminine impulses. The very marked degree of his bisexuality was only a confirmation of views which had long been held by Freud and which dated back to the time of his friendship with Fliess. But in his subsequent writings Freud laid greater stress than before on the fact of the *universal* occurrence of bisexuality and on the existence of an ‘inverted’ or ‘negative’ Oedipus complex. This thesis was given its clearest expression in the passage on the ‘complete’ Oedipus complex in Chapter III of *The Ego and the Id* (1923b). On the other hand, a tempting theoretical inference to the effect that motives related to bisexuality are the invariable determinants of repression is strongly resisted (p. 110 f.)—a point to which Freud recurred at greater length soon afterwards in ‘A Child is Being Beaten’ (1919c), p. 200 ff. below.

Finally, it is perhaps legitimate to draw attention to the extraordinary literary skill with which Freud has handled the case. He was faced with the pioneer's task of giving a scientific account of psychological events of undreamt-of novelty and complexity. The outcome is a work which not only avoids the dangers of confusion and obscurity but from first to last holds the reader's fascinated attention.

# From the History of an Infantile Neurosis<sup>1</sup>

## I Introductory Remarks

The case upon which I propose to report in the following pages (once again only in a fragmentary manner) is characterized by a number of peculiarities which require to be emphasized before I proceed to a description of the facts themselves. It is concerned with a young man whose health had broken down in his eighteenth year after a gonorrhoeal infection, and who was entirely incapacitated and completely dependent upon other people when he began his psycho-analytic treatment several years later. He had lived an approximately normal life during the ten years of his boyhood that preceded the date of his illness, and got through his studies at his secondary school

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **29**

<sup>1</sup> This case history was written down shortly after the termination of the treatment, in the winter of 1914-15. At that time I was still freshly under the impression of the twisted re-interpretations which C. G. Jung and Alfred Adler were endeavouring to give to the findings of psychoanalysis. This paper is therefore connected with my essay 'On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement' which was published in the *Jahrbuch der Psychoanalyse* in 1914. It supplements the polemic contained in that essay, which is in its essence of a personal character, by an objective estimation of the analytic material. It was originally intended for the next volume of the *Jahrbuch*, the appearance of which was, however, postponed indefinitely owing to the obstacles raised by the [first] Great War. I therefore decided to add it to the present collection of papers [*S.K.S.N.*, **4**] which was being issued by a new publisher [Heller, in place of Deuticke]. Meanwhile I had been obliged to deal in my *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (which I delivered in 1916 and 1917) with many points which should have been raised for the first time in this paper. No alterations of any importance have been made in the text of the first draft; additions are indicated by means of square brackets. [There are only two such additional passages, occurring on pp. **57** and **95**. Elsewhere in this paper, as in the rest of the *Standard Edition*, square brackets indicate additions by the Editor. The words 'twisted re-interpretations' in this footnote stand for the German '*Umdeutungen*'. The English version was suggested by the author.]

without much trouble. But his earlier years were dominated by a severe neurotic disturbance, which began immediately before his fourth birthday as an anxiety-hysteria (in the shape of an animal phobia), then changed into an obsessional neurosis with a religious content, and lasted with its offshoots as far as into his tenth<sup>1</sup> year.

Only this infantile neurosis will be the subject of my communication. In spite of the patient's direct request, I have abstained from writing a complete history of his illness, of his treatment, and of his recovery, because I recognized that such a task was technically impracticable and socially impermissible. This at the same time removes the possibility of demonstrating the connection between his illness in childhood and his later and permanent one. As regards the latter I can only say that on account of it the patient spent a long time in German sanatoria, and was at that period classified in the most authoritative quarters<sup>2</sup> as a case of 'manic-depressive insanity'. This diagnosis was certainly applicable to the patient's father, whose life, with its wealth of activity and interests, was disturbed by repeated attacks of severe depression. But in the son I was never able, during an observation which lasted several years, to detect any changes of mood which were disproportionate to the manifest psychological situation either in their intensity or in the circumstances of their appearance. I have formed the opinion that this case, like many others which clinical psychiatry has labelled with the most multifarious and shifting diagnoses, is to be regarded as a condition following on an obsessional neurosis which has come to an end spontaneously, but has left a defect behind it after recovery.

My description will therefore deal with an infantile neurosis which was analysed not while it actually existed, but only fifteen years after its termination. This state of things has its advantages as well as its disadvantages in comparison with the alternative. An analysis which is conducted upon a neurotic child itself must, as a matter of course, appear to be more trustworthy, but it cannot be very rich in material; too many

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **29**

<sup>1</sup> [In the editions before 1924 this read 'eighth'.]

<sup>2</sup> [We learn from Dr. Jones that among the psychiatrists consulted by the patient were such leaders of the profession as Zichen in Berlin and Kraepelin in Munich.]

words and thoughts have to be lent to the child,<sup>1</sup> and even so the deepest strata may turn out to be impenetrable to consciousness. An analysis of a childhood disorder through the medium of recollection in an intellectually mature adult is free from these limitations; but it necessitates our taking into account the distortion and refurbishing to which a person's own past is subjected when it is looked back upon from a later period. The first alternative perhaps gives the more convincing results; the second is by far the more instructive.

In any case it may be maintained that analysis of children's neuroses can claim to possess a specially high theoretical interest. They afford us, roughly speaking, as much help towards a proper understanding of the neuroses of adults as do children's dreams in respect to the dreams of adults. Not, indeed, that they are more perspicuous or poorer in elements; in fact, the difficulty of feeling one's way into the mental life of a child makes them set the physician a particularly difficult task. But nevertheless, so many of the later deposits are wanting in them that the essence of the neurosis springs to the eyes with unmistakable distinctness. In the present phase of the battle which is raging round psycho-analysis the resistance to its findings has, as we know, taken on a new form. People were content formerly to dispute the reality of the facts which are asserted by analysis; and for this purpose the best technique seemed to be to avoid examining them. That procedure appears to be slowly exhausting itself; and people are now adopting another plan—of recognizing the facts, but of eliminating, by means of twisted interpretations, the consequences that follow from them, so that the critics can still ward off the objectionable novelties as efficiently as ever. The study of children's neuroses exposes the complete inadequacy of these shallow or high-handed attempts at re-interpretation. It shows the predominant part that is played in the formation of neuroses by those libidinal motive forces which are so eagerly disavowed, and reveals the absence of any aspirations towards remote cultural aims, of which the child still knows nothing, and which cannot therefore be of any significance for him.

Another characteristic which makes the present analysis

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **30**

<sup>1</sup> [The evidential value of child-analysis had been discussed by Freud in the case history of 'Little Hans' (**1909b**), *Standard Ed.*, **10**, **6** and **101** ff.]



noteworthy is connected with the severity of the illness and the duration of the treatment. Analyses which lead to a favourable conclusion in a short time are of value in ministering to the therapist's self-esteem and substantiate the medical importance of psycho-analysis; but they remain for the most part insignificant as regards the advancement of scientific knowledge. Nothing new is learnt from them. In fact they only succeed so quickly because everything that was necessary for their accomplishment was already known. Something new can only be gained from analyses that present special difficulties, and to the overcoming of these a great deal of time has to be devoted. Only in such cases do we succeed in descending into the deepest and most primitive strata of mental development and in gaining from there solutions for the problems of the later formations. And we feel afterwards that, strictly speaking, only an analysis which has penetrated so far deserves the name. Naturally a single case does not give us all the information that we should like to have. Or, to put it more correctly, it might teach us everything, if we were only in a position to make everything out, and if we were not compelled by the inexperience of our own perception to content ourselves with a little.

As regards these fertile difficulties the case I am about to discuss left nothing to be desired. The first years of the treatment produced scarcely any change. Owing to a fortunate concatenation, all the external circumstances nevertheless combined to make it possible to proceed with the therapeutic experiment. I can easily believe that in less favourable circumstances the treatment would have been given up after a short time. Of the physician's point of view I can only declare that in a case of this kind he must behave as 'timelessly' as the unconscious itself,<sup>1</sup> if he wishes to learn anything or to achieve anything. And in the end he will succeed in doing so, if he has the strength to renounce any short-sighted therapeutic ambition. It is not to be expected that the amount of patience, adaptability, insight, and confidence demanded of the patient and his relatives will be forthcoming in many other cases. But the analyst has a right to feel that the results which he has attained from such lengthy work in one case will help substantially to reduce the length of the treatment in a subsequent case of equal severity, and that by submitting on a single occasion

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 32

<sup>1</sup> [See 'The Unconscious' (1915e), Part V.]

to the timelessness of the unconscious he will be brought nearer to vanquishing it in the end.<sup>1</sup>

The patient with whom I am here concerned remained for a long time unassailably entrenched behind an attitude of obliging apathy. He listened, understood, and remained unapproachable. His unimpeachable intelligence was, as it were, cut off from the instinctual forces which governed his behaviour in the few relations of life that remained to him. It required a long education to induce him to take an independent share in the work; and when as a result of this exertion he began for the first time to feel relief, he immediately gave up working in order to avoid any further changes, and in order to remain comfortably in the situation which had been thus established. His shrinking from a self-sufficient existence was so great as to outweigh all the vexations of his illness. Only one way was to be found of overcoming it. I was obliged to wait until his attachment to myself had become strong enough to counterbalance this shrinking, and then played off this one factor against the other. I determined—but not until trustworthy signs had led me to judge that the right moment had come—that the treatment must be brought to an end at a particular fixed date, no matter how far it had advanced. I was resolved to keep to the date; and eventually the patient came to see that I was in earnest. Under the inexorable pressure of this fixed limit his resistance and his fixation to the illness gave way, and now in a disproportionately short time the analysis produced all the material which made it possible to clear up his inhibitions and remove his symptoms. All the information, too, which enabled me to understand his infantile neurosis is derived from this last period of the work, during which resistance temporarily disappeared and the patient gave an impression of lucidity which is usually attainable only in hypnosis.<sup>2</sup>

Thus the course of this treatment illustrates a maxim whose truth has long been appreciated in the technique of analysis. The length of the road over which an analysis must travel with the patient, and the quantity of material which must be

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **33**

<sup>1</sup> [The question of the length of analyses was discussed by Freud in ‘Analysis Terminable and Interminable’ (1937c).]

<sup>2</sup> [The effects of setting a time-limit to an analysis were considered by Freud in reference to this particular case in Section I of the paper quoted in the last footnote (1937c).]

mastered on the way, are of no importance in comparison with the resistance which is met with in the course of the work, and are only of importance at all in so far as they are necessarily proportional to the resistance. The situation is the same as when to-day an enemy army needs weeks and months to make its way across a stretch of country which in times of peace was traversed by an express train in a few hours and which only a short time before had been passed over by the defending army in a few days.

A third peculiarity of the analysis which is to be described in these pages has only increased my difficulty in deciding to make a report upon it. On the whole its results have coincided in the most satisfactory manner with our previous knowledge, or have been easily embodied into it. Many details, however, seemed to me myself to be so extraordinary and incredible that I felt some hesitation in asking other people to believe them. I requested the patient to make the strictest criticism of his recollections, but he found nothing improbable in his statements and adhered closely to them. Readers may at all events rest assured that I myself am only reporting what I came upon as an independent experience, uninfluenced by my expectation. So that there was nothing left for me but to remember the wise saying that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy. Anyone who could succeed in eliminating his pre-existing convictions even more thoroughly could no doubt discover even more such things.<sup>1</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **34**

<sup>1</sup> [The rather complicated chronology of the case will become clearer if reference is made to the footnote on p. **121** below.]

## II General Survey of the Patient's Environment and the History of the Case

I am unable to give either a purely historical or a purely thematic account of my patient's story; I can write a history neither of the treatment nor of the illness, but I shall find myself obliged to combine the two methods of presentation. It is well known that no means has been found of in any way introducing into the reproduction of an analysis the sense of conviction which results from the analysis itself. Exhaustive verbatim reports of the proceedings during the hours of analysis would certainly be of no help at all; and in any case the technique of the treatment makes it impossible to draw them up. So analyses such as this are not published in order to produce conviction in the minds of those whose attitude has hitherto been recusant and sceptical. The intention is only to bring forward some new facts for investigators who have already been convinced by their own clinical experiences.

I shall begin, then, by giving a picture of the child's world, and by telling as much of the story of his childhood as could be learnt without any exertion; it was not, indeed, for several years that the story became any less incomplete and obscure.

His parents had been married young, and were still leading a happy married life, upon which their ill-health was soon to throw the first shadows. His mother began to suffer from abdominal disorders, and his father from his first attacks of depression, which led to his absence from home. Naturally the patient only came to understand his father's illness very much later on, but he was aware of his mother's weak health even in his early childhood. As a consequence of it she had relatively little to do with the children. One day, certainly before his fourth year,<sup>1</sup> while his mother was seeing off the doctor to the station and he himself was walking beside her, holding her hand,

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 36

<sup>1</sup> [See p. 76 *n.* In the editions before 1924 this read 'perhaps in his sixth year'.]

he overheard her lamenting her condition. Her words made a deep impression upon him, and later on he applied them to himself [cf. p. 77]. He was not the only child; he had a sister, about two years his elder, lively, gifted, and precociously naughty, who was to play an important part in his life.

As far back as he could remember he was looked after by a nurse, an uneducated old woman of peasant birth, with an untiring affection for him. He served her as a substitute for a son of her own who had died young. The family lived on a country estate, from which they used to move to another for the summer. The two estates were not far from a large town. There was a break in his childhood when his parents sold the estates and moved into the town. Near relatives used often to pay them long visits upon one estate or the other—brothers of his father, sisters of his mother and their children, and his grandparents on his mother's side. During the summer his parents used to be away for a few weeks. In a screen memory he saw himself with his nurse looking after the carriage which was driving off with his father, mother and sister, and then going peaceably back into the house. He must have been very small at that time.<sup>1</sup> Next summer his sister was left at home, and an English governess was engaged, who became responsible for the supervision of the children.

In his later years he was told many stories about his childhood.<sup>2</sup> He knew a great deal himself, but it was naturally disconnected both as regards date and subject-matter. One of these traditions, which was repeated over and over again in his presence on the occasion of his later illness, introduces us to the problem with whose solution we shall be occupied. He seems at first to have been a very good-natured, tractable, and

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 37

<sup>1</sup> Two and a half years old. It was possible later on to determine almost all the dates with certainty.

<sup>2</sup> Information of this kind may, as a rule, be employed as absolutely authentic material. So it may seem tempting to take the easy course of filling up the gaps in a patient's memory by making enquiries from the older members of his family; but I cannot advise too strongly against such a technique. Any stories that may be told by relatives in reply to enquiries and requests are at the mercy of every critical misgiving that can come into play. One invariably regrets having made oneself dependent upon such information; at the same time confidence in the analysis is shaken and a court of appeal is set up over it. Whatever can be remembered at all will anyhow come to light in the further course of analysis.

even quiet child, so that they used to say of him that he ought to have been the girl and his elder sister the boy. But once, when his parents came back from their summer holiday, they found him transformed. He had become discontented, irritable and violent, took offence on every possible occasion, and then flew into a rage and screamed like a savage; so that, when this state of things continued, his parents expressed their misgivings as to whether it would be possible to send him to school later on. This happened during the summer while the English governess was with them. She turned out to be an eccentric and quarrelsome person, and, moreover, to be addicted to drink. The boy's mother was therefore inclined to ascribe the alteration in his character to the influence of this Englishwoman, and assumed that she had irritated him by her treatment. His sharp-sighted grandmother, who had spent the summer with the children, was of opinion that the boy's irritability had been provoked by the dissensions between the Englishwoman and the nurse. The Englishwoman had repeatedly called the nurse a witch, and had obliged her to leave the room; the little boy had openly taken the side of his beloved 'Nanya' and let the governess see his hatred. However it may have been, the Englishwoman was sent away soon after the parents' return, without there being any consequent change in the child's unbearable behaviour.

The patient had preserved his memory of this naughty period. According to his belief he made the first of his scenes one Christmas, when he was not given a double quantity of presents which were his due, because Christmas Day was at the same time his birthday. He did not spare even his beloved Nanya with his importunity and touchiness, and even tormented her more remorselessly perhaps than any one. But the phase which brought with it his change in character was inextricably connected in his memory with many other strange and pathological phenomena which he was unable to arrange in chronological sequence. He threw all the incidents that I am now about to relate (which cannot possibly have been contemporaneous, and which are full of internal contradictions) into one and the same period of time, to which he gave the name 'still on the first estate'. He thought they must have left that estate by the time he was five years old.<sup>1</sup> Thus he could recollect how he had suffered

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **38**

<sup>1</sup> [The patient probably had in mind the estate on which the family lived for most of the year (cf. p. **14**). Some time after the two original estates were sold, the family, as Freud informed the translators, bought a new one (cf. p. **93**).]

from a fear, which his sister exploited for the purpose of tormenting him. There was a particular picture-book, in which a wolf was represented, standing upright and striding along. Whenever he caught sight of this picture he began to scream like a lunatic that he was afraid of the wolf coming and eating him up. His sister, however, always succeeded in arranging so that he was obliged to see this picture, and was delighted at his terror. Meanwhile he was also frightened at other animals as well, big and little. Once he was running after a beautiful big butterfly, with striped yellow wings which ended in points, in the hope of catching it. (It was no doubt a 'swallow-tail'.<sup>1</sup>) He was suddenly seized with a terrible fear of the creature, and, screaming, gave up the chase. He also felt fear and loathing of beetles and caterpillars. Yet he could also remember that at this very time he used to torment beetles and cut caterpillars to pieces. Horses, too, gave him an uncanny feeling. If a horse was beaten he began to scream, and he was once obliged to leave a circus on that account. On other occasions he himself enjoyed beating horses. Whether these contradictory sorts of attitudes towards animals were really in operation simultaneously, or whether they did not more probably replace one another, but if so in what order and when—to all these questions his memory could offer no decisive reply. He was also unable to say whether his naughty period was *replaced* by a phase of illness or whether it persisted right through the latter. But, in any case, the statements of his that follow justified the assumption that during these years of his childhood he went through an easily recognizable attack of obsessional neurosis. He related how during a long period he was very pious. Before he went to sleep he was obliged to pray for a long time and to make an endless series of signs of the cross. In the evening, too, he used to make the round of all the holy pictures that hung in the room, taking a chair with him, upon which he climbed, and used to kiss each one of them devoutly. It was utterly inconsistent with this pious ceremonial—or, on the other hand, perhaps it was quite consistent with it—that he should recollect some blasphemous thoughts which used to come into his head like an inspiration

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **39**

<sup>1</sup> [*Schwalbenschwanz*.] Here, and at the beginning of Section VIII below, the editions before 1924 read '*Admiral*'.]

from the devil. He was obliged to think 'God—swine' or 'God—shit'. Once while he was on a journey to a health-resort in Germany he was tormented by the obsession of having to think of the Holy Trinity whenever he saw three heaps of horse-dung or other excrement lying in the road. At that time he used to carry out another peculiar ceremonial when he saw people that he felt sorry for, such as beggars, cripples, or very old men. He had to breathe out noisily, so as not to become like them; and under certain conditions he had to draw in his breath vigorously. I naturally assumed that these obvious symptoms of an obsessional neurosis belonged to a somewhat later time and stage of development than the signs of anxiety and the cruel treatment of animals.

The patient's maturer years were marked by a very unsatisfactory relation to his father, who, after repeated attacks of depression, was no longer able to conceal the pathological features of his character. In the earliest years of the patient's childhood this relation had been a very affectionate one, and the recollection of it had remained in his memory. His father was very fond of him, and liked playing with him. From an early age he was proud of his father, and was always declaring that he would like to be a gentleman like him. His Nanya told him that his sister was his mother's child, but that he was his father's—which had very much pleased him. Towards the end of his childhood there was an estrangement between him and his father. His father had an unmistakable preference for his sister, and he felt very much slighted by this. Later on fear of his father became the dominating factor.

All of the phenomena which the patient associated with the phase of his life that began with his naughtiness disappeared in about his eighth year. They did not disappear at a single blow, and made occasional reappearances, but finally gave way, in the patient's opinion, before the influence of the masters and tutors, who then took the place of the women who had hitherto looked after him. Here, then, in the briefest outline, are the riddles for which the analysis had to find a solution. What was the origin of the sudden change in the boy's character? What was the significance of his phobia and of his perversities? How did he arrive at his obsessive piety? And how are all these phenomena interrelated? I will once more recall the fact that our therapeutic work was concerned with a subsequent and recent

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 40



neurotic illness, and that light could only be thrown upon these earlier problems when the course of the analysis led away for a time from the present, and forced us to make a *détour* through the prehistoric period of childhood.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **41**

### III The Seduction and its Immediate Consequences

It is easy to understand that the first suspicion fell upon the English governess, for the change in the boy made its appearance while she was there. Two screen memories had persisted, which were incomprehensible in themselves, and which related to her. On one occasion, as she was walking along in front of them, she said: 'Do look at my little tail!' Another time, when they were on a drive, her hat flew away, to the two children's great satisfaction. This pointed to the castration complex, and might permit of a construction being made to the effect that a threat uttered by her against the boy had been largely responsible for originating his abnormal conduct. There is no danger at all in communicating constructions of this kind to the person under analysis; they never do any damage to the analysis if they are mistaken; but at the same time they are not put forward unless there is some prospect of reaching a nearer approximation to the truth by means of them.<sup>1</sup> The first effect of this supposition was the appearance of some dreams, which it was not possible to interpret completely, but all of which seemed to centre around the same material. As far as they could be understood, they were concerned with aggressive actions on the boy's part against his sister or against the governess and with energetic reproofs and punishments on account of them. It was as though ...after her bath ...he had tried ...to undress his sister ...to tear off her coverings ...or veils—and so on. But it was not possible to get at any firm content from the interpretation; and since these dreams gave an impression of always working over the same material in various different ways, the correct reading of these ostensible reminiscences became assured: it could only be a question of phantasies, which the dreamer had made on the subject of his childhood at some time or other, probably at the age of puberty, and which had now come to the surface again in this unrecognizable form.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **42**

<sup>1</sup> [Freud entered into this at greater length in his paper 'Constructions in Analysis' (**1937d**), particularly in Section II.]

The explanation came at a single blow, when the patient suddenly called to mind the fact that, when he was still very small, 'on the first estate', his sister had seduced him into sexual practices. First came a recollection that in the lavatory, which the children used frequently to visit together, she had made this proposal: 'Let's show our bottoms', and had proceeded from words to deeds. Subsequently the more essential part of the seduction came to light, with full particulars as to time and place. It was in spring, at a time when his father was away; the children were in one room playing on the floor, while their mother was working in the next. His sister had taken hold of his penis and played with it, at the same time telling him incomprehensible stories about his Nanya, as though by way of explanation. His Nanya, she said, used to do the same thing with all kinds of people—for instance, with the gardener: she used to stand him on his head, and then take hold of his genitals.

Here, then, was the explanation of the phantasies whose existence we had already divined. They were meant to efface the memory of an event which later on seemed offensive to the patient's masculine self-esteem, and they reached this end by putting an imaginary and desirable converse in the place of the historical truth. According to these phantasies it was not he who had played the passive part towards his sister, but, on the contrary, he had been aggressive, had tried to see his sister undressed, had been rejected and punished, and had for that reason got into the rage which the family tradition talked of so much. It was also appropriate to weave the governess into this imaginative composition, since the chief responsibility for his fits of rage had been ascribed to her by his mother and grandmother. These phantasies, therefore, corresponded exactly to the legends by means of which a nation that has become great and proud tries to conceal the insignificance and failure of its beginnings.<sup>1</sup>

The governess can actually have had only a very remote share in the seduction and its consequences. The scenes with his sister took place in the early part of the same year in which, at the height of the summer, the Englishwoman arrived to take the place of his absent parents. The boy's hostility to the governess

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 43

<sup>1</sup> [See the longer discussion of this in Freud's study of Leonardo (1910c), near the beginning of Chapter II.]

came about, rather, in another way. By abusing the nurse and slandering her as a witch, she was in his eyes following in the footsteps of his sister, who had first told him such monstrous stories about the nurse; and in this way she enabled him to express openly against herself the aversion which, as we shall hear, he had developed against his sister as a result of his seduction.

But his seduction by his sister was certainly not a phantasy. Its credibility was increased by some information which had never been forgotten and which dated from a later part of his life, when he was grown up. A cousin who was more than ten years his elder told him in a conversation about his sister that he very well remembered what a forward and sensual little thing she had been: once, when she was a child of four or five, she had sat on his lap and opened his trousers to take hold of his penis.

I should like at this point to break off the story of my patient's childhood and say something of this sister, of her development and later fortunes, and of the influence she had on him. She was two years older than he was, and had always remained ahead of him. As a child she was boyish and unmanageable, but she then entered upon a brilliant intellectual development and distinguished herself by her acute and realistic powers of mind; she inclined in her studies to the natural sciences, but also produced imaginative writings of which her father had a high opinion. She was mentally far superior to her numerous early admirers, and used to make jokes at their expense. In her early twenties, however, she began to be depressed, complained that she was not good-looking enough, and withdrew from all society. She was sent to travel in the company of an acquaintance, an elderly lady, and after her return told a number of most improbable stories of how she had been ill-treated by her companion, but remained with her affections obviously fixed upon her alleged tormentor. While she was on a second journey, soon afterwards, she poisoned herself and died far away from her home. Her disorder is probably to be regarded as the beginning of a dementia praecox. She was one of the proofs of the conspicuously neuropathic heredity in her family, but by no means the only one. An uncle, her father's brother, died after long years of life as an eccentric, with indications pointing to the presence of a severe

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 44

obsessional neurosis; while a good number of collateral relatives were and are afflicted with less serious nervous complaints.

Independently of the question of seduction, our patient, while he was a child, found in his sister an inconvenient competitor for the good opinion of his parents, and he felt very much oppressed by her merciless display of superiority. Later on he especially envied her the respect which his father showed for her mental capacity and intellectual achievements, while he, intellectually inhibited as he was since his obsessional neurosis, had to be content with a lower estimation. From his fourteenth year onwards the relations between the brother and sister began to improve; a similar disposition of mind and a common opposition to their parents brought them so close together that they got on with each other like the best of friends. During the tempestuous sexual excitement of his puberty he ventured upon an attempt at an intimate physical approach. She rejected him with equal decision and dexterity, and he at once turned away from her to a little peasant girl who was a servant in the house and had the same name as his sister. In doing so he was taking a step which had a determinant influence on his heterosexual choice of object, for all the girls with whom he subsequently fell in love—often with the clearest indications of compulsion—were also servants, whose education and intelligence were necessarily far inferior to his own. If all of these objects of his love were substitutes for the figure of the sister whom he had to forgo, then it could not be denied that an intention of debasing his sister and of putting an end to her intellectual superiority, which he had formerly found so oppressive, had obtained the decisive control over his object-choice.<sup>1</sup>

Human sexual conduct, as well as everything else, has been subordinated by Alfred Adler to motive forces of this kind, which spring from the will to power, from the individual's self-assertive instinct. Without ever denying the importance of these motives of power and prerogative, I have never been convinced that they play the dominating and exclusive part that has been ascribed to them. If I had not pursued my patient's analysis to the end, I should have been obliged, on account of my observation of this case, to correct my preconceived opinion in a direction favourable to Adler. The conclusion of the analysis unexpectedly brought up new material which, on the contrary,

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 45

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. Freud's earlier paper on this subject (1912d).]

showed that these motives of power (in this case the intention to debase) had determined the object-choice only in the sense of serving as a contributory cause and as a rationalization, whereas the true underlying determination enabled me to maintain my former convictions.<sup>1</sup>

When the news of his sister's death arrived, so the patient told me, he felt hardly a trace of grief. He had to force himself to show signs of sorrow, and was able quite coolly to rejoice at having now become the sole heir to the property. He had already been suffering from his recent illness for several years when this occurred. But I must confess that this one piece of information made me for a long time uncertain in my diagnostic judgement of the case. It was to be assumed, no doubt, that his grief over the loss of the most dearly loved member of his family would meet with an inhibition in its expression, as a result of the continued operation of his jealousy of her and of the added presence of his incestuous love for her which had now become unconscious. But I could not do without some substitute for the missing outbursts of grief. And this was at last found in another expression of feeling which had remained inexplicable to the patient. A few months after his sister's death he himself made a journey in the neighbourhood in which she had died. There he sought out the burial-place of a great poet, who was at that time his ideal, and shed bitter tears upon his grave. This reaction seemed strange to him himself, for he knew that more than two generations had passed by since the death of the poet he admired. He only understood it when he remembered that his father had been in the habit of comparing his dead sister's works with the great poet's. He gave me another indication of the correct way of interpreting the homage which he ostensibly paid to the poet, by a mistake in his story which I was able to detect at this point. He had repeatedly specified before that his sister had shot herself; but he was now obliged to make a correction and say that she had taken poison. The poet, however, had been shot in a duel.<sup>2</sup>

I now return to the brother's story, but from this point I must proceed for a little upon thematic lines. The boy's age at

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **46**

<sup>1</sup> See below, p. **93**. [For a fuller discussion of Adler's views, see Part III of 'On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement' (**1914d**).]

<sup>2</sup> [On the Wolf Man's own authority, Lermontov.]

the time at which his sister began her seductions turned out to be three and a quarter years.<sup>1</sup> It happened, as has been mentioned, in the spring of the same year in whose summer the English governess arrived, and in whose autumn his parents, on their return, found him so fundamentally altered. It is very natural, then, to connect this transformation with the awakening of his sexual activity that had meanwhile taken place.

How did the boy react to the allurements of his elder sister? By a refusal, is the answer, but by a refusal which applied to the person and not to the thing. His sister was not agreeable to him as a sexual object, probably because his relation to her had already been determined in a hostile direction owing to their rivalry for their parents' love. He held aloof from her, and, moreover, her solicitations soon ceased. But he tried to win, instead of her, another person of whom he was fonder; and the information which his sister herself had given him, and in which she had claimed his Nanya as a model, turned his choice in that direction. He therefore began to play with his penis in his Nanya's presence, and this, like so many other instances in which children do not conceal their masturbation, must be regarded as an attempt at seduction. His Nanya disillusioned him; she made a serious face, and explained that that wasn't good; children who did that, she added, got a 'wound' in the place.

The effect of this intelligence, which amounted to a threat, is to be traced in various directions. His dependence upon his Nanya was diminished in consequence. He might well have been angry with her; and later on, when his fits of rage set in, it became clear that he really was embittered against her. But it was characteristic of him that every position of the libido which he found himself obliged to abandon was at first obstinately defended by him against the new development. When the governess came upon the scene and abused his Nanya, drove her out of the room, and tried to destroy her authority, he, on the contrary, exaggerated his love for the victim of these attacks and assumed a brusque and defiant attitude towards the aggressive governess. Nevertheless, in secret he began to look about for another sexual object. His seduction had given him the passive sexual aim of being touched on the genitals; we shall

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 47

<sup>1</sup> [In the editions before 1924 this read 'from three and a quarter to three and a half years'.]

presently hear in connection with whom it was that he tried to achieve this aim, and what paths led him to this choice.

It agrees entirely with our anticipations when we learn that, after his first genital excitations, his sexual researches began, and that he soon came upon the problem of castration. At this time he succeeded in observing two girls—his sister and a friend of hers—while they were micturating. His acumen might well have enabled him to gather the true facts from this spectacle, but he behaved as we know other male children behave in these circumstances. He rejected the idea that he saw before him a confirmation of the wound with which his Nanya had threatened him, and he explained to himself that this was the girls' 'front bottom'. The theme of castration was not settled by this decision; he found new allusions to it in everything that he heard. Once when the children were given some coloured sugar-sticks, the governess, who was inclined to disordered fancies, pronounced that they were pieces of chopped-up snakes. He remembered afterwards that his father had once met a snake while he was walking along a footpath, and had beaten it to pieces with his stick. He heard the story (out of *Reynard the Fox*) read aloud, of how the wolf wanted to go fishing in the winter, and used his tail as a bait, and how in that way his tail was broken off in the ice. He learned the different names by which horses are distinguished, according to whether their sexual organs are intact or not. Thus he was occupied with thoughts about castration, but as yet he had no belief in it and no dread of it. Other sexual problems arose for him out of the fairy tales with which he became familiar at this time. In 'Little Red Riding-Hood' and 'The Seven Little Goats' the children were taken out of the wolf's body. Was the wolf a female creature, then, or could men have children in their bodies as well? At this time the question was not yet settled. Moreover, at the time of these enquiries he had as yet no fear of wolves.

One of the patient's pieces of information will make it easier for us to understand the alteration in his character which appeared during his parents' absence as a somewhat indirect consequence of his seduction. He said that he gave up masturbating very soon after his Nanya's refusal and threat. *His sexual life, therefore, which was beginning to come under the sway of the genital zone, gave way before an external obstacle, and was thrown back by its influence into an earlier phase of pregenital organization.* As a result of

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 49



the suppression of his masturbation, the boy's sexual life took on a sadistic-anal character. He became irritable and a tormentor, and gratified himself in this way at the expense of animals and humans. His principal object was his beloved Nanya, and he knew how to torment her till she burst into tears. In this way he revenged himself on her for the refusal he had met with, and at the same time gratified his sexual lust in the form which corresponded to his present regressive phase. He began to be cruel to small animals, to catch flies and pull off their wings, to crush beetles underfoot; in his imagination he liked beating large animals (horses) as well. All of these, then, were active and sadistic proceedings; we shall discuss his anal impulses at this period in a later connection.

It is a most important fact that some contemporary phantasies of quite another kind came up as well in the patient's memory. The content of these was of boys being chastised and beaten, and especially being beaten on the penis. And from other phantasies, which represented the heir to the throne being shut up in a narrow room and beaten, it was easy to guess for whom it was that the anonymous figures served as whipping-boys. The heir to the throne was evidently he himself; his sadism had therefore turned round in phantasy against himself, and had been converted into masochism. The detail of the sexual organ itself receiving the beating justified the conclusion that a sense of guilt, which related to his masturbation, was already concerned in this transformation.<sup>1</sup>

No doubt was left in the analysis that these passive trends had made their appearance at the same time as the active-sadistic ones, or very soon after them.<sup>2</sup> This is in accordance with the unusually clear, intense, and constant *ambivalence*<sup>3</sup> of the patient, which was shown here for the first time in the even development of both members of the pairs of contrary component instincts. Such behaviour was also characteristic of his later life, and so was this further trait: no position of the libido which had once

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **50**

<sup>1</sup> [On the subject of beating-phantasies see Freud (1919e), below, p. 179 ff.]

<sup>2</sup> By passive trends I mean trends that have a passive sexual aim; but in saying this I have in mind a transformation not of the instinct but only of its aim.

<sup>3</sup> [This exceptional use of the term 'ambivalence' as referring to activity and passivity is discussed in an Editor's footnote in 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes' (1915c).]

been established was ever completely replaced by a later one. It was rather left in existence side by side with all the others, and this allowed him to maintain an incessant vacillation which proved to be incompatible with the acquisition of a stable character.

The boy's masochistic trends lead on to another point, which I have so far avoided mentioning, because it can only be confirmed by means of the analysis of the subsequent phase of his development. I have already mentioned that after his refusal by his Nanya his libidinal expectation detached itself from her and began to contemplate another person as a sexual object. This person was his father, at that time away from home. He was no doubt led to this choice by a number of convergent factors, including such fortuitous ones as the recollection of the snake being cut to pieces; but above all he was in this way able to renew his first and most primitive object-choice, which, in conformity with a small child's narcissism, had taken place along the path of identification.<sup>1</sup> We have heard already that his father had been his admired model, and that when he was asked what he wanted to be he used to reply: a gentleman like his father. This object of identification of his active current became the sexual object of a passive current in his present analsadistic phase. It looks as though his seduction by his sister had forced him into a passive role, and had given him a passive sexual aim. Under the persisting influence of this experience he pursued a path from his sister *via* his Nanya to his father—from a passive attitude towards women to the same attitude towards men—and had, nevertheless, by this means found a link with his earlier and spontaneous phase of development. His father was now his object once more; in conformity with his higher stage of development, identification was replaced by object-choice; while the transformation of his active attitude into a passive one was the consequence and the record of the seduction which had occurred meanwhile. It would naturally not have been so easy to achieve an active attitude in the sadistic phase towards his all-powerful father. When his father came home in the late summer or autumn the patient's fits of rage and scenes of fury were put to a new use. They had served for active-sadistic ends in relation to his Nanya; in relation to his father

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **51**

<sup>1</sup> [For a fuller discussion of identification see Chapter VII of *Group Psychology* (1921c).]

their purpose was masochistic. By bringing his naughtiness forward he was trying to force punishments and beatings out of his father, and in that way to obtain from him the masochistic sexual satisfaction that he desired. His screaming fits were therefore simply attempts at seduction. In accordance, moreover, with the motives which underlie masochism, this beating would also have satisfied his sense of guilt. He had preserved a memory of how, during one of these scenes of naughtiness, he had redoubled his screams as soon as his father came towards him. His father did not beat him, however, but tried to pacify him by playing ball in front of him with the pillows of his cot.

I do not know how often parents and educators, faced with inexplicable naughtiness on the part of a child, might not have occasion to bear this typical state of affairs in mind. A child who behaves in this unmanageable way is making a confession and trying to provoke punishment. He hopes for a beating as a simultaneous means of setting his sense of guilt at rest and of satisfying his masochistic sexual trend.<sup>1</sup>

We owe the further explanation of the case to a recollection which emerged with great distinctness. This was to the effect that the signs of an alteration in the patient's character were not accompanied by any symptoms of anxiety until after the occurrence of a particular event. Previously, it seems, there was no anxiety, while directly after the event the anxiety expressed itself in the most tormenting shape. The date of this transformation can be stated with certainty; it was immediately before his fourth birthday. Taking this as a fixed point, we are able to divide the period of his childhood with which we are concerned into two phases: a first phase of naughtiness and perversity from his seduction at the age of three and a quarter up to his fourth birthday, and a longer subsequent phase in which the signs of neurosis predominated. But the event which makes this division possible was not an external trauma, but a dream, from which he awoke in a state of anxiety.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **52**

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. Freud's discussion of 'Criminals from a Sense of Guilt' which forms the third Section of his paper 'Some Character-Types Met with in Psycho-Analytic Work' (**1916d**).]

#### IV The Dream and the Primal Scene

I Have already published this dream elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> on account of the quantity of material in it which is derived from fairy tales; and I will begin by repeating what I wrote on that occasion:

*“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 pay attention 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 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 making 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 (**Fig. 1**). 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

---

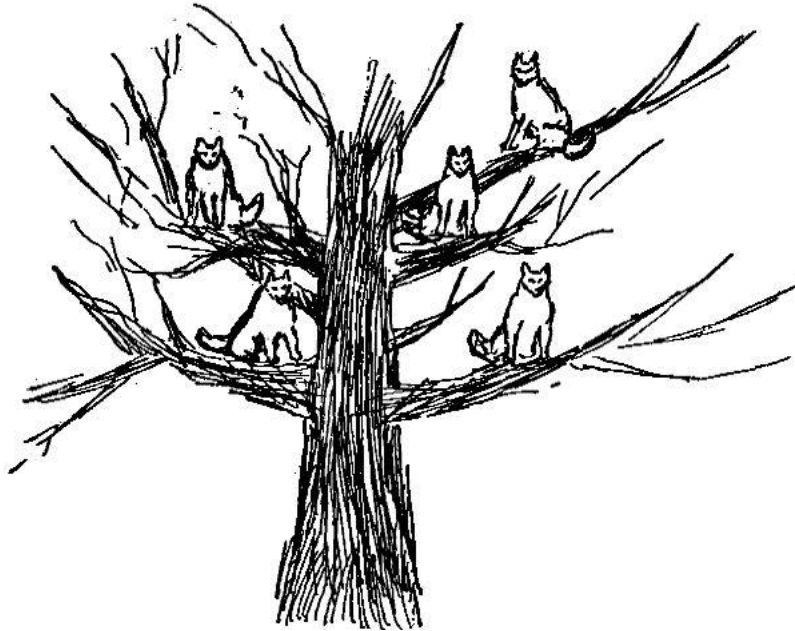
[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **54**

<sup>1</sup> ‘The Occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy Tales’ (**1913d**).

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

FIG. 1.



and blissful. Later on—according to enquiries 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

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 55

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 on 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

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 56

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 later in 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.'

Leaving on one side everything in this quotation that anticipates

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 57

<sup>1</sup> 'Compare the similarity between these two fairy tales and the myth of Kronos, which has been pointed out by Rank (1912).'

the dream's remoter implications, let us return to its immediate interpretation. I may remark that this interpretation was a task that dragged on over several years. The patient related the dream at a very early stage of the analysis and very soon came to share my conviction that the causes of his infantile neurosis lay concealed behind it. In the course of the treatment we often came back to the dream, but it was only during the last months of the analysis that it became possible to understand it completely, and only then thanks to spontaneous work on the patient's part. He had always emphasized the fact that two factors in the dream had made the greatest impression on him: first, the perfect stillness and immobility of the wolves, and secondly, the strained attention with which they all looked at him. The lasting sense of reality, too, which the dream left behind it, seemed to him to deserve notice.

Let us take this last remark as a starting-point. We know from our experience in interpreting dreams that this sense of reality carries a particular significance along with it. It assures us that some part of the latent material of the dream is claiming in the dreamer's memory to possess the quality of reality, that is, that the dream relates to an occurrence that really took place and was not merely imagined.<sup>1</sup> It can naturally only be a question of the reality of something unknown; for instance, the conviction that his grandfather really told him the story of the tailor and the wolf, or that the stories of 'Little Red Riding-Hood' and of 'The Seven Little Goats' were really read aloud to him, would not be of a nature to be replaced by this sense of reality that outlasted the dream. The dream seemed to point to an occurrence the reality of which was very strongly emphasized as being in marked contrast to the unreality of the fairy tales.

If it was to be assumed that behind the content of the dream there lay some such unknown scene—one, that is, which had already been forgotten at the time of the dream—then it must have taken place very early. The dreamer, it will be recalled, said: 'I was three, four, or at most five years old at the time I had the dream.' And we can add: 'And I was reminded by the dream of something that must have belonged to an even earlier period.'

The parts of the manifest content of the dream which were

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 59

<sup>1</sup> [See *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900a), *Standard Ed.*, 5, 372.]



emphasized by the dreamer, the factors of attentive looking and of motionlessness, must lead to the content of this scene. We must naturally expect to find that this material reproduces the unknown material of the scene in some distorted form, perhaps even distorted into its opposite.

There were several conclusions, too, to be drawn from the raw material which had been produced by the patient's first analysis of the dream, and these had to be fitted into the collocation of which we were in search. Behind the mention of the sheep-breeding, evidence was to be expected of his sexual researches, his interest in which he was able to gratify during his visits with his father; but there must also have been allusions to a fear of death, since the greater part of the sheep had died of the epidemic. The most obtrusive thing in the dream, the wolves on the tree, led straight to his grandfather's story; and what was fascinating about this story and capable of provoking the dream can scarcely have been anything but its connection with the theme of castration.

We also concluded from the first incomplete analysis of the dream that the wolf may have been a father-surrogate; so that, in that case, this first anxiety-dream would have brought to light the fear of his father which from that time forward was to dominate his life. This conclusion, indeed, was in itself not yet binding. But if we put together as the result of the provisional analysis what can be derived from the material produced by the dreamer, we then find before us for reconstruction some such fragments as these:

*A real occurrence—dating from a very early period—looking—immobility—sexual problems—castration—his father—something terrible.*

One day the patient began to continue with the interpretation of the dream. He thought that the part of the dream which said that 'suddenly the window opened of its own accord' was not completely explained by its connection with the window at which the tailor was sitting and through which the wolf came into the room. 'It must mean: "My eyes suddenly opened." I was asleep, therefore, and suddenly woke up, and as I woke I saw something: the tree with the wolves.' No objection could be made to this; but the point could be developed further. He had woken up and had seen something. The attentive looking, which in the dream was ascribed to the wolves, should rather be shifted on to him. At a decisive point, therefore, a transposition

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 60

has taken place; and moreover this is indicated by another transposition in the manifest content of the dream.<sup>1</sup> For the fact that the wolves were sitting on the tree was also a transposition, since in his grandfather's story they were underneath, and were unable to climb on to the tree.

What, then, if the other factor emphasized by the dreamer were also distorted by means of a transposition or reversal? In that case instead of immobility (the wolves sat there motionless; they looked at him, but did not move) the meaning would have to be: the most violent motion. That is to say, he suddenly woke up, and saw in front of him a scene of violent movement at which he looked with strained attention. In the one case the distortion would consist in an interchange of subject and object, of activity and passivity: being looked at instead of looking. In the other case it would consist in a transformation into the opposite; rest instead of motion.

On another occasion an association which suddenly occurred to him carried us another step forward in our understanding of the dream: 'The tree was a Christmas-tree.' He now knew that he had dreamt the dream shortly before Christmas and in expectation of it. Since Christmas Day was also his birthday, it now became possible to establish with certainty the date of the dream and of the change in him which proceeded from it. It was immediately before his fourth birthday. He had gone to sleep, then, in tense expectation of the day which ought to bring him a double quantity of presents. We know that in such circumstances a child may easily anticipate the fulfilment of his wishes. So it was already Christmas in his dream; the content of the dream showed him his Christmas box, the presents which were to be his were hanging on the tree. But instead of presents they had turned into—wolves, and the dream ended by his being overcome by fear of being eaten by the wolf (probably his father), and by his flying for refuge to his nurse. Our knowledge of his sexual development before the dream makes it possible for us to fill in the gaps in the dream and to explain the transformation of his satisfaction into anxiety. Of the wishes concerned in the formation of the dream the most powerful must have been the wish for the sexual satisfaction which he was at that time longing to obtain from his father. The strength of this wish

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **61**

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. *The Interpretation of Dreams, Standard Ed.*, 4, **288.**]

made it possible to revive a long-forgotten trace in his memory of a scene which was able to show him what sexual satisfaction from his father was like; and the result was terror, horror of the fulfilment of the wish, the repression of the impulse which had manifested itself by means of the wish, and consequently a flight from his father to his less dangerous nurse.

The importance of this date of Christmas Day had been preserved in his supposed recollection of having had his first fit of rage because he was dissatisfied with his Christmas presents [p. 15]. The recollection combined elements of truth and of falsehood. It could not be entirely right, since according to the repeated declarations of his parents his naughtiness had already begun on their return in the autumn and it was not a fact that they had not come on till Christmas. But he had preserved the essential connection between his unsatisfied love, his rage, and Christmas.

But what picture can the nightly workings of his sexual desire have conjured up that could frighten him away so violently from the fulfilment for which he longed? The material of the analysis shows that there is one condition which this picture must satisfy. It must have been calculated to create a conviction of the reality of the existence of castration. Fear of castration could then become the motive power for the transformation of the affect.

I have now reached the point at which I must abandon the support I have hitherto had from the course of the analysis. I am afraid it will also be the point at which the reader's belief will abandon me.

What sprang into activity that night out of the chaos of the dreamer's unconscious memory-traces was the picture of copulation between his parents, copulation in circumstances which were not entirely usual and were especially favourable for observation. It gradually became possible to find satisfactory answers to all the questions that arose in connection with this scene; for in the course of the treatment the first dream returned in innumerable variations and new editions, in connection with which the analysis produced the information that was required. Thus in the first place the child's age at the date of the observation was established as being about one and a half years.<sup>1</sup> He

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 62

<sup>1</sup> The age of six months came under consideration as a far less probable, and indeed scarcely tenable, alternative.

was suffering at the time from malaria, an attack of which used to come on every day at a particular hour.<sup>1</sup> From his tenth year onwards he was from time to time subject to moods of depression, which used to come on in the afternoon and reached their height at about five o'clock. This symptom still existed at the time of the analytic treatment. The recurring fits of depression took the place of the earlier attacks of fever or languor; five o'clock was either the time of the highest fever or of the observation of the intercourse, unless the two times coincided.<sup>2</sup> Probably for the very reason of this illness, he was in his parents' bedroom. The illness, the occurrence of which is also corroborated by direct tradition, makes it reasonable to refer the event to the summer, and, since the child was born on Christmas Day, to assume that his age was  $n + 1\frac{1}{2}$  years.<sup>3</sup> He had been sleeping in his cot, then, in his parents' bedroom, and woke up, perhaps because of his rising fever, in the afternoon, possibly at five o'clock, the hour which was later marked out by depression. It harmonizes with our assumption that it was a hot summer's day, if we suppose that his parents had retired, half undressed,<sup>4</sup> for an afternoon *siesta*. When he woke up, he witnessed a coitus *a tergo* [from behind], three times repeated;<sup>5</sup> he was able to see his mother's genitals as well as his father's organ; and he understood the process as well as its significance.<sup>6</sup> Lastly

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 63

<sup>1</sup> Compare the subsequent metamorphoses of this factor during the obsessional neurosis. In the patient's dreams during the treatment it was replaced by a violent wind. [Added 1924:] '*Aria*' = 'air'. [*Mal-aria*' = 'bad air'.]

<sup>2</sup> We may remark in this connection that the patient drew only *five* wolves in his illustration to the dream, although the text mentioned six or seven.

<sup>3</sup> [It might perhaps be clearer to say ' $n + \frac{1}{2}$ '. The point is that owing to the interval of 6 months between the patient's birthday and the summer, his age at the time of the trauma must have been 0 years + 6 months, or 1 year + 6 months, or 2 years + 6 months, etc. The  $0 + \frac{1}{2}$  is, however, already excluded in the footnote on p. 36.]

<sup>4</sup> In white underclothes: the *white* wolves.

<sup>5</sup> Why three times? He suddenly one day produced the statement that I had discovered this detail by interpretation. This was not the case. It was a spontaneous association, exempt from further criticism; in his usual way he passed it off on to me, and by this projection tried to make it seem more trustworthy.

<sup>6</sup> I mean that he understood it at the time of the dream when he was four years old, not at the time of the observation. He received the impressions when he was one and a half; his understanding of them was deferred, but became possible at the time of the dream owing to his development, his sexual excitations, and his sexual researches.

he interrupted his parents' intercourse in a manner which will be discussed later [p. 80].

There is at bottom nothing extraordinary, nothing to give the impression of being the product of an extravagant imagination, in the fact that a young couple who had only been married a few years should have ended a *siesta* on a hot summer's afternoon with a love-scene, and should have disregarded the presence of their little boy of one and a half, asleep in his cot. On the contrary, such an event would, I think, be something entirely commonplace and *banal*; and even the position in which we have inferred that the coitus took place cannot in the least alter this judgement—especially as the evidence does not require that the intercourse should have been performed from behind each time. A single time would have been enough to give the spectator an opportunity for making observations which would have been rendered difficult or impossible by any other attitude of the lovers. The content of the scene cannot therefore in itself be an argument against its credibility. Doubts as to its probability will turn upon three other points: whether a child at the tender age of one and a half could be in a position to take in the perceptions of such a complicated process and to preserve them so accurately in his unconscious; secondly, whether it is possible at the age of four for a deferred revision of the impressions so received to penetrate the understanding; and finally, whether any procedure could succeed in bringing into consciousness coherently and convincingly the details of a scene of this kind which had been experienced and understood in such circumstances.<sup>1</sup>

Later on I shall carefully examine these and other doubts; but I can assure the reader that I am no less critically inclined

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 64

<sup>1</sup> The first of these difficulties cannot be reduced by assuming that the child at the time of his observation was after all probably a year older, that is to say *two* and a half, an age at which he may perhaps have been perfectly capable of talking. All the minor details of my patient's case almost excluded the possibility of shifting the date in this way. Moreover, the fact should be taken into account that these scenes of observing parental intercourse are by no means rarely brought to light in analysis. The condition of their occurrence, however, is precisely that it should be in the earliest period of childhood. The older the child is, the more carefully, with parents above a certain social level, will the child be deprived of the opportunity for this kind of observation.

than he towards an acceptance of this observation of the child's, and I will only ask him to join me in adopting a *provisional* belief in the reality of the scene. We will first proceed with the study of the relations between this 'primal scene'<sup>1</sup> and the patient's dream, his symptoms, and the history of his life; and we will trace separately the effects that followed from the essential content of the scene and from one of its visual impressions.

By the latter I mean the postures which he saw his parents adopt—the man upright, and the woman bent down like an animal. We have already heard [p. 30] that during his anxiety period his sister used to terrify him with a picture from the fairy-book, in which the wolf was shown standing upright, with one foot forward, with its claws stretched out and its ears pricked. He devoted himself with tireless perseverance during the treatment to the task of hunting in the second-hand bookshops till he had found the illustrated fairy-book of his childhood, and had recognized his bogey in an illustration to the story of 'The Wolf and the Seven Little Goats'. He thought that the posture of the wolf in this picture might have reminded him of that of his father during the constructed primal scene. At all events the picture became the point of departure for further manifestations of anxiety. Once when he was in his seventh or eighth year he was informed that next day a new tutor was coming for him. That night he dreamt of this tutor in the shape of a lion that came towards his bed roaring loudly and in the posture of the wolf in the picture; and once again he awoke in a state of anxiety. The wolf phobia had been overcome by that time, so he was free to choose himself a new anxiety-animal, and in this late dream he was recognizing the tutor as a father-surrogate. In the later years of his childhood each of his tutors and masters played the part of his father, and was endowed with his father's influence both for good and for evil.

While he was at his secondary school the Fates provided him with a remarkable opportunity of reviving his wolf phobia, and of using the relation which lay behind it as an occasion for severe inhibitions. The master who taught his form Latin was called Wolf. From the very first he felt cowed by him, and he was once taken severely to task by him for having made a stupid mistake

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 65

<sup>1</sup> [*'Urszene.'* This seems to be the earliest published use of the term. Freud had, however, used it in approximately the same sense in a letter to Fliess as early as May 2, 1897 (1950a, Letter 61).]

in a piece of Latin translation. From that time on he could not get free from a paralysing fear of this master, and it was soon extended to other masters besides. But the occasion on which he made his blunder in the translation was also to the purpose. He had to translate the Latin word *'filius'*, and he did it with the French word *'fils'* instead of with the corresponding word from his own language. The wolf, in fact, was still his father.<sup>1</sup>

The first 'transitory symptom'<sup>2</sup> which the patient produced during the treatment went back once more to the wolf phobia and to the fairy tale of 'The Seven Little Goats'. In the room in which the first sessions were held there was a large grandfather clock opposite the patient, who lay on a sofa facing away from me. I was struck by the fact that from time to time he turned his face towards me, looked at me in a very friendly way as though to propitiate me, and then turned his look away from me to the clock. I thought at the time that he was in this way showing his eagerness for the end of the hour. A long time afterwards the patient reminded me of this piece of dumb show, and gave me an explanation of it; for he recalled that the youngest of the seven little goats hid himself in the case of the grandfather clock while his six brothers were eaten up by the wolf. So what he had meant was: 'Be kind to me! Must I be frightened of you? Are you going to eat me up? Shall I hide myself from you in the clock-case like the youngest little goat?'

The wolf that he was afraid of was undoubtedly his father; but his fear of the wolf was conditional upon the creature being in an upright posture. His recollection asserted most definitely that he had not been terrified by pictures of wolves going on all fours or, as in the story of 'Little Red Riding-Hood', lying in

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **67**

<sup>1</sup> After this reprimand from the schoolmaster-wolf he learnt that it was the general opinion of his companions that, to be pacified, the master expected money from him. We shall return to this point later [p. **72 ff.**].—I can see that it would greatly facilitate a rationalistic view of such a history of a child's development as this if it could be supposed that his whole fear of the wolf had really originated from the Latin master of that name, that it had been projected back into his childhood, and, supported by the illustration to the fairy tale, had caused the phantasy of the primal scene. But this is untenable; the chronological priority of the wolf phobia and its reference to the period of his childhood spent upon the first estate is far too securely attested. And his dream at the age of four?

<sup>2</sup> Ferenczi (**1912**).

bed. The posture which, according to our construction of the primal scene, he had seen the woman assume, was of no less significance; though in this case the significance was limited to the sexual sphere. The most striking phenomenon of his erotic life after maturity was his liability to compulsive attacks of falling physically in love which came on and disappeared again in the most puzzling succession. These attacks released a tremendous energy in him even at times when he was otherwise inhibited, and they were quite beyond his control. I must, for a specially important reason, postpone a full consideration of this compulsive love [see p. 91 ff]; but I may mention here that it was subject to a definite condition, which was concealed from his consciousness and was discovered only during the treatment. It was necessary that the woman should have assumed the posture which we have ascribed to his mother in the primal scene. From his puberty he had felt large and conspicuous buttocks as the most powerful attraction in a woman; to copulate except from behind gave him scarcely any enjoyment. At this point a criticism may justly be raised: it may be objected that a sexual preference of this kind for the hind parts of the body is a general characteristic of people who are inclined to an obsessional neurosis, and that its presence does not justify us in referring it back to a special impression in childhood. It is part of the fabric of the anal-erotic disposition and is one of the archaic traits which distinguish that constitution. Indeed, copulation from behind—*more ferarum* [in the fashion of animals]—may, after all, be regarded as phylogenetically the older form. We shall return to this point too in a later discussion, when we have brought forward the supplementary material which showed the basis of the unconscious condition upon which his falling in love depended. [Cf. pp. 56 and 92.]

Let us now proceed with our discussion of the relations between his dream and the primal scene. We should so far have expected the dream to present the child (who was rejoicing at Christmas in the prospect of the fulfilment of his wishes) with this picture of sexual satisfaction afforded through his father's agency, just as he had seen it in the primal scene, as a model of the satisfaction that he himself was longing to obtain from his father. Instead of this picture, however, there appeared the material of the story which he had been told by his grandfather shortly before: the tree, the wolves, and the taillessness (in the

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 68



over-compensated form of the bushy tails of the putative wolves). At this point some connection is missing, some associative bridge to lead from the content of the primal scene to that of the wolf story. This connection is provided once again by the postures and only by them. In his grandfather's story the tailless wolf asked the others *to climb upon him*. It was this detail that called up the recollection of the picture of the primal scene; and it was in this way that it became possible for the material of the primal scene to be represented by that of the wolf story, and at the same time for the *two* parents to be replaced, as was desirable, by *several* wolves. The content of the dream met with a further transformation, and the material of the wolf story was made to fit in with the content of the fairy tale of 'The Seven Little Goats', by borrowing from it the number seven.<sup>1</sup>

The steps in the transformation of the material, 'primal scene—wolf story—fairy tale of "The Seven Little Goats"', are a reflection of the progress of the dreamer's thoughts during the construction of the dream: 'longing for sexual satisfaction from his father—realization that castration is a necessary condition of it—fear of his father'. It is only at this point, I think, that we can regard the anxiety-dream of this four-year-old boy as being exhaustively explained.<sup>2</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 69

<sup>1</sup> It says 'six or seven' in the dream. Six is the number of the children that were eaten; the seventh escaped into the clock-case. It is always a strict law of dream-interpretation that an explanation must be found for every detail.

<sup>2</sup> Now that we have succeeded in making a synthesis of the dream, I will try to give a comprehensive account of the relations between the manifest content of the dream and the latent dream-thoughts. [Cf. the synthesis of 'Dora's' first dream (1905e), *Standard Ed.*, 7, 88 ff.]

*It was night, I was lying in my bed.* The latter part of this is the beginning of the reproduction of the primal scene. 'It was night' is a distortion of 'I had been asleep'. The remark, 'I know it was winter when I had the dream, and night-time', refers to the patient's recollection of the dream and is not part of its content. It is correct, for it was one of the nights before his birthday, that is, Christmas Day.

*Suddenly the window opened of its own accord.* That is to be translated: 'Suddenly I woke up of my own accord', a recollection of the primal scene. The influence of the wolf story, in which the wolf leapt in through the window, is making itself felt as a modifying factor, and transforms a direct expression into a plastic one. At the same time the introduction of the window serves the purpose of providing a contemporary reference for the subsequent content of the dream. On Christmas Eve the door opens suddenly and one sees before one the tree with the presents. Here therefore the influence of the actual expectation of Christmas (which comprises the wish for sexual satisfaction) is making itself felt.

*The big walnut-tree.* The representative of the Christmas tree, and therefore belonging to the current situation. But also the tree out of the wolf story, on which the tailor took refuge from pursuit, and under which the wolves were on the watch. Moreover, as I have often been able to satisfy myself, a high tree is a symbol of observing, of scopophilia. A person sitting on a tree can see everything that is going on below him and cannot himself be seen. Compare Boccaccio's well-known story, and similar *facetiae*.

*The wolves.* Their number: *six or seven*. In the wolf story there was a pack, and no number was given. The fixing of the number shows the influence of the fairy tale of 'The Seven Little Goats', six of whom were eaten up. The fact that

the number two in the primal scene is replaced by a larger number, which would be absurd in the primal scene, is welcomed by the resistance as a means of distortion. In the illustration to the dream the dreamer brings forward the number five, which is probably meant to correct the statement 'It was night'.

*They were sitting on the tree.* In the first place they replace the Christmas presents hanging on the tree. But they are also transposed on to the tree because that can mean that they are looking. In his grandfather's story they were posted underneath the tree. Their relation to the tree has therefore been reversed in the dream; and from this it may be concluded that there are further reversals of the latent material to be found in the content of the dream.

*They were looking at him with strained attention.* This feature comes entirely from the primal scene, and has got into the dream at the price of being turned completely round.

*They were quite white.* This feature is unessential in itself, but is strongly emphasized in the dreamer's narrative. It owes its intensity to a copious fusion of elements from all the strata of the material, and it combines unimportant details from the other sources of the dream with a fragment of the primal scene which is more significant. This last part of its determination goes back to the white of his parents' bedclothes and underclothes, and to this is added the white of the flocks of sheep, and of the sheep-dogs, as an allusion to his sexual researches among animals, and the white in the fairy tale of 'The Seven Little Goats', in which the mother is recognized by the white of her hand. Later on we shall see that the white clothes are also an allusion to death. [There does not seem in fact to be any further clear reference to this point. The connection is perhaps with the episode of the winding-sheet (p. 98).

*They sat there motionless.* This contradicts the most striking feature of the observed scene, namely, its agitated movement, which, in virtue of the postures to which it led, constitutes the connection between the primal scene and the wolf story.

*They had tails like foxes.* This must be the contradiction of a conclusion which was derived from the action of the primal scene on the wolf story, and which must be recognized as the most important result of the dreamer's sexual researches: 'So there really is such a thing as castration.' The terror with which this conclusion was received finally broke out in the dream and brought it to an end.

*The fear of being eaten up by the wolves.* It seemed to the dreamer as though the motive force of this fear was not derived from the content of the dream. He said he need not have been afraid, for the wolves looked more like foxes or dogs, and they did not rush at him as though to bite him, but were very still and not at all terrible. We observe that the dream-work tries for some time to make the distressing content harmless by transforming it into its opposite. ('They aren't moving, and, only look, they have the loveliest tails!') Until at last this expedient fails, and the fear breaks out. It expresses itself by the help of the fairy tale, in which the goat-children are eaten up by the wolf-father. This part of the fairy tale may perhaps have acted as a reminder of threats made by the child's father in fun when he was playing with him; so that the fear of being eaten up by the wolf may be a reminiscence as well as a substitute by displacement.

The wishes which act as motive forces in this dream are obvious. First there are the superficial wishes of the day, that Christmas with its presents may already be here (a dream of impatience) and accompanying these is the deeper wish, now permanently present, for sexual satisfaction from the dreamer's father. This is immediately replaced by the wish to see once more what was then so fascinating. The mental process then proceeds on its way. Starting from the fulfilment of this last wish with the conjuring up of the primal scene, it passes on to what has now become inevitable—the repudiation of that wish

and its repression.

The diffuseness and elaboration of this commentary have been forced on me by the effort to present the reader with some sort of equivalent for the convincing power of an analysis carried through by oneself; perhaps they may also serve to discourage him from asking for the publication of analyses which have stretched over several years.]

- 42 -

After what has already been said I need only deal shortly with the pathogenic effect of the primal scene and the alteration which its revival produced in his sexual development. We will only trace that one of its effects to which the dream gave expression. Later on we shall have to make it clear that it was not only a single sexual current that started from the primal scene but a whole set of them, that his sexual life was positively

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **70**

splintered up by it. We shall further bear in mind that the activation of this scene (I purposely avoid the word 'recollection') had the same effect as though it were a recent experience. The effects of the scene were deferred, but meanwhile it had lost none of its freshness in the interval between the ages of one and a half and four years. We shall perhaps find in what follows reason to suppose that it produced certain effects even

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **71**

at the time of its perception, that is, from the age of one and a half onwards.

When the patient entered more deeply into the situation of the primal scene, he brought to light the following pieces of self-observation. He assumed to begin with, he said, that the event of which he was a witness was an act of violence<sup>1</sup>, but the expression of enjoyment which he saw on his mother's face did not fit in with this; he was obliged to recognize that the experience was one of satisfaction.<sup>2</sup> What was essentially new for him in his observation of his parents' intercourse was the conviction of the reality of castration—a possibility with which his thoughts had already been occupied previously. (The sight of the two girls micturating, his Nanya's threat, the governess's interpretation

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **72**

<sup>1</sup> [See in this connection Freud's paper on 'The Sexual Theories of Children' (**1908c**), *Standard Edition*, **9**, 220-21.]

<sup>2</sup> We might perhaps best do justice to this statement of the patient's by supposing that the object of his observation was in the first instance a coitus in the normal position, which cannot fail to produce the impression of being a sadistic act, and that only after this was the position altered, so that he had an opportunity for making other observations and judgements. This hypothesis, however, was not confirmed with certainty, and moreover does not seem to me indispensable. We must not forget the actual situation which lies behind the abbreviated description given in the text: the patient under analysis, at an age of over twenty-five years, was putting the impressions and impulses of his fourth year into words which he would never have found at that time. If we fail to notice this, it may easily seem comic and incredible that a child of four should be capable of such technical judgements and learned notions. This is simply another instance of *deferred action*. At the age of one and a half the child receives an impression to which he is unable to react adequately; he is only able to understand it and to be moved by it when the impression is revived in him at the age of four; and only twenty years later, during the analysis, is he able to grasp with his conscious mental processes what was then going on in him. The patient justifiably disregards the three periods of time, and puts his present ego into the situation which is so long past. And in this we follow him, since with correct self-observation and interpretation the effect must be the same as though the distance between the second and third periods of time could be neglected. Moreover, we have no other means of describing the events of the second period. [This theory of deferred action had already been put forward by Freud in the *Studies on Hysteria* (**1895d**) in discussing what he then called 'retention hysteria' (*Standard Ed.*, **2**, **161** ff.). He also gave a very elaborate account of its workings in hysteria in Part II of his posthumously-published 'Project' (**1950a**), also written in 1895. But in these earlier statements of the theory the effects of the primal scenes were deferred at least until the age of puberty, and the primal scenes themselves were never imagined as happening at so early an age as in the present case.]

of the sugar-sticks, the recollection of his father having beaten a snake to pieces.) For now he saw with his own eyes the wound of which his Nanya had spoken, and understood that its presence was a necessary condition of intercourse with his father. He could no longer confuse it with the bottom, as he had in his observation of the little girls.<sup>1</sup>

The dream ended in a state of anxiety, from which he did not recover until he had his Nanya with him. He fled, therefore, from his father to her. His anxiety was a repudiation of the wish for sexual satisfaction from his father—the trend which had put the dream into his head. The form taken by the anxiety, the fear of ‘being eaten by the wolf’, was only the (as we shall hear, regressive) transposition of the wish to be copulated with by his father, that is, to be given sexual satisfaction in the same way as his mother. His last sexual aim, the passive attitude towards his father, succumbed to repression, and fear of his father appeared in its place in the shape of the wolf phobia.

And the driving force of this repression? The circumstances of the case show that it can only have been his narcissistic genital libido, which, in the form of concern for his male organ, was fighting against a satisfaction whose attainment seemed to involve the renunciation of that organ. And it was from his threatened narcissism that he derived the masculinity with which he defended himself against his passive attitude towards his father.

We now observe that at this point in our narrative we must make an alteration in our terminology. During the dream he had reached a new phase in his sexual organization. Up to then the sexual opposites had been for him *active* and *passive*. Since his seduction his sexual aim had been a passive one, of being touched on the genitals; it was then transformed, by regression to the earlier stage of the sadistic-anal organization, into the masochistic aim of being beaten or punished. It was a matter of indifference to him whether he reached this aim with a man or with a woman. He had travelled, without considering the difference of sex, from his Nanya to his father; he had longed to have his penis touched by his Nanya, and had tried to provoke a beating from his father. Here his genitals were left out of account; though the connection with them which had been

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 72

<sup>1</sup> We shall learn later on [p. 77 ff.], when we come to trace out his anal eroticism, how he further dealt with this portion of the problem.

concealed by the regression was still expressed in his phantasy of being beaten *on the penis*. The activation of the primal scene in the dream now brought him back to the genital organization. He discovered the vagina and the biological significance of masculine and feminine. He understood now that active was the same as masculine, while passive was the same as feminine. His passive sexual aim should now have been transformed into a feminine one, and have expressed itself as 'being copulated with by his father' instead of 'being beaten by him on the genitals or on the bottom'. This feminine aim, however, underwent repression and was obliged to let itself be replaced by fear of the wolf.

We must here break off the discussion of his sexual development until new light is thrown from the later stages of his history upon these earlier ones. For the proper appreciation of the wolf phobia we will only add that both his father and mother became wolves. His mother took the part of the castrated wolf, which let the others climb upon it; his father took the part of the wolf that climbed. But his fear, as we have heard him assure us, related only to the standing wolf, that is, to his father. It must further strike us that the fear with which the dream ended had a model in his grandfather's story. For in this the castrated wolf, which had let the others climb upon it, was seized with fear as soon as it was reminded of the fact of its taillessness. It seems, therefore, as though he had identified himself with his castrated mother during the dream, and was now fighting against that fact. 'If you want to be sexually satisfied by Father', we may perhaps represent him as saying to himself, 'you must allow yourself to be castrated like Mother; but I won't have that.' In short, a clear protest on the part of his masculinity! Let us, however, plainly understand that the sexual development of the case that we are now examining has a great disadvantage from the point of view of research, for it was by no means undisturbed. It was first decisively influenced by the seduction, and was then diverted by the scene of observation of the coitus, which in its deferred action operated like a second seduction.<sup>1</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 74

<sup>1</sup> [An attempt was later made by Rank (1926) to make use of the wolf dream to support his own views on the analysis of the transference. His arguments were criticized by Ferenczi (1927), who quoted the text of a letter from the 'Wolf Man' himself which had been put at his disposal by Freud.]



## V A Few Discussions

The whale and the polar bear, it has been said, cannot wage war on each other, for since each is confined to his own element they cannot meet. It is just as impossible for me to argue with workers in the field of psychology or of the neuroses who do not recognize the postulates of psycho-analysis and who look on its results as artefacts. But during the last few years there has grown up another kind of opposition as well, among people who, in their own opinion at all events, take their stand upon the ground of analysis, who do not dispute its technique or results, but who merely think themselves justified in drawing other conclusions from the same material and in submitting it to other interpretations.

As a rule, however, theoretical controversy is unfruitful. No sooner has one begun to depart from the material on which one ought to be relying, than one runs the risk of becoming intoxicated with one's own assertions and, in the end, of supporting opinions which any observation would have contradicted. For this reason it seems to me to be incomparably more useful to combat dissentient interpretations by testing them upon particular cases and problems.

I have remarked above (see p. 38) that it will certainly be considered improbable, firstly, that 'a child at the tender age of one and a half could be in a position to take in the perceptions of such a complicated process and to preserve them so accurately in his unconscious; secondly, that it is possible at the age of four for a deferred revision of this material to penetrate the understanding; and finally, that any procedure could succeed in bringing into consciousness coherently and convincingly the details of a scene of this kind which had been experienced and understood in such circumstances'.

The last question is purely one of fact. Anyone who will take the trouble of pursuing an analysis into these depths by means of the prescribed technique will convince himself that it is decidedly possible. Anyone who neglects this, and breaks off the analysis in some higher stratum, has waived his right of

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 76

forming a judgement on the matter. But the interpretation of what is arrived at in depth-analysis is not decided by this.

The two other doubts are based on a low estimate of the importance of early infantile impressions and an unwillingness to ascribe such enduring effects to them. The supporters of this view look for the causes of neuroses almost exclusively in the grave conflicts of later life; they assume that the importance of childhood is only held up before our eyes in analysis on account of the inclination of neurotics for expressing their present interests in reminiscences and symbols from the remote past. Such an estimate of the importance of the infantile factor would involve the disappearance of much that has formed part of the most intimate characteristics of analysis, though also, no doubt, of much that raises resistance to it and alienates the confidence of the outsider.

The view, then, that we are putting up for discussion is as follows. It maintains that scenes from early infancy, such as are brought up by an exhaustive analysis of neuroses (as, for instance, in the present case), are not reproductions of real occurrences, to which it is possible to ascribe an influence over the course of the patient's later life and over the formation of his symptoms. It considers them rather as products of the imagination, which find their instigation in mature life, which are intended to serve as some kind of symbolic representation of real wishes and interests, and which owe their origin to a regressive tendency, to a turning-away from the tasks of the present. If that is so, we can of course spare ourselves the necessity of attributing such a surprising amount to the mental life and intellectual capacity of children of the tenderest age.

Besides the desire which we all share for the rationalization and simplification of our difficult problem, there are all sorts of facts that speak in favour of this view. It is also possible to eliminate beforehand one objection to it which may arise, particularly in the mind of a practising analyst. It must be admitted that, if this view of these scenes from infancy were the right one, the carrying-out of analysis would not in the first instance be altered in any respect. If neurotics are endowed with the evil characteristic of diverting their interest from the present and of attaching it to these regressive substitutes, the products of their imagination, then there is absolutely nothing

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 77

for it but to follow upon their tracks and bring these unconscious productions into consciousness; for, leaving on one side their lack of value from the point of view of reality, they are of the utmost value from our point of view, since they are for the moment the bearers and possessors of the interest which we want to set free so as to be able to direct it on to the tasks of the present. The analysis would have to run precisely the same course as one which had a *naïf* faith in the truth of the phantasies. The difference would only come at the end of the analysis, after the phantasies had been laid bare. We should then say to the patient: 'Very well, then; your neurosis proceeded *as though* you had received these impressions and spun them out in your childhood. You will see, of course, that that is out of the question. They were products of your imagination which were intended to divert you from the real tasks that lay before you. Let us now enquire what these tasks were, and what lines of communication ran between them and your phantasies.' After the infantile phantasies had been disposed of in this way, it would be possible to begin a second portion of the treatment, which would be concerned with the patient's real life.

Any shortening of this course, any alteration, that is, in psycho-analytic treatment, as it has hitherto been practised, would be technically inadmissible. Unless these phantasies are made conscious to the patient to their fullest extent, he cannot obtain command of the interest which is attached to them. If his attention is diverted from them as soon as their existence and their general outlines are divined, support is simply being given to the work of repression, thanks to which they have been put beyond the patient's reach in spite of all his pains. If he is given a premature sense of their unimportance, by being informed, for instance, that it will only be a question of phantasies, which, of course, have no real significance, his co-operation will never be secured for the task of bringing them into consciousness. A correct procedure, therefore, would make no alteration in the technique of analysis, whatever estimate might be formed of these scenes from infancy.

I have already mentioned that there are a number of facts which can be brought up in support of the view of these scenes being regressive phantasies. And above all there is this one: so far as my experience hitherto goes, these scenes from infancy are not reproduced during the treatment as recollections, they

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 78

are the products of construction. Many people will certainly think that this single admission decides the whole dispute.

I am anxious not to be misunderstood. Every analyst knows—and he has met with the experience on countless occasions—that in the course of a successful treatment the patient brings up a large number of spontaneous recollections from his childhood, for the appearance of which (a first appearance, perhaps) the physician feels himself entirely blameless, since he has not made any attempt at a construction which could have put any material of the sort into the patient's head. It does not necessarily follow that these previously unconscious recollections are always true. They may be; but they are often distorted from the truth, and interspersed with imaginary elements, just like the so-called screen memories which are preserved spontaneously. All that I mean to say is this: scenes, like this one in my present patient's case, which date from such an early period and exhibit a similar content, and which further lay claim to such an extraordinary significance for the history of the case, are as a rule not reproduced as recollections, but have to be divined—constructed—gradually and laboriously from an aggregate of indications.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it would be sufficient for the purposes of the argument if my admission that scenes of this kind do not become conscious in the shape of recollections applied only to cases of obsessional neurosis, or even if I were to limit my assertion to the case which we are studying here.

I am not of opinion, however, that such scenes must necessarily be phantasies because they do not reappear in the shape of recollections. It seems to me absolutely equivalent to a recollection, if the memories are replaced (as in the present case) by dreams the analysis of which invariably leads back to the same scene and which reproduce every portion of its content in an inexhaustible variety of new shapes. Indeed, dreaming is another kind of remembering, though one that is subject to the conditions that rule at night and to the laws of dream-formation. It is this recurrence in dreams that I regard as the explanation of the fact that the patients themselves gradually acquire a profound conviction of the reality of these primal scenes, a conviction which is in no respect inferior to one based on recollection<sup>2</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **79**

<sup>1</sup> [Cf. Freud's paper on 'Constructions in Analysis' (**1937d**).]

<sup>2</sup> A passage in the first edition of my *Interpretation of Dreams* (**1900a**) will show at what an early stage I was occupied with this problem. On p. **126** [*Standard Ed.*, **4**, **184**] of that work there is an analysis of a remark occurring in a dream: 'That's not obtainable any longer.' It is explained that the phrase originated from myself. 'A few days earlier I had explained to the patient that the earliest experiences of childhood were "not obtainable any longer as such" but were replaced in analysis by "transferences" and dreams.

There is naturally no need for those who take the opposite view to abandon as hopeless their fight against such arguments. It is well known that dreams can be guided.<sup>1</sup> And the sense of conviction felt by the person analysed may be the result of suggestion, which is always having new parts assigned to it in the play of forces involved in analytic treatment. The old-fashioned psychotherapist, it might be maintained, used to suggest to his patient that he was cured, that he had overcome his inhibitions, and so on; while the psycho-analyst, on this view, suggests to him that when he was a child he had some experience or other, which he must now recollect in order to be cured. This would be the difference between the two.

Let it be clearly understood that this last attempt at an explanation on the part of those who take the view opposed to mine results in the scenes from infancy being disposed of far more fundamentally than was announced to begin with. What was argued at first was that they were not realities but phantasies. But what is argued now is evidently that they are phantasies not of the patient but of the analyst himself, who forces them upon the person under analysis on account of some complexes of his own. An analyst, indeed, who hears this reproach, will comfort himself by recalling how gradually the construction of this phantasy which he is supposed to have originated came about, and, when all is said and done, how independently of the physician's incentive many points in its development proceeded; how, after a certain phase of the treatment, everything seemed to converge upon it, and how later, in the synthesis, the most various and remarkable results radiated out from it; how not only the large problems but the smallest peculiarities in the history of the case were cleared up by this single assumption. And he will disclaim the possession of the amount of ingenuity necessary for the concoction of an occurrence which can fulfil all these demands. But even this plea will be without an effect

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **80**

<sup>1</sup> The *mechanism* of dreaming cannot be influenced; but dream *material* is to some extent subject to orders. [See Section VII of 'Remarks on the Theory and Practice of Dream-Interpretation' (**1923c**).]

on an adversary who has not experienced the analysis himself. On the one side there will be a charge of subtle self-deception, and on the other of obtuseness of judgement; it will be impossible to arrive at a decision.

Let us turn to another factor which supports this opposing view of these constructed scenes from infancy. It is as follows: There can be no doubt of the real existence of all the processes which have been brought forward in order to explain these doubtful structures as phantasies, and their importance must be recognized. The diversion of interest from the tasks of real life,<sup>1</sup> the existence of phantasies in the capacity of substitutes for unperformed actions, the regressive tendency which is expressed in these productions—regressive in more than one sense, in so far as there is involved simultaneously a shrinking-back from life and a harking-back to the past—all these things hold good, and are regularly confirmed by analysis. One might think that they would also suffice to explain the supposed reminiscences from early infancy which are under discussion; and in accordance with the principle of economy in science<sup>2</sup> such an explanation would have the advantage over one which is inadequate without the support of new and surprising assumptions.

I may here venture to point out that the antagonistic views which are to be found in the psycho-analytic literature of to-day are usually arrived at on the principle of *pars pro toto*. From a highly composite combination one part of the operative factors is singled out and proclaimed as the truth; and in its favour the other part, together with the whole combination, is then contradicted. If we look a little closer, to see which group of factors it is that has been given the preference, we shall find that it is the one that contains material already known from other sources or what can be most easily related to that material. Thus, Jung picks out actuality and regression, and Adler, egoistic motives. What is left over, however, and rejected as false, is precisely what is new in psycho-analysis and peculiar to it. This is the easiest method of repelling the revolutionary and inconvenient advances of psycho-analysis.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **81**

<sup>1</sup> I have good reasons for preferring to say ‘the diversion of *libido* from current *conflicts*’. [For Freud's view of the relation between libido and interest, see the end of Section I of his paper on narcissism (1914c).]

<sup>2</sup> [Commonly known as ‘Occam's razor’.]

It is worth while remarking that none of the factors which are adduced by the opposing view in order to explain these scenes from infancy had to wait for recognition until Jung brought them forward as novelties. The notion of a current conflict, of a turning away from reality, of a substitutive satisfaction obtained in phantasy, of a regression to material from the past—all of this (employed, moreover, in the same context, though perhaps with a slightly different terminology) had for years formed an integral part of my own theory. It was not the whole of it, however. It was only one part of the causes leading to the formation of neuroses—that part which, starting from reality, operates in a regressive direction. Side by side with this I left room for another influence which, starting from the impressions of childhood, operates in a forward direction, which points a path for the libido that is shrinking away from life, and which makes it possible to understand the otherwise inexplicable regression to childhood. Thus on my view the two factors cooperate in the formation of symptoms. But an earlier co-operation seems to me to be of equal importance. I am of opinion that *the influence of childhood makes itself felt already in the situation at the beginning of the formation of a neurosis, since it plays a decisive part in determining whether and at what point the individual shall fail to master the real problems of life.*

What is in dispute, therefore, is the significance of the infantile factor. The problem is to find a case which can establish that significance beyond any doubt. Such, however, is the case which is being dealt with so exhaustively in these pages and which is distinguished by the characteristic that the neurosis in later life was preceded by a neurosis in early childhood. It is for that very reason, indeed, that I have chosen it to report upon. Should any one feel inclined to reject it because the animal phobia strikes him as not sufficiently serious to be recognized as an independent neurosis, I may mention that the phobia was succeeded without any interval by an obsessional ceremonial, and by obsessional acts and thoughts, which will be discussed in the following sections of this paper.

The occurrence of a neurotic disorder in the fourth and fifth years of childhood proves, first and foremost, that infantile experiences are by themselves in a position to produce a neurosis, without there being any need for the addition of a flight from some task which has to be faced in real life. It may be objected

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **82**

that even a child is constantly being confronted with tasks which it would perhaps be glad to evade. That is so; but the life of a child under school age is easily observable, and we can examine it to see whether any 'tasks' are to be found in it capable of determining the causation of a neurosis. But we discover nothing but instinctual impulses which the child cannot satisfy and which it is not old enough to master, and the sources from which these impulses arise.

As was to be expected, the enormous shortening of the interval between the outbreak of the neurosis and the date of the childhood experiences which are under discussion reduces to the narrowest limits the regressive part of the causation, while it brings into full view the portion of it which operates in a forward direction, the influence of earlier impressions. The present case history will, I hope, give a clear picture of this position of things. But there are other reasons why neuroses of childhood give a decisive answer to the question of the nature of primal scenes—the earliest experiences of childhood that are brought to light in analysis.

Let us assume as an uncontradicted premise that a primal scene of this kind has been correctly deduced technically, that it is indispensable to a comprehensive solution of all the conundrums that are set us by the symptoms of the infantile disorder, that all the consequences radiate out from it, just as all the threads of the analysis have led up to it. Then, in view of its content, it is impossible that it can be anything else than the reproduction of a reality experienced by the child. For a child, like an adult, can produce phantasies only from material which has been acquired from some source or other; and with children, some of the means of acquiring it (by reading, for instance) are cut off, while the space of time at their disposal for acquiring it is short and can easily be searched with a view to the discovery of any such sources.

In the present case the content of the primal scene is a picture of sexual intercourse between the boy's parents in a posture especially favourable for certain observations. Now it would be no evidence whatever of the reality of such a scene if we were to find it in a patient whose symptoms (the effects of the scene, that is) had appeared at some time or other in the later part of his life. A person such as this might have acquired the impressions, the ideas, and the knowledge on a great number of

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 84



different occasions in the course of the long interval; he might then have transformed them into an imaginary picture, have projected them back into his childhood, and have attached them to his parents. If, however, the effects of a scene of this sort appear in the child's fourth or fifth year, then he must have witnessed the scene at an age even earlier than that. But in that case we are still faced with all the disconcerting consequences which have arisen from the analysis of this infantile neurosis. The only way out would be to assume that the patient not only unconsciously imagined the primal scene, but also concocted the alteration in his character, his fear of the wolf, and his religious obsession; but such an expedient would be contradicted by his otherwise sober nature and by the direct tradition in his family. It must therefore be left at this (I can see no other possibility): either the analysis based on the neurosis in his childhood is all a piece of nonsense from start to finish, or everything took place just as I have described it above.

At an earlier stage in the discussion [p. 41] we were brought up against an ambiguity in regard to the patient's predilection for female nates and for sexual intercourse in the posture in which they are especially prominent. It seemed necessary to trace this predilection back to the intercourse which he had observed between his parents, while at the same time a preference of this kind is a general characteristic of archaic constitutions which are predisposed to an obsessional neurosis. But the contradiction is easily resolved if we regard it as a case of overdetermination. The person who was the subject of his observation of this posture during intercourse was, after all, his father in the flesh, and it may also have been from him that he had inherited this constitutional predilection. Neither his father's subsequent illness nor his family history contradicts this; as has been mentioned already [p. 21 f.], a brother of his father's died in a condition which must be regarded as the outcome of a severe obsessional disorder.

In this connection we may recall that, at the time of his seduction as a boy of three and a quarter,<sup>1</sup> his sister had uttered a remarkable calumny against his good old nurse, to the effect that she stood all kinds of people on their heads and then took hold of them by their genitals (p. 20). We cannot fail to be struck by the idea that perhaps the sister, at a similar tender

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 85

<sup>1</sup> [In the editions before 1924 this read 'three and a half'.]

age, also witnessed the same scene as was observed by her brother later on, and that it was this that had suggested to her notion about 'standing people on their heads' during the sexual act. This hypothesis would also give us a hint of the reason for her own sexual precocity.

[Originally<sup>1</sup> I had no intention of pursuing the discussion of the reality of 'primal scenes' any further in this place. Since, however, I have meanwhile had occasion in my *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* [1916-17, Lecture XXIII] to treat the subject on more general lines and with no controversial aim in view, it would be misleading if I omitted to apply the considerations which determined my other discussion of the matter to the case that is now before us. I therefore proceed as follows by way of supplement and rectification.—There remains the possibility of taking yet another view of the primal scene underlying the dream—a view, moreover, which obviates to a large extent the conclusion that has been arrived at above and relieves us of many of our difficulties. But the theory which seeks to reduce scenes from infancy to the level of regressive symbols will gain nothing even by this modification; and indeed that theory seems to me to be finally disposed of by this (as it would be by any other) analysis of an infantile neurosis.

This other view which I have in mind is that the state of affairs can be explained in the following manner. It is true that we cannot dispense with the assumption that the child observed a copulation, the sight of which gave him a conviction that castration might be more than an empty threat. Moreover, the significance which he subsequently came to attach to the postures of men and women, in connection with the development of anxiety on the one hand, and as a condition upon which his falling in love depended on the other hand, leaves us no choice but to conclude that it must have been a *coitus a tergo, more ferarum*. But there is another factor which is not so irreplaceable and which may be dropped. Perhaps what the child observed was not copulation between his parents but copulation between animals, which he then displaced on to his parents, as though he had inferred that his parents did things in the same way.

Colour is lent to this view above all by the fact that the wolves

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 86

<sup>1</sup> [Author's square bracket. See end of footnote, p. 7.]

in the dream were actually sheep-dogs and, moreover, appear as such in the drawing. Shortly before the dream the boy was repeatedly taken to visit the flocks of sheep [p. 30], and there he might see just such large white dogs and probably also observe them copulating. I should also like to bring into this connection the number three, which the dreamer introduced without adducing any further motive [p. 37, n. 5], and I would suggest that he had kept in his memory the fact that he had made three such observations with the sheep-dogs. What supervened during the expectant excitement of the night of his dream was the transference on to his parents of his recently acquired memory-picture, with *all* its details, and it was only thus that the powerful emotional effects which followed were made possible. He now arrived at a deferred understanding of the impressions which he may have received a few weeks or months earlier—a process such as all of us perhaps have been through in our own experiences. The transference from the copulating dogs on to his parents was accomplished not by means of his making an inference accompanied by words but by his searching out in his memory a real scene in which his parents had been together and which could be coalesced with the situation of the copulation. All the details of the scene which were established in the analysis of the dream may have been accurately reproduced. It was really on a summer's afternoon while the child was suffering from malaria, the parents were both present, dressed in white, when the child woke up from his sleep, but—the scene was innocent. The rest had been added by the inquisitive child's subsequent wish, based on his experiences with the dogs, to witness his parents too in their love-making; and the scene which was thus imagined now produced all the effects that we have catalogued, just as though it had been entirely real and not fused together out of two components, the one earlier and indifferent, the other later and profoundly impressive.

It is at once obvious how greatly the demands on our credulity are reduced. We need no longer suppose that the parents copulated in the presence of their child (a very young one, it is true)—which was a disagreeable idea for many of us. The period of time during which the effects were deferred is very greatly diminished; it now covers only a few months of the child's fourth year and does not stretch back at all into the first dark

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 87

years of childhood. There remains scarcely anything strange in the child's conduct in making the transference from the dogs on to his parents and in being afraid of the wolf instead of his father. He was in that phase of the development of his attitude towards the world which I have described in *Totem and Taboo* [1912-13, Essay IV] as the return of totemism. The theory which endeavours to explain the primal scenes found in neuroses as retrospective phantasies of a later date seems to obtain powerful support from the present observation, in spite of our patient being of the tender age of four years. Young though he was, he was yet able to succeed in replacing an impression of his fourth year by an imaginary trauma at the age of one and a half. This regression, however, seems neither mysterious nor tendentious. The scene which was to be made up had to fulfil certain conditions which, in consequence of the circumstances of the dreamer's life, could only be found in precisely this early period; such, for instance, was the condition that he should be in bed in his parents' bedroom.

But something that I am able to adduce from the analytic findings in other cases will seem to most readers to be the decisive factor in favour of the correctness of the view here proposed. Scenes of observing sexual intercourse between parents at a very early age (whether they be real memories or phantasies) are as a matter of fact by no means rarities in the analyses of neurotic mortals. Possibly they are no less frequent among those who are not neurotics. Possibly they are part of the regular store in the—conscious or unconscious—treasury of their memories. But as often as I have been able by means of analysis to bring out a scene of this sort, it has shown the same peculiarity which startled us with our present patient too: it has related to *coitus a tergo*, which alone offers the spectator a possibility of inspecting the genitals. There is surely no need any longer to doubt that what we are dealing with is only a phantasy, which is invariably aroused, perhaps, by an observation of the sexual intercourse of animals. And yet more: I have hinted [p. 38] that my description of the 'primal scene' has remained incomplete because I have reserved for a later moment my account of the way in which the child interrupted his parents' intercourse. I must now add that this method of interruption is also the same in every case.

I can well believe that I have now laid myself open to grave

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 88

aspersions on the part of the readers of this case history. If these arguments in favour of such a view of the 'primal scene' were at my disposal, how could I possibly have taken it on myself to begin by advocating one which seemed so absurd? Or have I made these new observations, which have obliged me to alter my original view, in the interval between the first draft of the case history and this addition, and am I for some reason or other unwilling to admit the fact? I will admit something else instead: I intend on this occasion to close the discussion of the reality of the primal scene with a *non liquet*.<sup>1</sup> This case history is not yet at an end; in its further course a factor will emerge which will shake the certainty which we seem at present to enjoy. Nothing, I think, will then be left but to refer my readers to the passages in my *Introductory Lectures* in which I have treated the problem of primal phantasies or primal scenes.]

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 89

<sup>1</sup> ['It is not clear'—a verdict where the evidence in a trial is inconclusive.]

## VI The Obsessional Neurosis

Now for the third time the patient came under a new influence that gave a decisive turn to his development. When he was four and a half years old, and as his state of irritability and apprehensiveness had still not improved, his mother determined to make him acquainted with the Bible story in the hope of distracting and elevating him. Moreover, she succeeded; his initiation into religion brought the previous phase to an end, but at the same time it led to the anxiety symptoms being replaced by obsessional symptoms. Up to then he had not been able to get to sleep easily because he had been afraid of having bad dreams like the one he had had that night before Christmas; now he was obliged before he went to bed to kiss all the holy pictures in the room, to recite prayers, and to make innumerable signs of the cross upon himself and upon his bed.

His childhood now falls clearly into the following epochs: first, the earliest period up to the seduction when he was three and a quarter years old, during which the primal scene took place; secondly, the period of the alteration in his character up to the anxiety dream (four years old); thirdly, the period of the animal phobia up to his initiation into religion (four and a half years old); and from then onwards the period of the obsessional neurosis up to a time later than his tenth year. That there should be an instantaneous and clear-cut displacement of one phase by the next was not in the nature of things or of our patient; on the contrary, the preservation of all that had gone before and the co-existence of the most different sorts of currents were characteristic of him. His naughtiness did not disappear when the anxiety set in, and persisted with slowly diminishing force during the period of piety. But there was no longer any question of a wolf phobia during this last phase. The obsessional neurosis ran its course discontinuously; the first attack was the longest and most intense, and others came on when he was eight and ten, following each time upon exciting causes which stood in a clear relationship to the content of the neurosis.

His mother told him the sacred story herself, and also

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **91**

made his Nanya read aloud to him about it out of a book adorned with illustrations. The chief emphasis in the narrative was naturally laid upon the story of the passion. His Nanya, who was very pious and superstitious, added her own commentary on it, but was also obliged to listen to all the little critic's objections and doubts. If the battles which now began to convulse his mind finally ended in a victory for faith, his Nanya's influence was not without its share in this result.

What he related to me as his recollection of his reactions to this initiation was met by me at first with complete disbelief. It was impossible, I thought, that these could have been the thoughts of a child of four and a half or five; he had probably referred back to this remote past the thoughts which had arisen from the reflections of a grown man of thirty.<sup>1</sup> But the patient would not hear of this correction; I could not succeed, as in so many other differences of opinion between us, in convincing him; and in the end the correspondence between the thoughts which he had recollected and the symptoms of which he gave particulars, as well as the way in which the thoughts fitted into his sexual development, compelled me on the contrary to come to believe him. And I then reflected that this very criticism of the doctrines of religion, which I was unwilling to ascribe to the child, was only achieved by an infinitesimal minority of adults.

I shall now bring forward the material of his recollections, and not until afterwards try to find some path that may lead to an explanation of them.

The impression which he received from the sacred story was, to begin with, as he reported, by no means an agreeable one. He set his face, in the first place, against the feature of suffering in the figure of Christ, and then against his story as a whole. He turned his critical dissatisfaction against God the Father. If he

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **92**

<sup>1</sup> I also repeatedly attempted to throw the patient's whole story forward by one year at all events, and in that way to refer the seduction to an age of four and a quarter, the dream to his fifth birthday, etc. As regards the intervals between the events there was no possibility of gaining any time. But the patient remained obdurate on the point, though he did not succeed entirely in removing my doubts. A postponement like this for one year would obviously be of no importance as regards the impression made by his story and as regards the discussions and implications attached to it.

were almighty, then it was his fault that men were wicked and tormented others and were sent to Hell for it. He ought to have made them good; he was responsible himself for all wickedness and all torments. The patient took objection to the command that we should turn the other cheek if our right cheek is smitten, and to the fact that Christ had wished on the Cross<sup>1</sup> that the cup might be taken away from him, as well as to the fact that no miracle had taken place to prove that he was the Son of God. Thus his acuteness was on the alert, and was able to search out with remorseless severity the weak points of the sacred narrative.

But to this rationalistic criticism there were very soon added ruminations and doubts, which betray to us that hidden impulses were also at work. One of the first questions which he addressed to his Nanya was whether Christ had had a behind too. His Nanya informed him that he had been a god and also a man. As a man he had had and done all the same things as other men. This did not satisfy him at all, but he succeeded in finding consolation of his own by saying to himself that the behind is really only a continuation of the legs. But hardly had he pacified his dread of having to humiliate the sacred figure, when it flared up again as the further question arose whether Christ used to shit too. He did not venture to put this question to his pious Nanya, but he himself found a way out, and she could not have shown him a better. Since Christ had made wine *out of* nothing, he could also have made food *into* nothing and in this way have avoided defaecating.

We shall be in a better position to understand these ruminations if we return to a piece of his sexual development which we have already mentioned. We know that, after the rebuff from his Nanya [p. 24 f.] and the consequent suppression of the beginnings of genital activity, his sexual life developed in the direction of sadism and masochism. He tormented and ill-treated small animals, imagined himself beating horses, and on the other hand imagined the heir to the throne being beaten<sup>2</sup> In his sadism he maintained his ancient identification with his father; but in his masochism he chose him as a sexual object. He was deep in a phase of the pregenital organization which I

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 93

1 [This should, of course, be the Mount of Olives. Freud informed the translators that the mistake originated from the patient himself.]

2 Especially on the penis (see pp. 26[and 47]).



regard as the predisposition to obsessional neurosis.<sup>1</sup> The operation of the dream, which brought him under the influence of the primal scene, could have led him to make the advance to the genital organization, and to transform his masochism towards his father into a feminine attitude towards him—into homosexuality. But the dream did not bring about this advance; it ended in a state of anxiety. His relation to his father might have been expected to proceed from the sexual aim of being beaten by him to the next aim, namely, that of being copulated with by him like a woman; but in fact, owing to the opposition of his narcissistic masculinity, this relation was thrown back to an even more primitive stage. It was displaced on to a father-surrogate, and at the same time split off in the shape of a fear of being eaten by the wolf. But this by no means disposed of it. On the contrary, we can only do justice to the apparent complexity of the state of affairs by bearing firmly in mind the co-existence of the three sexual trends which were directed by the boy towards his father. From the time of the dream onwards, in his unconscious he was homosexual, and in his neurosis he was at the level of cannibalism; while the earlier masochistic attitude remained the dominant one. All three currents had passive sexual aims; there was the same object, and the same sexual impulse, but that impulse had become split up along three different levels.

His knowledge of the sacred story now gave him a chance of sublimating his predominant masochistic attitude towards his father. He became Christ—which was made specially easy for him on account of their having the same birthday. Thus he became something great and also (a fact upon which enough stress was not laid for the moment) a man. We catch a glimpse of his repressed homosexual attitude in his doubting whether Christ could have a behind, for these ruminations can have had no other meaning but the question whether he himself could be used by his father like a woman—like his mother in the primal scene. When we come to the solution of the other obsessional ideas, we shall find this interpretation confirmed. His reflection that it was insulting to bring the sacred figure into relation with such insinuations corresponded to the repression of his passive homosexuality. It will be noticed that he was

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 94

<sup>1</sup> [See the paper Freud had written on the subject not long before the present one (1913i).]

endeavouring to keep his new sublimation free from the admixture which it derived from sources in the repressed. But he was unsuccessful.

We do not as yet understand why he also rebelled against the passive character of Christ and against his ill-treatment by his Father, and in this way began also to renounce his previous masochistic ideal, even in its sublimation. We may assume that this second conflict was especially favourable to the emergence of the humiliating obsessional thoughts from the first conflict (between the dominant masochistic and the repressed homosexual currents), for it is only natural that in a mental conflict all the currents upon one side or the other should combine with one another, even though they have the most diverse origins. Some fresh information teaches us the motive of this rebelling and at the same time of the criticisms which he levelled at religion.

His sexual researches, too, gained something from what he was told about the sacred story. So far he had had no reason for supposing that children only came from women. On the contrary, his Nanya had given him to believe that he was his father's child, while his sister was his mother's [p. 17]; and this closer connection with his father had been very precious to him. He now heard that Mary was called the Mother of God. So all children came from women, and what his Nanya had said to him was no longer tenable. Moreover, as a result of what he was told, he was bewildered as to who Christ's father really was. He was inclined to think it was Joseph, as he heard that he and Mary had always lived together, but his Nanya said that Joseph was only 'like' his father and that his real father was God. He could make nothing of that. He only understood this much: if the question was one that could be argued about at all, then the relation between father and son could not be such an intimate one as he had always imagined it to be.

The boy had some kind of inkling of the ambivalent feelings towards the father which are an underlying factor in all religions, and attacked his religion on account of the slackening which it implied in this relation between son and father. Naturally his opposition soon ceased to take the form of doubting the truth of the doctrine, and turned instead directly against the figure of God. God had treated his son harshly and cruelly, but he was no better towards men; he had sacrificed his own

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 95

son and had ordered Abraham to do the same. He began to fear God.

If he was Christ, then his father was God. But the God which religion forced upon him was not a true substitute for the father whom he had loved and whom he did not want to have stolen from him. His love for this father of his gave him his critical acuteness. He resisted God in order to be able to cling to his father; and in doing this he was really upholding the old father against the new. He was faced by a trying part of the process of detaching himself from his father.

His old love for his father, which had been manifest in his earliest period, was therefore the source of his energy in struggling against God and of his acuteness in criticizing religion. But on the other hand this hostility to the new God was not an original reaction either; it had its prototype in a hostile impulse against his father, which had come into existence under the influence of the anxiety-dream, and it was at bottom only a revival of that impulse. The two opposing currents of feeling, which were to rule the whole of his later life, met here in the ambivalent struggle over the question of religion. It followed, moreover, that what this struggle produced in the shape of symptoms (the blasphemous ideas, the compulsion which came over him of thinking ‘God—shit’, ‘God—swine’) were genuine compromise-products, as we shall see from the analysis of these ideas in connection with his anal erotism.

Some other obsessional symptoms of a less typical sort pointed with equal certainty to his father, while at the same time showing the connection between the obsessional neurosis and the earlier occurrences.

A part of the pious ritual by means of which he eventually atoned for his blasphemies was the command to breathe in a ceremonious manner under certain conditions. Each time he made the sign of the cross he was obliged to breathe in deeply or to exhale forcibly. In his native tongue ‘breath’ is the same word as ‘spirit’, so that here the Holy Ghost came in. He was obliged to breathe in the Holy Spirit, or to breathe out the evil spirits which he had heard and read about.<sup>1</sup> He ascribed too to these evil spirits the blasphemous thoughts for which he had to inflict such heavy penance upon himself. He was, however, also

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 96

<sup>1</sup> This symptom, as we shall hear, had developed after his sixth year and when he could already read.

obliged to exhale when he saw beggars, or cripples, or ugly, old, or wretched-looking people; but he could think of no way of connecting this obsession with the spirits. The only account he could give to himself was that he did it so as not to become like such people.

Eventually, in connection with a dream, the analysis elicited the information that the breathing out at the sight of pitiable-looking people had begun only after his sixth year and was related to his father. He had not seen his father for many months, when one day his mother said she was going to take the children with her to the town and show them something that would very much please them. She then took them to a sanatorium, where they saw their father again; he looked ill, and the boy felt very sorry for him. His father was thus the prototype of all the cripples, beggars, and poor people in whose presence he was obliged to breathe out; just as a father is the prototype of the bogies that people see in anxiety-states, and of the caricatures that are drawn to bring derision upon some one. We shall learn elsewhere [p. 88] that this attitude of compassion was derived from a particular detail of the primal scene, a detail which only became operative in the obsessional neurosis at this late moment.

Thus his determination not to become like cripples (which was the motive of his breathing out in their presence) was his old identification with his father transformed into the negative. But in so doing he was also copying his father in the positive sense, for the heavy breathing was an imitation of the noise which he had heard coming from his father during the intercourse.<sup>1</sup> He had derived the Holy Ghost from this manifestation of male sensual excitement. Repression had turned this breathing into an evil spirit, which had another genealogy as well: namely, the malaria [p. 37] from which he had been suffering at the time of the primal scene.

His repudiation of these evil spirits corresponded to an unmistakable strain of asceticism in him which also found expression in other reactions. When he heard that Christ had once cast out some evil spirits into a herd of swine which then rushed down a precipice, he thought of how his sister in the earliest years of her childhood, before he could remember, had rolled down on to the beach from the cliff-path above the harbour. She too was an evil spirit and a swine. It was a short

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 98

<sup>1</sup> Assuming the reality of the primal scene.

road from here to 'God—swine'. His father himself had shown that he was no less of a slave to sensuality. When he was told the story of the first of mankind he was struck by the similarity of his lot to Adam's. In conversation with his Nanya he professed hypocritical surprise that Adam should have allowed himself to be dragged into misfortune by a woman, and promised her that he would never marry. A hostility towards women, due to his seduction by his sister, found strong expression at this time. And it was destined to disturb him often enough in his later erotic life. His sister came to be the permanent embodiment for him of temptation and sin. After he had been to confession he seemed to himself pure and free from sin. But then it appeared to him as though his sister were lying in wait to drag him again into sin, and in a moment he had provoked a quarrel with her which made him sinful once more. Thus he was obliged to keep on reproducing the event of his seduction over and over again. Moreover, he had never given away his blasphemous thoughts at confession, in spite of their being such a weight on his mind.

We have been led unawares into a consideration of the symptoms of the later years of the obsessional neurosis; and we shall therefore pass over the occurrences of the intervening period and shall proceed to describe its termination. We already know that, apart from its permanent strength, it underwent occasional intensifications: once—though the episode must for the present remain obscure to us—at the time of the death of a boy living in the same street, with whom he was able to identify himself. When he was ten years old he had a German tutor, who very soon obtained a great influence over him. It is most instructive to observe that the whole of his strict piety dwindled away, never to be revived, after he had noticed and had learnt from enlightening conversations with his tutor that this father-surrogate attached no importance to piety and set no store by the truth of religion. His piety sank away along with his dependence upon his father, who was now replaced by a new and more sociable father. This did not take place, however, without one last flicker of the obsessional neurosis; and from this he particularly remembered the obsession of having to think of the Holy Trinity whenever he saw three heaps of dung lying together in the road. In fact he never gave way to fresh ideas without making one last attempt at clinging to what had lost its values for him. When his tutor discouraged him

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 99

from his cruelties to small animals he did indeed put an end to those misdeeds, but not until he had again cut up caterpillars for a last time to his thorough satisfaction. He still behaved in just the same way during the analytic treatment, for he showed a habit of producing transitory 'negative reactions'; every time something had been conclusively cleared up, he attempted to contradict the effect for a short while by an aggravation of the symptom which had been cleared up. It is quite the rule, as we know, for children to treat prohibitions in the same kind of way. When they have been rebuked for something (for instance, because they are making an unbearable din), they repeat it once more after the prohibition before stopping it. In this way they gain the point of apparently stopping of their own accord and of disobeying the prohibition.

Under the German tutor's influence there arose a new and better sublimation of the patient's sadism, which, with the approach of puberty, had then gained the upper hand over his masochism. He developed an enthusiasm for military affairs, for uniforms, weapons and horses, and used them as food for continual day-dreams. Thus, under a man's influence, he had got free from his passive attitudes, and found himself for the time being on fairly normal lines. It was as an after-effect of his affection for the tutor, who left him soon afterwards, that in his later life he preferred German things (as, for instance, physicians, sanatoria, women) to those belonging to his native country (representing his father)—a fact which was incidentally of great advantage to the transference during the treatment.

There was another dream, which belongs to the period before his emancipation by the tutor, and which I mention because it was forgotten until its appearance during the treatment. He saw himself riding on a horse and pursued by a gigantic caterpillar. He recognized in this dream an allusion to an earlier one from the period before the tutor, which we had interpreted long before. In this earlier dream he saw the Devil dressed in black and in the upright posture with which the wolf and the lion had terrified him so much in their day. He was pointing with his out-stretched finger at a gigantic snail. The patient had soon guessed that this Devil was the Demon out of a well-known poem,<sup>1</sup> and that the dream itself was a version of a very popular picture representing the Demon in a love-scene

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **100**

<sup>1</sup> [Lermontov's 'The Demon'.]

with a girl. The snail was in the woman's place, as being a perfect female sexual symbol. Guided by the Demon's pointing gesture, we were soon able to give as the dream's meaning that the patient was longing for some one who should give him the last pieces of information that were still missing upon the riddle of sexual intercourse, just as his father had given him the first in the primal scene long before.

In connection with the later dream, in which the female symbol was replaced by the male one, he remembered a particular event which had occurred a short time before the dream. Riding on the estate one day, he passed a peasant who was lying asleep with his little boy beside him. The latter woke his father and said something to him, whereupon the father began to abuse the rider and to pursue him till he rode off hastily. There was also a second recollection, that on the same estate there were trees that were quite white, spun all over by caterpillars. We can see that he took flight from the realization of the phantasy of the son lying with his father, and that he brought in the white trees in order to make an allusion to the anxiety-dream of the white wolves on the walnut tree. It was thus a direct outbreak of dread of the feminine attitude towards men against which he had at first protected himself by his religious sublimation and was soon to protect himself still more effectively by the military one [p. 69].

It would, however, be a great mistake to suppose that after the removal of the obsessional symptoms no permanent effects of the obsessional neurosis remained behind. The process had led to a victory for the faith of piety over the rebelliousness of critical research, and had had the repression of the homosexual attitude as its necessary condition. Lasting disadvantages resulted from both these factors. His intellectual activity remained seriously impaired after this first great defeat. He developed no zeal for learning, he showed no more of the acuteness with which at the tender age of five he had criticized and dissected the doctrines of religion. The repression of his over-powerful homosexuality, which was accomplished during the anxiety-dream, reserved that important impulse for the unconscious, kept it directed towards its original aim, and withdrew it from all the sublimations to which it is susceptible in other circumstances. For this reason the patient was without all those social interests which give a content to life. It was only when,

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 101

during the analytic treatment, it became possible to liberate his shackled homosexuality that this state of affairs showed any improvement; and it was a most remarkable experience to see how (without any direct advice from the physician) each piece of homosexual libido which was set free sought out some application in life and some attachment to the great common concerns of mankind.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **103**



## VII Anal Erotism and the Castration Complex

I must beg the reader to bear in mind that I obtained this history of an infantile neurosis as a by-product, so to speak, during the analysis of an illness in mature years. I have therefore been obliged to put it together from even smaller fragments than are usually at one's disposal for purposes of synthesis. This task, which is not difficult in other respects, finds a natural limit when it is a question of forcing a structure which is itself in many dimensions on to the two-dimensional descriptive plane. I must therefore content myself with bringing forward fragmentary portions, which the reader can then put together into a living whole. The obsessional neurosis that has been described grew up, as has been repeatedly emphasized, on the basis of a sadistic-anal constitution. But we have hitherto discussed only one of the two chief factors—the patient's sadism and its transformations. Everything that concerns his anal erotism has intentionally been left on one side so that it might be brought together and discussed at this later stage.

Analysts have long been agreed that the multifarious instinctual impulses which are comprised under the name of anal erotism play an extraordinarily important part, which it would be quite impossible to over-estimate, in building up sexual life and mental activity in general. It is equally agreed that one of the most important manifestations of the transformed erotism derived from this source is to be found in the treatment of money,<sup>1</sup> for in the course of life this precious material attracts on to itself the psychical interest which was originally proper to faeces, the product of the anal zone. We are accustomed to trace back interest in money, in so far as it is of a libidinal and not of a rational character, to excretory pleasure, and we expect normal people to keep their relations to money entirely free from libidinal influences and regulate them according to the demands of reality.

In our patient, at the time of his later illness, these relations

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **103**

<sup>1</sup> [See Freud's paper on 'Character and Anal Erotism' (**1908b**).]

were disturbed to a particularly severe degree, and this fact was not the least considerable element in his lack of independence and his incapacity for dealing with life. He had become very rich through legacies from his father and uncle; it was obvious that he attached great importance to being taken for rich, and he was liable to feel very much hurt if he was undervalued in this respect. But he had no idea how much he possessed, what his expenditure was, or what balance was left over. It was hard to say whether he ought to be called a miser or a spendthrift. He behaved now in this way and now in that, but never in a way that seemed to show any consistent intention. Some striking traits, which I shall further discuss below, might have led one to regard him as a hardened plutocrat, who considered his wealth as his greatest personal advantage, and who would never for a moment allow emotional interests to weigh against pecuniary ones. Yet he did not value other people by their wealth, and, on the contrary, showed himself on many occasions unassuming, helpful, and charitable. Money, in fact, had been withdrawn from his conscious control, and meant for him something quite different.

I have already mentioned (p. 23) that I viewed with grave suspicion the way in which he consoled himself for the loss of his sister, who had become his closest companion during her latter years, with the reflection that now he would not have to share his parents' inheritance with her. But what was perhaps even more striking was the calmness with which he was able to relate this, as though he had no comprehension of the coarseness of feeling to which he was thus confessing. It is true that analysis rehabilitated him by showing that his grief for his sister had merely undergone a displacement; but it then became quite inexplicable why he should have tried to find a substitute for his sister in an increase of wealth.

He himself was puzzled by his behaviour in another connection. After his father's death the property that was left was divided between him and his mother. His mother administered it, and, as he himself admitted, met his pecuniary claims irreproachably and liberally. Yet every discussion of money matters that took place between them used to end with the most violent reproaches on his side, to the effect that she did not love him, that she was trying to economize at his expense, and that she would probably rather see him dead so as to have

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 104

sole control over the money. His mother used then to protest her disinterestedness with tears, and he would thereupon grow ashamed of himself and declare with justice that he thought nothing of the sort of her. But he was sure to repeat the same scene at the first opportunity.

Many incidents, of which I will relate two, show that, for a long time before the analysis, faeces had had this significance of money for him. At a time when his bowel as yet played no part in his complaint, he once paid a visit to a poor cousin of his in a large town. As he left him he reproached himself for not giving this relative financial support, and immediately afterwards had what was 'perhaps the most urgent need for relieving his bowels that he had experienced in his life'. Two years later he did in fact settle an annuity upon this cousin. Here is the other case. At the age of eighteen, while he was preparing for his leaving-examination at school, he visited a friend and came to an agreement with him on a plan which seemed advisable on account of the dread which they shared of failing in the examination.<sup>1</sup> It had been decided to bribe the school servant, and the patient's share of the sum to be provided was naturally the larger. On the way home he thought to himself that he should be glad to give even more if only he could succeed in getting through, if only he could be sure that nothing would happen to him in the examination—and an accident of another sort really did happen to him<sup>2</sup> before he reached his own front door.

We shall be prepared to hear that during his later illness he suffered from disturbances of his intestinal function which were very obstinate, though various circumstances caused them to fluctuate in intensity. When he came under my treatment he had become accustomed to enemas, which were given him by an attendant; spontaneous evacuations did not occur for months at a time, unless a sudden excitement from some particular direction intervened, as a result of which normal activity of the bowels might set in for a few days. His principal subject of

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **105**

<sup>1</sup> [The German word '*Durchfall*' means literally 'falling through'; it is used in the sense of 'failing', as in an examination, and also of 'diarrhoea'.] The patient informed me that his native tongue has no parallel to the familiar German use of '*Durchfall*' as a description for disturbances of the bowels.

<sup>2</sup> This expression has the same meaning in the patient's native tongue as in German. [The German idiom refers euphemistically to the excretory processes.]

complaint was that for him the world was hidden in a veil, or that he was cut off from the world by a veil. This veil was torn only at one moment—when, after an enema, the contents of the bowel left the intestinal canal; and he then felt well and normal again.<sup>1</sup>

The colleague to whom I referred the patient for a report upon his intestinal condition was perspicacious enough to explain it as being a functional one, or even psychically determined, and to abstain from any active medicinal treatment. Moreover, neither this nor dieting were of any use. During the years of analytic treatment there was no spontaneous motion—apart from the sudden influences that I have mentioned. The patient allowed himself to be convinced that if the intractable organ received more intensive treatment things would only be made worse, and contented himself with bringing on an evacuation once or twice a week by means of an enema or a purgative.

In discussing these intestinal troubles I have given more space to the patient's later illness than has been my plan elsewhere in this work, which is concerned with his infantile neurosis. I have done so for two reasons: first, because the intestinal symptoms were in point of fact carried forward from the infantile neurosis into the later one with little alteration, and secondly, because they played a principal part in the conclusion of the treatment.

We know how important doubt is to the physician who is analysing an obsessional neurosis.<sup>2</sup> It is the patient's strongest weapon, the favourite expedient of his resistance. This same doubt enabled our patient to lie entrenched behind a respectful indifference and to allow the efforts of the treatment to slip past him for years together. Nothing changed, and there was no way of convincing him. At last I recognized the importance of the intestinal trouble for my purposes; it represented the small trait of hysteria which is regularly to be found at the root of an obsessional neurosis.<sup>3</sup> I promised the patient a

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **106**

<sup>1</sup> The effect was the same whether he had the enema given him by some one else or whether he managed it himself. [For this symptom of 'derealization' cf. Freud's 'A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis' (**1936a**), *Standard Edition*, **22**, 244 f.]

<sup>2</sup> [Cf. the case history of the 'Rat Man' (**1909d**), *Standard Ed.*, **10**, **241-3**.]

<sup>3</sup> [Freud had already remarked on this at the beginning of Section II of his second paper on 'The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence' (**1896b**). He alluded to the point again in Chapter V of *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (**1926d**).]

complete recovery of his intestinal activity, and by means of this promise made his incredulity manifest. I then had the satisfaction of seeing his doubt dwindle away, as in the course of the work his bowel began, like a hysterically affected organ, to 'join in the conversation',<sup>1</sup> and in a few weeks' time recovered its normal functions after their long impairment.

I now turn back to the patient's childhood—to a time at which it was impossible that faeces could have had the significance of money for him.

Intestinal disorders set in very early with him, and especially in the form which is the most frequent and, among children, the most normal—namely, incontinence. We shall certainly be right, however, in rejecting a pathological explanation of these earliest occurrences, and in regarding them only as evidence of the patient's intention not to let himself be disturbed or checked in the pleasure attached to the function of evacuation. He found a great deal of enjoyment (such as would tally with the natural coarseness of many classes of society, though not of his) in anal jokes and exhibitions, and this enjoyment had been retained by him until after the beginning of his later illness.

During the time of the English governess it repeatedly happened that he and his Nanya had to share that obnoxious lady's bedroom. His Nanya noticed with comprehension the fact that precisely on those nights he made a mess in his bed, though otherwise this had ceased to happen a long time before. He was not in the least ashamed of it; it was an expression of defiance against the governess.

A year later (when he was four and a half), during the anxiety period, he happened to make a mess in his knickerbockers in the day-time. He was terribly ashamed of himself, and as he was being cleaned he moaned that he could not go on living like that. So that in the meantime something had changed; and by following up his lament we came upon the traces of this something. It turned out that the words 'he could not go on living like that' were repeated from some one else. His mother had once<sup>2</sup> taken him with her when she was walking

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **107**

<sup>1</sup> [This phrase ('mitsprechen') goes back to the *Studies on Hysteria* (1895d), *Standard Ed.*, 2, 296 f.]

<sup>2</sup> When this happened was not exactly fixed; but in any case before the anxiety-dream when he was four, and probably before his parents' absence from home.

down to the station with the doctor who had come to visit her. During this walk she had lamented over her pains and haemorrhages and had broken out in the same words, 'I cannot go on living like this', without imagining that the child whose hand she was holding would keep them in his memory. Thus his lament (which, moreover, he was to repeat on innumerable occasions during his later illness) had the significance of an identification with his mother.

There soon appeared in his recollection what was evidently, in respect both of its date and of its content, a missing intermediate link between these two events. It once happened at the beginning of his anxiety period that his apprehensive mother gave orders that precautions were to be taken to protect the children from dysentery, which had made its appearance in the neighbourhood of the estate. He made enquiries as to what that might be; and after hearing that when you have dysentery you find blood in your stool he became very nervous and declared that there was blood in his own stool; he was afraid he would die of dysentery, but allowed himself to be convinced by an examination that he had made a mistake and had no need to be frightened. We can see that in this dread he was trying to put into effect an identification with his mother, whose haemorrhages he had heard about in the conversation with her doctor. In his later attempt at identification (when he was four and a half) he had dropped any mention of the blood; he no longer understood himself, for he imagined that he was ashamed of himself and was not aware that he was being shaken by a dread of death, though this was unmistakably revealed in his lament.

At that time his mother, suffering as she was from an abdominal affection, was in general nervous, both about herself and the children; it is most probable that his own nervousness, besides its other motives, was based on an identification with his mother.

Now what can have been the meaning of this identification with his mother?

Between the impudent use he made of his incontinence when he was three and a half, and the horror with which he viewed it when he was four and a half, there lies the dream with which his anxiety period began—the dream which gave him a deferred comprehension of the scene he had experienced when

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **108**

he was one and a half (p. 45), and an explanation of the part played by women in the sexual act. It is only another step to connect the change in his attitude towards defaecation with this same great revulsion. Dysentery was evidently his name for the illness which he had heard his mother lamenting about, and which it was impossible to go on living with; he did not regard his mother's disease as being abdominal but as being intestinal. Under the influence of the primal scene he came to the conclusion that his mother had been made ill by what his father had done to her;<sup>1</sup> and his dread of having blood in his stool, of being as ill as his mother, was his repudiation of being identified with her in this sexual scene—the same repudiation with which he awoke from the dream. But the dread was also a proof that in his later elaboration of the primal scene he had put himself in his mother's place and had envied her this relation with his father. The organ by which his identification with women, his passive homosexual attitude to men, was able to express itself was the anal zone. The disorders in the function of this zone had acquired the significance of feminine impulses of tenderness, and they retained it during the later illness as well.

At this point we must consider an objection, the discussion of which may contribute much to the elucidation of the apparent confusion of the circumstances. We have been driven to assume that during the process of the dream he understood that women are castrated, that instead of a male organ they have a wound which serves for sexual intercourse, and that castration is the necessary condition of femininity; we have been driven to assume that the threat of this loss induced him to repress his feminine attitude towards men, and that he awoke from his homosexual enthusiasm in anxiety. Now how can this comprehension of sexual intercourse, this recognition of the vagina, be brought into harmony with the selection of the bowel for the purpose of identification with women? Are not the intestinal symptoms based on what is probably an older notion, and one which in any case completely contradicts the dread of castration—the notion, namely, that sexual intercourse takes place at the anus?

To be sure, this contradiction is present; and the two views are entirely inconsistent with each other. The only question is whether they need be consistent. Our bewilderment arises

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 109

<sup>1</sup> A conclusion which was probably not far from the truth.

only because we are always inclined to treat unconscious mental processes like conscious ones and to forget the profound differences between the two psychical systems.

When his Christmas dream, with its excitement and expectancy, conjured up before him the picture of the sexual intercourse of his parents as it had once been observed (or construed) by him, there can be no doubt that the first view of it to come up was the old one, according to which the part of the female body which received the male organ was the anus. And, indeed, what else could he have supposed when at the age of one and a half he was a spectator of the scene?<sup>1</sup> But now came the new event that occurred when he was four years old. What he had learnt in the meantime, the allusions which he had heard to castration, awoke and cast a doubt on the 'cloacal theory'; they brought to his notice the difference between the sexes and the sexual part played by women. In this contingency he behaved as children in general behave when they are given an unwished-for piece of information—whether sexual or of any other kind. He rejected what was new (in our case from motives connected with his fear of castration) and clung fast to what was old. He decided in favour of the intestine and against the vagina, just as, for similar motives, he later on took his father's side against God. He repudiated the new information and clung to the old theory. The latter must have provided the material for his identification with women, which made its appearance later as a dread of death in connection with the bowels, and for his first religious scruples, about whether Christ had had a behind, and so on. It is not that his new insight remained without any effect; quite the reverse. It developed an extraordinarily powerful effect, for it became a motive for keeping the whole process of the dream under repression and for excluding it from being worked over later in consciousness. But with that its effect was exhausted; it had no influence in deciding the sexual problem. That it should have been possible from that time onwards for a fear of castration to exist side by side with an identification with women by means of the bowel admittedly involved a contradiction. But it was only a logical contradiction—which is not saying much. On the contrary, the whole process is characteristic of the way in which the unconscious works. A

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **110**

<sup>1</sup> Or so long as he did not grasp the sense of the copulation between the dogs.



repression is something very different from a rejection.

When we were studying the genesis of the wolf phobia, we followed the effect of his new insight into the sexual act; but now that we are investigating the disturbances of the intestinal function, we find ourselves working on the basis of the old cloacal theory. The two points of view remained separated from each other by a stage of repression. His feminine attitude towards men, which had been repudiated by the act of repression, drew back, as it were, into the intestinal symptoms, and expressed itself in the attacks of diarrhoea, constipation, and intestinal pain, which were so frequent during the patient's childhood. His later sexual phantasies, which were based on a correct sexual knowledge, were thus able to express themselves regressively as intestinal troubles. But we cannot understand them until we have explained the modifications which take place in the significance of faeces from the first years of childhood onward<sup>1</sup>

I have already hinted at an earlier point in my story [p. 38] that one portion of the content of the primal scene has been kept back. I am now in a position to produce this missing portion. The child finally interrupted his parents' intercourse by passing a stool, which gave him an excuse for screaming. All the considerations which I have raised above in discussing the rest of the content of the same scene apply equally to the criticism of this additional piece. The patient accepted this concluding act when I had constructed it, and appeared to confirm it by producing 'transitory symptoms'. A further additional piece which I had proposed, to the effect that his father was annoyed at the interruption and gave vent to his ill-humour by scolding him, had to be dropped. The material of the analysis did not react to it.

The additional detail which I have now brought forward cannot of course be put on a level with the rest of the content of the scene. Here it is not a question of an impression from outside, which must be expected to re-emerge in a number of later indications, but of a reaction on the part of the child himself. It would make no difference to the story as a whole if this

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 111

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 'On Transformations of Instinct as Exemplified in Anal Erotism' (1917c). [See below, p. 125. Though that paper was published before the present case history, it was probably written later.]

demonstration had not occurred, or if it had been taken from a later period and inserted into the course of the scene. But there can be no question of how we are to regard it. It is a sign of a state of excitement of the anal zone (in the widest sense). In other similar cases an observation like this of sexual intercourse has ended with a discharge of urine; a grown-up man in the same circumstances would feel an erection. The fact that our little boy passed a stool as a sign of his sexual excitement is to be regarded as a characteristic of his congenital sexual constitution. He at once assumed a passive attitude, and showed more inclination towards a subsequent identification with women than with men.

At the same time, like every other child, he was making use of the content of the intestines in one of its earliest and most primitive meanings. Faeces are the child's first *gift*, the first sacrifice on behalf of his affection, a portion of his own body which he is ready to part with, but only for the sake of some one he loves<sup>1</sup> To use faeces as an expression of defiance, as our patient did against the governess when he was three and a half, is merely to turn this earlier 'gift' meaning into the negative. The '*grumus merdae*' [heap of faeces] left behind by criminals upon the scene of their misdeeds seems to have both these meanings: contumely, and a regressive expression of making amends. It is always possible, when a higher stage has been reached, for use still to be made of the lower one in its negative and debased sense. The contrariety is a manifestation of repression.<sup>2</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **112**

<sup>1</sup> I believe there can be no difficulty in substantiating the statement that infants only soil with their excrement people whom they know and are fond of; they do not consider strangers worthy of this distinction. In my *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905d) [*Standard Ed.*, 7, 185-7] I mentioned the very first purpose to which faeces are put—namely, the auto-erotic stimulation of the intestinal mucous membrane. We now reach a further stage, at which a decisive part in the process of defaecation is played by the child's attitude to some object to whom he thus shows himself obedient or agreeable. This relation is one that persists; for even older children will only allow themselves to be assisted in defaecating and urinating by particular privileged persons, though in this connection the prospect of other forms of satisfaction is also involved.

<sup>2</sup> In the unconscious, as we are aware, 'No' does not exist, and there is no distinction between contraries. Negation is only introduced by the process of repression. [See 'The Unconscious' (1915e), Section V, and the later paper on 'Negation' (1925h).]

At a later stage of sexual development faeces take on the meaning of a *baby*. For babies, like faeces, are born through the anus. The 'gift' meaning of faeces readily admits of this transformation. It is a common usage to speak of a baby as a 'gift'. The more frequent expression is that the woman has 'given' the man a baby; but in the usage of the unconscious equal attention is justly paid to the other aspect of the relation, namely, to the woman having 'received'<sup>1</sup> the baby as a gift from the man.

The meaning of faeces as *money* branches off from the 'gift' meaning in another direction.

The deeper significance of our patient's early screen memory, to the effect that he had his first fit of rage because he was not given enough presents one Christmas, is now revealed to us. What he was feeling the want of was sexual satisfaction, which he had taken as being anal. His sexual researches came during the course of the dream to understand what they had been prepared for finding before the dream, namely, that the sexual act solved the problem of the origin of babies. Even before the dream he had disliked babies. Once, when he had come upon a small unfledged bird that had fallen out of its nest, he had taken it for a human baby and been horrified at it. The analysis showed that all small animals, such as caterpillars and insects, that he had been so enraged with, had had the meaning of babies to him.<sup>2</sup> His position in regard to his elder sister had given him every opportunity for reflecting upon the relation between elder and younger children. His Nanya had once told him that his mother was so fond of him because he was the youngest, and this gave him good grounds for wishing that no younger child might come after him. His dread of this youngest child was revived under the influence of the dream which brought up before him his parents' intercourse.

To the sexual currents that are already known to us we must therefore add a further one, which, like the rest, started from the primal scene reproduced in the dream. In his identification with women (that is, with his mother) he was ready to give his father a baby, and was jealous of his mother, who had already done so and would perhaps do so again.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **113**

<sup>1</sup> [The word '*empfangen*' in the German means both 'received' and 'conceived'.]

<sup>2</sup> Just as vermin often stand for babies in dreams and phobias.

In a roundabout way, since both 'money' and 'baby' have the sense of 'gift', money can take over the meaning of baby and can thus become the means of expressing feminine (homosexual) satisfaction. This was what occurred with our patient when—he and his sister were staying at a German sanatorium at the time—he saw his father give his sister two large bank notes. In imagination he had always had suspicions of his father's relations with his sister; and at this his jealousy awoke. He rushed at his sister as soon as they were alone, and demanded a share of the money with so much vehemence and such reproaches that his sister, in tears, threw him the whole of it. What had excited him was not merely the actual money, but rather the 'baby'—anal sexual satisfaction from his father. And he was able to console himself with this when, in his father's lifetime, his sister died. The revolting thought which occurred to him when he heard the news of her death [p. 73] in fact meant no more than this: 'Now I am the only child. Now Father will have to love me only.' But though his reflection was in itself perfectly capable of becoming conscious, yet its homosexual background was so intolerable that it was possible for its disguise in the shape of the most sordid avarice to come as a great relief.

Similarly, too, when after his father's death he reproached his mother so unjustifiably with wanting to cheat him out of the money and with being fonder of the money than of him [p. 73 f.]. His old jealousy of her for having loved another child besides him, the possibility of her having wanted another child after him, drove him into making charges which he himself knew were unwarranted.

This analysis of the meaning of faeces makes it clear that the obsessive thoughts which obliged him to connect God with faeces had a further significance beyond the disparagement which he saw in them himself. They were in fact true compromise-products, in which a part was played no less by an affectionate current of devotion than by a hostile current of abuse. 'God—shit' was probably an abbreviation for an offering that one occasionally hears mentioned in its unabbreviated form. 'Shitting on God' [*auf Gott scheissen*] or 'shitting something for God' [*Gott etwas scheissen*] also means giving him a baby or getting him to give one a baby. The old 'gift' meaning in its negative and debased form and the 'baby' meaning that

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 115

was later developed from it are combined with each other in the obsessional phrase. In the latter of these meanings a feminine tenderness finds expression: a readiness to give up one's masculinity if in exchange for it one can be loved like a woman. Here, then, we have precisely the same impulse towards God which was expressed in unambiguous words in the delusional system of the paranoic Senatspräsident Schreber [Freud, 1911c end of Section I].

When later on I come to describing the final clearing up of my patient's symptoms, the way in which the intestinal disorder had put itself at the service of the homosexual current and had given expression to his feminine attitude towards his father will once again become evident. Meanwhile we shall mention a further meaning of faeces, which will lead us on to a discussion of the castration complex.

Since the column of faeces stimulates the erotogenic mucous membrane of the bowel, it plays the part of an active organ in regard to it; it behaves just as the penis does to the vaginal mucous membrane, and acts as it were as its forerunner during the cloacal epoch. The handing over of faeces for the sake of (out of love for) some one else becomes a prototype of castration; it is the first occasion upon which an individual parts with a piece of his own body<sup>1</sup> in order to gain the favour of some other person whom he loves. So that a person's love of his own penis, which is in other respects narcissistic, is not without an element of anal erotism. 'Faeces', 'baby' and 'penis' thus form a unity, an unconscious concept (*sit venia verbo*)—the concept, namely, of 'a little one' that can become separated from one's body. Along these paths of association the libidinal cathexis may become displaced or intensified in ways which are pathologically important and which are revealed by analysis.

We are already acquainted with the attitude which our patient first adopted to the problem of castration. He rejected castration, and held to his theory of intercourse by the anus. When I speak of his having rejected it, the first meaning of the phrase is that he would have nothing to do with it, in the sense of having repressed it. This really involved no judgement upon the question of its existence, but it was the same as if it did not exist. Such an attitude, however, could not have been his final one, even at the time of his infantile neurosis. We find good

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 116

<sup>1</sup> It is as such that faeces are invariably treated by children.

subsequent evidence of his having recognized castration as a fact. In this connection, once again, he behaved in the manner which was so characteristic of him, but which makes it so difficult to give a clear account of his mental processes or to feel one's way into them. First he resisted and then he yielded; but the second reaction did not *do away with* the first. In the end there were to be found in him two contrary currents side by side, of which one abominated the idea of castration, while the other was prepared to accept it and console itself with femininity as a compensation. But beyond any doubt a third current, the oldest and deepest, which did not as yet even raise the question of the reality of castration, was still capable of coming into activity. I have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> reported a hallucination which this same patient had at the age of five and upon which I need only add a brief commentary here.

“When I was five years old, I was playing in the garden near my nurse, and was carving with my pocket-knife in the bark of one of the walnut-trees that come into my dream as well.<sup>2</sup> Suddenly, to my unspeakable terror, I noticed that I had cut through the little finger of my (right or left?) hand, so that it was only hanging on by its skin. I felt no pain, but great fear. I did not venture to say anything to my nurse, who was only a few paces distant, but I sank down on the nearest seat and sat there incapable of casting another glance at my finger. At last I calmed down, took a look at the finger, and saw that it was entirely uninjured.”

After he had received his instruction in the Bible story at the age of four and a half he began, as we know, to make the intense effort of thought which ended in his obsessional piety. We may therefore assume that this hallucination belongs to the period in which he brought himself to recognize the reality of castration and it is perhaps to be regarded as actually marking this step. Even the small correction [see footnote] made by the patient is not without interest. If he had a hallucination of the same

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **117**

1 *Fausse Reconnaissance* (“*Déjà Raconté*”) in *Psycho-Analytic Treatment*’ (**1914a**), [*Standard Ed.*, **13**, **204** f.].

2 Cf. “The Occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy Tales” **[1913d]**. In telling the story again on a later occasion he made the following correction: “I don't believe I was cutting the tree. That was a confusion with another recollection, which must also have been hallucinatorily falsified, of having made a cut in a tree with my knife and of *blood* having come out of the tree.”

dreadful experience which Tasso, in his *Gerusalemme Liberata*, tells of his hero Tancred,<sup>1</sup> we shall perhaps be justified in reaching the interpretation that the tree meant a woman to my little patient as well. Here, then, he was playing the part of his father, and was connecting his mother's familiar haemorrhages with the castration of women, which he now recognized,—with the 'wound'.

His hallucination of the severed finger was instigated, as he reported later on, by the story that a female relation of his had been born with six toes and that the extra one had immediately afterwards been chopped off with an axe. Women, then, had no penis because it was taken away from them at birth. In this manner he came, at the period of the obsessional neurosis, to accept what he had already learned during the dream but had at the time rejected by repression. He must also have become acquainted, during the readings and discussions of the sacred story, with the ritual circumcision of Christ and of the Jews in general.

There is no doubt whatever that at this time his father was turning into the terrifying figure that threatened him with castration. The cruel God with whom he was then struggling—who made men sinful, only to punish them afterwards, who sacrificed his own son and the sons of men—this God threw back his character on to the patient's father, though, on the other hand, the boy was at the same time trying to defend his father against the God. At this point the boy had to fit into a phylogenetic pattern, and he did so, although his personal experiences may not have agreed with it. Although the threats or hints of castration which had come his way had emanated from women,<sup>2</sup> this could not hold up the final result for long. In spite of everything it was his father from whom in the end he came to fear castration. In this respect heredity triumphed over accidental experience; in man's prehistory it was unquestionably the father who practised castration as a punishment and who later softened it down into circumcision. The further

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **118**

<sup>1</sup> [The soul of Tancred's beloved Clorinda was imprisoned in a tree; and when, in ignorance of this, he slashed at it with his sword, blood flowed from the cut. This story is told by Freud at greater length in connection with the 'compulsion to repeat' in Chapter III of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920g), *Standard Ed.*, **18, 22**.]

<sup>2</sup> We already know this as regards his Nanya, and we shall hear of it again in connection with another woman.

the patient went in repressing sensuality during the course of the development of the obsessional neurosis,<sup>1</sup> the more natural it must have become to him to attribute these evil intentions to his father, who was the true representative of sensual activity.

His identification of his father with the castrator<sup>2</sup> became important as being the source of an intense unconscious hostility towards him (which reached the pitch of a death-wish) and of a sense of guilt which reacted against it. Up to this point, however, he was behaving normally—that is to say, like every neurotic who is possessed by a positive Oedipus complex. But the astonishing thing was that even against this there was a counter-current working in him, which, on the contrary, regarded his father as the one who had been castrated and as calling, therefore, for his sympathy.

When I analysed his ceremonial of breathing out whenever he saw cripples, beggars, and such people, I was able to show that that symptom could also be traced back to his father, whom he had felt sorry for when he visited him as a patient in the sanatorium [p. 67]. The analysis made it possible to follow this thread even further back. At a very early period, probably before his seduction (at the age of three and a quarter), there had been on the estate an old day-labourer whose business it was to carry the water into the house. He could not speak, ostensibly because his tongue had been cut out. (He was probably a deaf mute.) The little boy was very fond of him and pitied him deeply. When he died, he looked for him in the sky.<sup>3</sup> Here, then, was the first of the cripples for whom he had felt sympathy, and, as was shown by the context and the point at which

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 119

<sup>1</sup> For evidence of this see pp. 67-8.

<sup>2</sup> Among the most tormenting, though at the same time the most grotesque, symptoms of his later illness was his relation to every tailor from whom he ordered a suit of clothes: his deference and timidity in the presence of this high functionary, his attempts to get into his good books by giving him extravagant tips, and his despair over the results of the work however it might in fact have turned out. [The German word for 'tailor' is '*Schneider*', from the verb '*schneiden*' ('to cut'), a compound of which, '*beschneiden*', means 'to circumcise'. It will be remembered, too, that it was a tailor who pulled off the wolf's tail (pp. 30-1).]

<sup>3</sup> In this connection I may mention some dreams which he had, later than the anxiety-dream, but while he was still on the first estate. These dreams represented the scene of coition as an event taking place between heavenly bodies.



the episode came out in the analysis, an undoubted father-surrogate.

In the analysis this man was associated with the recollection of other servants whom the patient had liked and about whom he emphasized the fact that they had been either sickly or Jews (which implied circumcision). The footman, too, who had helped to clean him after his accident at four and a half [p. 76], had been a Jew and a consumptive and had been an object of his compassion. All of these figures belong to the period before his visit to his father at the sanatorium, that is, before the formation of the symptom; the latter must therefore rather have been intended to ward off (by means of the breathing out) any identification with the object of the patient's pity. Then suddenly, in connection with a dream, the analysis plunged back into the prehistoric period, and led him to assert that during the copulation in the primal scene he had observed the penis disappear, that he had felt compassion for his father on that account, and had rejoiced at the reappearance of what he thought had been lost. So here was a fresh emotional impulse, starting once again from the primal scene. Moreover, the narcissistic origin of compassion (which is confirmed by the word itself)<sup>1</sup> is here quite unmistakably revealed.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 120

<sup>1</sup> [German '*Mitleid*', literally 'suffering with'.]

## VIII Fresh Material from the Primal Period—Solution

It happens in many analyses that as one approaches their end new recollections emerge which have hitherto been kept carefully concealed. Or it may be that on one occasion some unpretentious remark is thrown out in an indifferent tone of voice as though it were superfluous; that then, on another occasion, something further is added, which begins to make the physician prick his ears; and that at last he comes to recognize this despised fragment of a memory as the key to the weightiest secrets that the patient's neurosis has veiled.

Early in the analysis my patient had told me of a memory of the period in which his naughtiness had been in the habit of suddenly turning into anxiety. He was chasing a beautiful big butterfly with yellow stripes and large wings which ended in pointed projections—a swallow-tail, in fact [see p. 16]. Suddenly, when the butterfly had settled on a flower, he was seized with a dreadful fear of the creature, and ran away screaming.

This memory recurred occasionally during the analysis, and called for an explanation; but for a long time none was to be found. Nevertheless it was to be assumed as a matter of course that a detail like this had not kept its place in his recollection on its own account, but that it was a screen-memory, representing something of more importance with which it was in some way connected. One day he told me that in his language a butterfly was called '*babushka*', 'granny'. He added that in general butterflies had seemed to him like women and girls, and beetles and caterpillars like boys. So there could be little doubt that in this anxiety scene a recollection of some female person had been aroused. I will not hide the fact that at that time I put forward the possibility that the yellow stripes on the butterfly had reminded him of similar stripes on a piece of clothing worn by some woman. I only mention this as an illustration to show how inadequate the physician's constructive efforts usually are for clearing up questions that arise, and how

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 122

unjust it is to attribute the results of analysis to the physician's imagination and suggestion.

Many months later, in quite another connection, the patient remarked that the opening and shutting of the butterfly's wings while it was settled on the flower had given him an uncanny feeling. It had looked, so he said, like a woman opening her legs, and the legs then made the shape of a Roman V, which, as we know, was the hour at which, in his boyhood, and even up to the time of the treatment, he used to fall into a depressed state of mind [p. 37].

This was an association which I could never have arrived at myself, and which gained importance from a consideration of the thoroughly infantile nature of the train of association which it revealed. The attention of children, as I have often noticed, is attracted far more readily by movements than by forms at rest; and they frequently base associations upon a similarity of movement which is overlooked or neglected by adults.

After this the little problem was once more left untouched for a long time; but I may mention the facile suspicion that the points or stick-like projections of the butterfly's wings might have had the meaning of genital symbols.

One day there emerged, timidly and indistinctly, a kind of recollection that at a very early age, even before the time of the nurse, he must have had a nursery-maid who was very fond of him. Her name had been the same as his mother's. He had no doubt returned her affection. It was, in fact, a first love that had faded into oblivion. But we agreed that something must have occurred at that time that became of importance later on.

Then on another occasion he emended this recollection. She could not have had the same name as his mother; that had been a mistake on his part, and it showed, of course, that in his memory she had become fused with his mother. Her real name, he went on, had occurred to him in a roundabout way. He had suddenly thought of a store-room, on the first estate, in which fruit was kept after it had been picked, and of a particular sort of pear with a most delicious taste—a big pear with yellow stripes on its skin. The word for 'pear' in his language was '*grusha*', and that had also been the name of the nursery-maid.

It thus became clear that behind the screen memory of the hunted butterfly the memory of the nursery-maid lay concealed.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 123

But the yellow stripes were not on her dress, but on the pear whose name was the same as hers. What, however, was the origin of the anxiety which had arisen when the memory of her had been activated? The obvious answer to this might have been the crude hypothesis that it had been this girl whom, when he was a small child, he had first seen making the movements with her legs which he had fixed in his mind with the Roman V—movements which allow access to the genitals. We spared ourselves such theorizing as this and waited for more material.

Very soon after this there came the recollection of a scene, incomplete, but, so far as it was preserved, definite. Grusha was kneeling on the floor, and beside her a pail and a short broom made of a bundle of twigs; he was also there, and she was teasing him or scolding him.

The missing elements could easily be supplied from other directions. During the first months of the treatment he had told me of how he had suddenly fallen in love in a compulsive manner with a peasant girl from whom, in his eighteenth year, he had contracted the precipitating cause of his later illness<sup>1</sup> When he told me this he had displayed a most extraordinary unwillingness to give me the girl's name. It was an entirely isolated instance of resistance, for apart from it he obeyed the fundamental rule of analysis unreservedly. He asserted, however, that the reason for his being so much ashamed of mentioning the name was that it was a purely peasant name and that no girl of gentle birth could possibly be called by it. When eventually the name was produced, it turned out to be *Matrona*, which has a motherly ring about it. The shame was evidently displaced. He was not ashamed of the fact that these love-affairs were invariably concerned with girls of the humblest origin; he was ashamed only of the name. If it should turn out that the affair with *Matrona* had something in common with the *Grusha* scene, then the shame would have to be transferred back to that early episode.

He had told me another time that when he heard the story of John Huss he had been greatly moved, and that his attention had been held by the bundles of firewood that were dragged up when he was burnt at the stake. Now his sympathy for Huss created a perfectly definite suspicion in my mind, for I have

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 124

<sup>1</sup> [A gonorrhoeal infection. Cf. p. 7.]

often come upon this sympathy in youthful patients and I have always been able to explain it in the same way. One such patient even went so far as to produce a dramatized version of Huss's career; he began to write his play on the day on which he lost the object with whom he was secretly in love. Huss perished by fire, and (like others who possess the same qualification) he becomes the hero of people who have at one time suffered from enuresis. My patient himself connected the bundles of firewood used for the execution of Huss with the nursery-maid's broom or bundle of twigs.

This material fitted together spontaneously and served to fill in the gaps in the patient's memory of the scene with Grusha. When he saw the girl scrubbing the floor he had micturated in the room and she had rejoined, no doubt jokingly, with a threat of castration<sup>1</sup>

I do not know if my readers will have already guessed why it is that I have given such a detailed account of this episode from the patient's early childhood.<sup>2</sup> It provides an important link between the primal scene and the later compulsive love [p. 41] which came to be of such decisive significance in his subsequent career, and it further shows us a condition upon which his falling in love depended and which elucidates that compulsion.

When he saw the girl on the floor engaged in scrubbing it, and kneeling down, with her buttocks projecting and her back horizontal, he was faced once again with the posture which his mother had assumed in the copulation scene. She became

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 125

<sup>1</sup> It is very remarkable that the reaction of shame should be so intimately connected with involuntary emptying of the bladder (whether in the day-time or at night) and not equally so, as one would have expected, with incontinence of the bowels. Experience leaves no room for doubt upon the point. The regular relation that is found to exist between incontinence of the bladder and fire also provides matter for reflection. It is possible that these reactions and relations represent precipitates from the history of human civilization derived from a lower stratum than anything that is preserved for us in the traces surviving in myths or folklore. [Freud had discussed the connection between enuresis and dreaming of fire in his case history of 'Dora' (1905e), *Standard Ed.*, 7, 71-2. He returned to the subject in a footnote in Chapter III of *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930a) and later devoted a paper to it (1932a).]

<sup>2</sup> It may be assigned to a time at which he was about two and a half: between his supposed observation of intercourse and his seduction.

his mother to him; he was seized with sexual excitement owing to the activation of this picture;<sup>1</sup> and, like his father (whose action he can only have regarded at the time as micturition), he behaved in a masculine way towards her. His micturition on the floor was in reality an attempt at a seduction, and the girl replied to it with a threat of castration, just as though she had understood what he meant.

The compulsion which proceeded from the primal scene was transferred on to this scene with Grusha and was carried forward by it. But the condition upon which his falling in love depended underwent a change which showed the influence of the second scene: it was transferred from the woman's posture to the occupation on which she was engaged while in that posture. This was clear, for instance, in the episode of Matrona. He was walking through the village which formed part of their (later) estate [cf. p. 15], when he saw a peasant girl kneeling by the pond and employed in washing clothes in it. He fell in love with the girl instantly and with irresistible violence, although he had not yet been able to get even a glimpse of her face. By her posture and occupation she had taken the place of Grusha for him. We can now see how it was that the shame which properly related to the content of the scene with Grusha could become attached to the name of Matrona.

Another attack of falling in love, dating from a few years earlier, shows even more clearly the compelling influence of the Grusha scene. A young peasant girl, who was a servant in the house, had long attracted him, but he succeeded in keeping himself from approaching her. One day, when he came upon her in a room by herself, he was overwhelmed by his love. He found her kneeling on the floor and engaged in scrubbing it, with a pail and a broom beside her—in fact, exactly as he had seen the girl in his childhood.

Even his final choice of object, which played such an important part in his life, is shown by its details (though they cannot be adduced here) to have been dependent upon the same condition and to have been an offshoot of the compulsion which, starting from the primal scene and going on to the scene with Grusha, had dominated his love-choice. I have remarked on an earlier page that I recognize in the patient an endeavour to debase his love-object. This is to be explained as

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 126

<sup>1</sup> This was *before* the dream.

a reaction against pressure from the sister who was so much his superior. But I promised at the same time (see pp. 22-3) to show that this self-assertive motive was not the only determinant, but that it concealed another and deeper one based on purely erotic motives. These were brought to light by the patient's memory of the nursery-maid scrubbing the floor—*physically* debased too, by the by. All his later love-objects were surrogates for this one person, who through the accident of her attitude had herself become his first mother-surrogate. The patient's first association in connection with the problem of his fear of the butterfly can now easily be explained retrospectively as a distant allusion to the primal scene (the hour of five). He confirmed the connection between the Grusha scene and the threat of castration by a particularly ingenious dream, which he himself succeeded in deciphering. 'I had a dream,' he said, 'of a man tearing off the wings of an *Espe*.' '*Espe*?' I asked; 'what do you mean by that?' 'You know; that insect with yellow stripes on its body, that stings. This must be an allusion to Grusha, the pear with the yellow stripes.' I could now put him right: 'So what you mean is a *Wespe* [wasp].' 'Is it called a *Wespe* ? I really thought it was called an *Espe*.' (Like so many other people, he used his difficulties with a foreign language as a screen for symptomatic acts.) 'But *Espe*, why, that's myself: S. P.' (which were his initials).<sup>1</sup> The *Espe* was of course a mutilated *Wespe*. The dream said clearly that he was avenging himself on Grusha for her threat of castration.

The action of the two-and-a-half-year-old boy in the scene with Grusha is the earliest effect of the primal scene which has come to our knowledge. It represents him as copying his father, and shows us a tendency towards development in a direction which would later deserve the name of masculine. His seduction drove him into passivity—for which, in any case, the way was prepared by his behaviour when he was a witness of his parents' intercourse.

I must here turn for a moment to the history of the treatment. When once the Grusha scene had been assimilated—the first experience that he could really remember, and one which he had remembered without any conjectures or intervention on my part—the problem of the treatment had every appearance of having been solved. From that time forward there were no more resistances; all that remained to be done was to collect

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 127

<sup>1</sup> [In Austria '*Espe*' and '*S.P.*' would be pronounced exactly alike.]

and to co-ordinate. The old trauma theory of the neuroses,<sup>1</sup> which was after all built up upon impressions gained from psycho-analytic practice, had suddenly come to the front once more. Out of critical interest I made one more attempt to force upon the patient another view of his story, which might commend itself more to sober common sense. It was true that there could be no doubt about the scene with Grusha, but, I suggested, in itself that scene meant nothing; it had been emphasized *ex post facto* by a regression from the circumstances of his object-choice, which, as a result of his intention to debase, had been diverted from his sister on to servant girls. On the other hand, his observation of intercourse, I argued, was a phantasy of his later years; its historical nucleus may perhaps have been an observation or an experience by the patient of the administration of an innocent enema. Some of my readers will possibly be inclined to think that with such hypotheses as these I was for the first time beginning to approach an understanding of the case; but the patient looked at me uncomprehendingly and a little contemptuously when I put this view before him, and he never reacted to it again. I have already stated my own arguments against any such rationalization at their proper point in the discussion. [Section V above.]

[Thus<sup>2</sup> the Grusha scene, by explaining the conditions governing the patient's object-choice—conditions which were of decisive importance in his life—prevents our over-estimating the significance of his intention to debase women. But it does more than this. It affords me a justification for having refused on an earlier page (see p. 60) to adopt unhesitatingly, as the only tenable explanation, the view that the primal scene was derived from an observation made upon animals shortly before the dream. The Grusha scene emerged in the patient's memory spontaneously and through no effort of mine. His fear of the yellow-striped butterfly, which went back to that scene, proved that the scene had had a significant content, or that he had been able to attach this significance to its content subsequently. By means of the accompanying associations and the inferences

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 128

<sup>1</sup> [See the discussion of this in Freud's paper on the part played by sexuality in the aetiology of the neuroses (1906a), *Standard Ed.*, 7, 273 ff.]

<sup>2</sup> [Author's square bracket. See end of footnote, p. 7.]



that followed from them, it was possible with certainty to supply this significant element which was lacking in the patient's memory. It then appeared that his fear of the butterfly was in every respect analogous to his fear of the wolf; in both cases it was a fear of castration, which was, to begin with, referred to the person who had first uttered the threat of castration, but was then transposed on to another person to whom it was bound to become attached in accordance with phylogenetic precedent. The scene with Grusha had occurred when the patient was two and a half, but the anxiety-episode with the yellow butterfly was certainly subsequent to the anxiety-dream. It was easy to understand how the patient's later comprehension of the possibility of castration had retrospectively brought out the anxiety in the scene with Grusha. But that scene in itself contained nothing objectionable or improbable; on the contrary, it consisted entirely of commonplace details which gave no grounds for scepticism. There was nothing in it which could lead one to attribute its origin to the child's imagination; such a supposition, indeed, seemed scarcely possible.

The question now arises whether we are justified in regarding the fact that the boy micturated, while he stood looking at the girl on her knees scrubbing the floor, as a proof of sexual excitement on his part. If so, the excitement would be evidence of the influence of an earlier impression, which might equally have been the actual occurrence of the primal scene or an observation made upon animals before the age of two and a half. Or are we to conclude that the situation as regards Grusha was entirely innocent, that the child's emptying his bladder was purely accidental, and that it was not until later that the whole scene became sexualized in his memory, after he had come to recognize the importance of similar situations?

On these issues I can venture upon no decision. I must confess, however, that I regard it as greatly to the credit of psychoanalysis that it should even have reached the stage of *raising* such questions as these. Nevertheless, I cannot deny that the scene with Grusha, the part it played in the analysis, and the effects that followed from it in the patient's life can be most naturally and completely explained if we consider that the primal scene, which may in other cases be a phantasy, was a reality in the present one. After all, there is nothing impossible

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 129

about it; and the hypothesis of its reality is entirely compatible with the inciting action of the observations upon animals which are indicated by the sheep-dogs in the dream-picture.

I will now turn from this unsatisfactory conclusion to a consideration of the problem which I have attempted in my *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* [Lecture XXIII]. I should myself be glad to know whether the primal scene in my present patient's case was a phantasy or a real experience; but, taking other similar cases into account, I must admit that the answer to this question is not in fact a matter of very great importance. These scenes of observing parental intercourse, of being seduced in childhood, and of being threatened with castration are unquestionably an inherited endowment, a phylogenetic heritage, but they may just as easily be acquired by personal experience. With my patient, his seduction by his elder sister was an indisputable reality; why should not the same have been true of his observation of his parents' intercourse?

All that we find in the prehistory of neuroses is that a child catches hold of this phylogenetic experience where his own experience fails him. He fills in the gaps in individual truth with prehistoric truth; he replaces occurrences in his own life by occurrences in the life of his ancestors. I fully agree with Jung<sup>1</sup> in recognizing the existence of this phylogenetic heritage; but I regard it as a methodological error to seize on a phylogenetic explanation before the ontogenetic possibilities have been exhausted. I cannot see any reason for obstinately disputing the importance of infantile prehistory while at the same time freely acknowledging the importance of ancestral prehistory. Nor can I overlook the fact that phylogenetic motives and productions themselves stand in need of elucidation, and that in quite a number of instances this is afforded by factors in the childhood of the individual. And, finally, I cannot feel surprised that what was originally produced by certain circumstances in prehistoric times and was then transmitted in the shape of a predisposition to its re-acquirement should, since the same circumstances persist, emerge once more as a concrete event in the experience of the individual.]

Room must also be found in the interval between the primal

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **130**

<sup>1</sup> *Die Psychologie der unbewussten Prozesse*, 1917. This was published too late for it to have influenced my *Introductory Lectures*.

scene and the seduction (from the age of one and a half to the age of three and a quarter) for the dumb water-carrier [p. 87]. He served the patient as a father-surrogate just as Grusha served him as a mother-surrogate. I do not think there is any justification for regarding this as an example of the intention to debase, even though it is true that both parents have come to be represented by servants. A child pays no regard to social distinctions, which have little meaning for him as yet; and he classes people of inferior rank with his parents if such people love him as his parents do. Nor is the intention to debase any more responsible for the substitution of animals for a child's parents, for children are very far indeed from taking a disparaging view of animals.<sup>1</sup> Uncles and aunts are used as parent-surrogates without any regard to the question of debasing, and this was in fact done by our present patient, as many of his recollections showed.

There also belongs in this period a phase, which was obscurely remembered, in which he would not eat anything except sweet things, until alarm was felt on the score of his health. He was told about one of his uncles who had refused to eat in the same way and had wasted away to death while he was still young. He was also informed that when he himself was three months old he had been so seriously ill (with pneumonia?) that his winding-sheet had been got ready for him. In this way they succeeded in alarming him, so that he began eating again; and in the later years of his childhood he used actually to overdo this duty, as though to guard himself against the threat of death. The fear of death, which was evoked at that time for his own protection, made its reappearance later when his mother warned him of the danger of dysentery [p. 77]. Later still, it brought on an attack of his obsessional neurosis (see p. 68). We shall try below [p. 107] to go into its origins and meanings.

I am inclined to the opinion that this disturbance of appetite should be regarded as the very first of the patient's neurotic illnesses. If so, the disturbance of appetite, the wolf phobia, and the obsessional piety would constitute the complete series of infantile disorders which laid down the predisposition for his neurotic break-down after he had passed the age of puberty. It will be objected that few children escape such disorders as a

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 132

<sup>1</sup> [This point was dealt with by Freud at greater length in his paper 'A Difficulty in the Path of Psycho-Analysis' (1917a), below p. 140.]

temporary loss of appetite or an animal phobia. But this argument is exactly what I should wish for. I am ready to assert that every neurosis in an adult is built upon a neurosis which has occurred in his childhood but has not invariably been severe enough to strike the eye and be recognized as such. This objection only serves to emphasize the theoretical importance of the part which infantile neuroses must play in our view of those later disorders which we treat as neuroses and endeavour to attribute entirely to the effects of adult life. If our present patient had not suffered from obsessional piety in addition to his disturbance of appetite and his animal phobia, his story would not have been noticeably different from that of other children, and we should have been the poorer by the loss of precious material which may guard us against certain plausible errors.

The analysis would be unsatisfactory if it failed to explain the phrase used by the patient for summing up the troubles of which he complained. The world, he said, was hidden from him by a veil [p. 75]; and our psycho-analytic training forbids our assuming that these words can have been without significance or have been chosen at haphazard. The veil was torn, strange to say, in one situation only; and that was at the moment when, as a result of an enema, he passed a motion through his anus. He then felt well again, and for a very short while he saw the world clearly. The interpretation of this 'veil' progressed with as much difficulty as we met with in clearing up his fear of the butterfly. Nor did he keep to the veil. It became still more elusive, as a feeling of twilight, 'iènèbres', and of other impalpable things.

It was not until just before taking leave of the treatment that he remembered having been told that he was born with a caul. He had for that reason always looked on himself as a special child of fortune whom no ill could befall.<sup>1</sup> He did not lose that conviction until he was forced to realize that his gonorrhoeal infection constituted a serious injury to his body. The blow to his narcissism was too much for him and he went to pieces. It may be said that in so doing he was repeating a mechanism that he had already brought into play once before. For his wolf phobia had broken out when he found himself

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 133

<sup>1</sup> [The German word for 'caul' (*Glückshaube*), like the corresponding Scots expression 'sely how', means literally 'lucky hood'.]

faced by the fact that such a thing as castration was possible; and he clearly classed his gonorrhoea as castration.

Thus the caul was the veil which hid him from the world and hid the world from him. The complaint that he made was in reality a fulfilled wishful phantasy: it exhibited him as back once more in the womb, and was, in fact, a wishful phantasy of flight from the world. It can be translated as follows: 'Life makes me so unhappy! I must get back into the womb!'

But what can have been the meaning of the fact that this veil, which was now symbolic but had once been real, was torn at the moment at which he evacuated his bowels after an enema, and that under this condition his illness left him? The context enables us to reply. If this birth-veil was torn, then he saw the world and was re-born. The stool was the child, as which he was born a second time, to a happier life. Here, then, we have the phantasy of re-birth, to which Jung has recently drawn attention and to which he has assigned such a dominating position in the imaginative life of neurotics.

This would be all very well, if it were the whole story. But certain details of the situation, and a due regard for the connection between it and this particular patient's life-history, compel us to pursue the interpretation further. The necessary condition of his re-birth was that he should have an enema administered to him by a man. (It was not until later on that he was driven by necessity to take this man's place himself.) This can only have meant that he had identified himself with his mother, that the man was acting as his father, and that the enema was repeating the act of copulation, as the fruit of which the excrement-baby (which was once again himself) would be born. The phantasy of re-birth was therefore bound up closely with the necessary condition of sexual satisfaction from a man. So that the translation now runs to this effect: only on condition that he took the woman's place and substituted himself for his mother, and thus let himself be sexually satisfied by his father and bore him a child—only on that condition would his illness leave him. Here, therefore, the phantasy of re-birth was simply a mutilated and censored version of the homosexual wishful phantasy.

If we look into the matter more closely we cannot help remarking that in this condition which he laid down for his

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 134

recovery the patient was simply repeating the state of affairs at the time of the 'primal scene'. At that moment he had wanted to substitute himself for his mother; and, as we assumed long ago, it was he himself who, in the scene in question, had produced the excrement-baby. He still remained fixated, as though by a spell, to the scene which had such a decisive effect on his sexual life, and the return of which during the night of the dream brought the onset of his illness. The tearing of the veil was analogous to the opening of his eyes and to the opening of the window. The primal scene had become transformed into the necessary condition for his recovery.

It is easy to make a unified statement of what was expressed on the one hand by the complaint he made and on the other hand by the single exceptional condition under which the complaint no longer held good, and thus to make clear the whole meaning that underlay the two factors: he wished he could be back in the womb, not simply in order that he might then be re-born, but in order that he might be copulated with there by his father, might obtain sexual satisfaction from him, and might bear him a child.

The wish to be born of his father (as he had at first believed was the case), the wish to be sexually satisfied by him, the wish to present him with a child—and all of this at the price of his own masculinity, and expressed in the language of anal eroticism—these wishes complete the circle of his fixation upon his father. In them homosexuality has found its furthest and most intimate expression.<sup>1</sup>

This instance, I think, throws light on the meaning and origin of the womb-phantasy as well as that of re-birth. The former, the womb-phantasy, is frequently derived (as it was in the present case) from an attachment to the father. There is a wish to be inside the mother's womb in order to replace her during intercourse—in order to take her place in regard to the father. The phantasy of re-birth, on the other hand, is in all probability regularly a softened substitute (a euphemism, one might say) for the phantasy of incestuous intercourse with the

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **135**

<sup>1</sup> A possible subsidiary explanation, namely that the veil represented the hymen which is torn at the moment of intercourse with a man, does not harmonize completely with the necessary condition for his recovery. Moreover it has no bearing on the life of the patient, for whom virginity carried no significance.

mother; to make use of Silberer's expression, it is an *anagogic*<sup>1</sup> abbreviation of it. There is a wish to be back in a situation in which one was in the mother's genitals; and in this connection the man is identifying himself with his own penis and is using it to represent himself. Thus the two phantasies are revealed as each other's counterparts: they give expression, according as the subject's attitude is feminine or masculine, to his wish for sexual intercourse with his father or with his mother. We cannot dismiss the possibility that in the complaint made by our present patient and in the necessary condition laid down for his recovery the two phantasies, that is to say the two incestuous wishes, were united.<sup>2</sup>

I will make a final attempt at re-interpreting the last findings of this analysis in accordance with the scheme of my opponents. The patient lamented his flight from the world in a typical womb-phantasy and viewed his recovery as a typically conceived re-birth. In accordance with the predominant side of his disposition, he expressed the latter in anal symptoms. He next concocted, on the model of his anal phantasy of re-birth, a childhood scene which repeated his wishes in an archaic-symbolic medium of expression. His symptoms were then strung together as though they had been derived from a primal scene of that kind. He was driven to embark on this long backward course either because he had come up against some task in life which he was too lazy to perform, or because he had every reason to be aware of his own inferiority and thought he could best protect himself from being slighted by elaborating such contrivances as these.

All this would be very nice, if only the unlucky wretch had not had a dream when he was no more than four years old, which signaled the beginning of his neurosis, which was instigated by his grandfather's story of the tailor and the wolf, and the interpretation of which necessitates the assumption of this primal scene. All the alleviations which the theories of Jung and Adler seek to afford us come to grief, alas, upon such paltry but unimpeachable facts as these. As things stand, it

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **136**

1 [This term of Silberer's is explained and discussed in an addition made in 1919 to *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900a), *Standard Ed.*, 5, 524. (Cf. Silberer, 1914.)]

2 [See the discussion of the 'complete' Oedipus complex in Chapter III of *The Ego and the Id* (1923b).]

seems to me more probable that the phantasy of re-birth was a derivative of the primal scene than that, conversely, the primal scene was a reflection of the phantasy of re-birth. And we may perhaps suppose, too, that the patient, at a time only four years after his birth, may after all have been too young to be already wishing to be born again. But no, I must take this last argument back; for my own observations show that we have rated the powers of children too low and that there is no knowing what they cannot be given credit for.<sup>1</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **137**

<sup>1</sup> I admit that this is the most delicate question in the whole domain of psycho-analysis. I did not require the contributions of Adler or Jung to induce me to consider the matter with a critical eye, and to bear in mind the possibility that what analysis puts forward as being forgotten experiences of childhood (and of an improbably early childhood) may on the contrary be based upon phantasies created on occasions occurring late in life. According to this view, wherever we seemed in analyses to see traces of the after-effects of an infantile impression of the kind in question, we should rather have to assume that we were faced by the manifestation of some constitutional factor or of some disposition that had been phylogenetically maintained. On the contrary, no doubt has troubled me more; no other uncertainty has been more decisive in holding me back from publishing my conclusions. I was the first—a point to which none of my opponents have referred—to recognize both the part played by phantasies in symptom-formation and also the ‘retrospective phantasying’ of late impressions into childhood and their sexualization after the event. (See my *Interpretation of Dreams* (1900a), First Edition, p. 49, and ‘Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis’, (1909d) [*Standard Ed.*, 10, 206 ff., footnote].) If, in spite of this, I have held to the more difficult and more improbable view, it has been as a result of arguments such as are forced upon the investigator by the case described in these pages or by any other infantile neurosis—arguments which I once again lay before my readers for their decision.

[The reference to p. 49 of the first edition of *Die Traumdeutung* which is given in all editions of this paper would correspond to *Standard Ed.*, 4, 70-1. No relevant passage, however, occurs there and evidently a wrong page number has been given. It seems likely that Freud had in mind a passage occurring in *Standard Ed.*, 4, 288, which corresponds to p. 198 of the first edition of *Die Traumdeutung*. He there uses the same term ‘retrospective phantasy’ (‘zurückphantasieren’) as in the present footnote.—In Freud's early paper on ‘Screen Memories’ (1899a) he considers phenomena related to these ‘retrospective phantasies’; cf. *Standard Edition*, 3, 303 ff. and 322. n. ]



## IX Recapitulations and Problems

I do not know if the reader of this report of an analysis will have succeeded in forming a clear picture of the origin and development of the patient's illness. I fear that, on the contrary, this will not have been the case. But though on other occasions I have said very little on behalf of my powers in the art of exposition, I should like in the present instance to plead mitigating circumstances. The description of such early phases and of such deep strata of mental life has been a task which has never before been attacked; and it is better to perform that task badly than to take flight before it—a proceeding which would moreover (or so we are told) involve the coward in risks of a certain kind. I prefer, therefore, to put a bold face on it and show that I have not allowed myself to be held back by a sense of my own inferiority.

The case itself was not a particularly favourable one. The advantage of having a wealth of information about the patient's childhood (an advantage which was made possible by the fact that the child could be studied through the medium of the adult) had to be purchased at the expense of the analysis being most terribly disjointed and of the exposition showing corresponding gaps. Personal peculiarities in the patient and a national character that was foreign to ours made the task of feeling one's way into his mind a laborious one. The contrast between the patient's agreeable and affable personality, his acute intelligence and his nice-mindedness on the one hand, and his completely unbridled instinctual life on the other, necessitated an excessively long process of preparatory education, and this made a general perspective more difficult. But the patient himself has no responsibility for that feature of the case which put the severest obstacles in the way of any description of it. In the psychology of adults we have fortunately reached the point of being able to divide mental processes into conscious and unconscious and of being able to give a clearly-worded description of both. With children this distinction leaves us almost completely in the lurch. It is often embarrassing to

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **138**

decide what one would choose to call conscious and what unconscious. Processes which have become the dominant ones, and which from their subsequent behaviour must be equated with conscious ones, have nevertheless not been conscious in the child. It is easy to understand why. In children the conscious has not yet acquired all its characteristics; it is still in process of development, and it does not as yet fully possess the capacity for transposing itself into verbal images. We are constantly guilty of making a confusion between the phenomenon of emergence as a perception in consciousness and the fact of belonging to a hypothetical psychical system to which we ought to assign some conventional name, but which we in fact also call 'consciousness' (the system Cs.). This confusion does no harm when we are giving a psychological description of an adult, but it is misleading when we are dealing with that of a young child. Nor should we be much assisted here if we introduced the 'preconscious'; for a child's preconscious may, in just the same way, fail to coincide with an adult's. We must be content, therefore, with having clearly recognized the obscurity.

It is obvious that a case such as that which is described in these pages might be made an excuse for dragging into the discussion every one of the findings and problems of psychoanalysis. But this would be an endless and unjustifiable labour. It must be recognized that everything cannot be learnt from a single case and that everything cannot be decided by it; we must content ourselves with exploiting whatever it may happen to show most clearly. There are in any case narrow limits to what a psycho-analysis is called upon to explain. For, while it is its business to explain the striking symptoms by revealing their genesis, it is not its business to explain but merely to describe the psychical mechanisms and instinctual processes to which one is led by that means. In order to derive fresh generalizations from what has thus been established with regard to the mechanisms and instincts, it would be essential to have at one's disposal numerous cases as thoroughly and deeply analysed as the present one. But they are not easily to be had, and each one of them requires years of labour. So that advances in these spheres of knowledge must necessarily be slow. There is no doubt a great temptation to content oneself with 'scratching' the mental surface of a number of people and of replacing what is left undone by speculation—the latter being put under the

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 139

patronage of some school or other of philosophy. Practical requirements may also be adduced in favour of this procedure; but no substitute can satisfy the requirements of science.

I shall now attempt to sketch out a synthetic survey of my patient's sexual development, beginning from its earliest indications. The first that we hear of it is in the disturbance of his appetite [p. 98]; for, taking other observations into account, I am inclined, though with due reservations, to regard that as a result of some process in the sphere of sexuality. I have been driven to regard as the earliest recognizable sexual organization the so-called 'cannibalistic' or 'oral' phase, during which the original attachment of sexual excitation to the nutritional instinct still dominates the scene.<sup>1</sup> It is not to be expected that we should come upon direct manifestations of this phase, but only upon indications of it where disturbances have been set up. Impairment of the nutritional instinct (though this can of course have other causes) draws our attention to a failure on the part of the organism to master its sexual excitation. In this phase the sexual aim could only be cannibalism—devouring; it makes its appearance with our present patient through regression from a higher stage, in the form of fear of 'being eaten by the wolf'. We were, indeed, obliged to translate this into a fear of being copulated with by his father. It is well known that there is a neurosis in girls which occurs at a much later age, at the time of puberty or soon afterwards, and which expresses aversion to sexuality by means of anorexia. This neurosis will have to be brought into relation with the oral phase of sexual life. The erotic aim of the oral organization further makes its appearance at the height of a lover's paroxysm (in such phrases as 'I could eat you up with love') and in affectionate relations with children, when the grown-up person is pretending to be a child himself. I have elsewhere given voice to a suspicion that the father of our present patient used himself to indulge in 'affectionate abuse', and may have played at wolf or dog with the little boy and have threatened as a joke to gobble him up (p. 32). The patient confirmed this suspicion by his curious behaviour in the transference. Whenever he shrank back on to the transference from the difficulties of the treatment, he used

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 140

<sup>1</sup> [See a section added in 1915 to Freud's *Three Essays (1905d)*, *Standard Ed.*, 7, 198, and 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes' (1915c).]

to threaten me with eating me up and later with all kinds of other ill-treatment—all of which was merely an expression of affection.

Permanent marks have been left by this oral phase of sexuality upon the usages of language. People commonly speak for instance, of an ‘appetizing’ love-object, and describe persons they are fond of as ‘sweet’. It will be remembered, too, that our little patient would only eat sweet things. In dreams sweet things and sweetmeats stand regularly for caresses or sexual gratifications.

It appears, moreover, that there is an anxiety belonging to this phase (only, of course, where some disturbance has arisen) which manifests itself as a fear of death and may be attached to anything that is pointed out to the child as being suitable for the purpose. With our patient it was employed to induce him to overcome his loss of appetite and indeed to overcompensate for it. A possible origin of this disturbance of his appetite will be found, if we bear in mind (basing ourselves on the hypothesis that we have so often discussed) that his observation of copulation at the age of one and a half, which produced so many deferred effects, certainly occurred before the time of these difficulties in his eating. So we may perhaps suppose that it accelerated the processes of sexual maturing and consequently did in fact also produce *immediate* effects, though these were insignificant in appearance.

I am of course aware that it is possible to explain the symptoms of this period (the wolf anxiety and the disturbance of appetite) in another and simpler manner, without any reference to sexuality or to a pregenital stage of its organization. Those who like to neglect the indications of neurosis and the interconnections between events will prefer this other explanation, and I shall not be able to prevent their doing so. It is hard to discover any cogent evidence in regard to these beginnings of sexual life except by such roundabout paths as I have indicated.

In the scene with Grusha (at the age of two and a half) we see the little boy at the beginning of a development which, except perhaps for its prematureness, deserves to be considered normal; thus we find in it identification with his father, and urethral erotism representing masculinity. It was also completely under the sway of the primal scene. We have hitherto regarded

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 141

his identification with his father as being narcissistic; but if we take the content of the primal scene into account we cannot deny that it had already reached the stage of genital organization. His male genital organ had begun to play its part and it continued to do so under the influence of his seduction by his sister.

But his seduction gives the impression not merely of having encouraged his sexual development but of having, to an even greater extent, disturbed and diverted it. It offered him a passive sexual aim, which was ultimately incompatible with the action of his male genital organ. At the first external obstacle, the threat of castration from his Nanya, his genital organization, half-hearted as it still was, broke down (at the age of three and a half<sup>1</sup>) and regressed to the stage which had preceded it, namely to that of the sadistic-anal organization, which he might otherwise have passed through, perhaps, with as slight indications as other children.

The sadistic-anal organization can easily be regarded as a continuation and development of the oral one. The violent muscular activity, directed upon the object, by which it is characterized, is to be explained as an action preparatory to eating. The eating then ceases to be a sexual aim, and the preparatory action becomes a sufficient aim in itself. The essential novelty, as compared with the previous stage, is that the receptive passive function becomes disengaged from the oral zone and attached to the anal zone. In this connection we can hardly fail to think of biological parallels or of the theory that the pregenital organizations in man should be regarded as vestiges of conditions which have been permanently retained in several classes of animals. The building up of the instinct for research out of its various components is another characteristic feature of this stage of development.

The boy's anal erotism was not particularly noticeable. Under the influence of his sadism the affectionate significance of faeces gave place to an aggressive one. A part was played in the transformation of his sadism into masochism by a sense of guilt, the presence of which points to developmental processes in spheres other than the sexual one.

His seduction continued to make its influence felt, by maintaining the passivity of his sexual aim. It transformed his sadism

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 142

<sup>1</sup> [In the editions before 1924 this read 'three and three quarters'.]

to a great extent into the masochism which was its passive counterpart. But it is questionable whether the seduction can be made entirely responsible for this characteristic of passivity, for the child's reaction to his observation of intercourse at the age of one and a half was already preponderantly a passive one. His sympathetic sexual excitement expressed itself by his passing a stool, though it is true that in this behaviour an active element is also to be distinguished. Side by side with the masochism which dominated his sexual impulses and also found expression in phantasies, his sadism, too, persisted and was directed against small animals. His sexual researches had set in from the time of the seduction and had been concerned, in essence, with two problems: the origin of children and the possibility of losing the genitals. These researches wove themselves into the manifestations of his instinctual impulses, and directed his sadistic propensities on to small animals as being representatives of small children.

We have now carried our account down to about the time of the boy's fourth birthday, and it was at that point that the dream brought into deferred operation his observation of intercourse at the age of one and a half. It is not possible for us completely to grasp or adequately to describe what now ensued. The activation of the picture, which, thanks to the advance in his intellectual development, he was now able to understand, operated not only like a fresh event, but like a new trauma, like an interference from outside analogous to the seduction. The genital organization which had been broken off was reestablished at a single blow; but the advance that was achieved in the dream could not be maintained. On the contrary, there came about, by means of a process that can only be equated with a repression, a repudiation of the new element and its replacement by a phobia.

Thus the sadistic-anal organization continued to exist during the phase of the animal phobia which now set in, only it suffered an admixture of anxiety-phenomena. The child persisted in his sadistic as well as in his masochistic activities, but he reacted with anxiety to a portion of them; the conversion of his sadism into its opposite probably made further progress.

The analysis of the anxiety-dream shows us that the repression was connected with his recognition of the existence of castration. The new element was rejected because its acceptance

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page **143**

would have cost him his penis. Closer consideration leads us to some such conclusion as the following. What was repressed was the homosexual attitude understood in the genital sense, an attitude which had been formed under the influence of this recognition of castration. But that attitude was retained as regards the unconscious and set up as a dissociated and deeper stratum. The motive force of the repression seems to have been the narcissistic masculinity which attached to the boy's genitals, and which had come into a long-prepared conflict with the passivity of his homosexual sexual aim. The repression was thus a result of his masculinity.

One might be tempted at this point to introduce a slight alteration into psycho-analytic theory. It would seem palpably obvious that the repression and the formation of the neurosis must have originated out of the conflict between masculine and feminine tendencies, that is out of bisexuality. This view of the situation, however, is incomplete. Of the two conflicting sexual impulses one was ego-syntonic, while the other offended the boy's narcissistic interest; it was on that account that the latter underwent repression. So that in this case, too, it was the ego that put the repression into operation, for the benefit of one of the sexual tendencies. In other cases there is no such conflict between masculinity and femininity; there is only a single sexual tendency present, which seeks for acceptance, but offends against certain forces of the ego and is consequently repelled. Indeed, conflicts between sexuality and the *moral* ego trends are far more common than such as take place within the sphere of sexuality; but a moral conflict of this kind is lacking in our present case. To insist that bisexuality is the motive force leading to repression is to take too narrow a view; whereas if we assert the same of the conflict between the ego and the sexual tendencies (that is, the libido) we shall have covered all possible cases.

The theory of the 'masculine protest', as it has been developed by Adler, is faced by the difficulty that repression by no means always takes the side of masculinity against femininity; there are quite large classes of cases in which it is masculinity that has to submit to repression by the ego. [Cf. Adler (1910).]

Moreover, a juster appreciation of the process of repression in our present case would lead us to deny that narcissistic masculinity was the sole motive force. The homosexual attitude which

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 144

came into being during the dream was of such overwhelming intensity that the little boy's ego found itself unable to cope with it and so defended itself against it by the process of repression.<sup>1</sup> The narcissistic masculinity which attached to his genitals, being opposed to the homosexual attitude, was drawn in, in order to assist the ego in carrying out the task. Merely to avoid misunderstandings, I will add that all narcissistic impulses operate from the ego and have their permanent seat in the ego, and that repressions are directed against libidinal object-cathexes.<sup>2</sup>

Let us now leave the process of repression, though we have perhaps not succeeded in dealing with it exhaustively, and let us turn to the boy's state when he awoke from the dream. If it had really been his masculinity that had triumphed over his homosexuality (or femininity) during the dream-process, then we should necessarily find that the dominant trend was an active sexual trend of a character already explicitly masculine. But there is no question of this having happened. The essentials of the sexual organization had not been changed; the sadistic-anal phase persisted, and remained the dominant one. The triumph of his masculinity was shown only in this: that thenceforward he reacted with anxiety to the passive sexual aims of the dominant organization—aims which were masochistic but not feminine. We are not confronted by a triumphant masculine sexual trend, but only by a passive one and a struggle against it.

I can well imagine the difficulties that the reader must find in the sharp distinction (unfamiliar but essential) which I have drawn between 'active' and 'masculine' and between 'passive' and 'feminine'. I shall therefore not hesitate to repeat myself. The state of affairs, then, after the dream, may be described as follows. The sexual trends had been split up; in the unconscious the stage of the genital organization had been reached, and a

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **146**

<sup>1</sup> [Freud had insisted from very early times, e.g. in Section 6 of Part I of his 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (**1950a [1895]**), on the traumatic effects of excessive excitation. In Chapter II of *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (**1926d**), he writes: 'It is highly probable that the immediate precipitating causes of primal repressions are quantitative factors such as an excessive force of excitation and the breaking through of the protective shield against stimuli.']

<sup>2</sup> [Adler's theory of repression is considered by Freud in greater detail in the last part of his paper on beating-phantasies (**1919e**), below p. **201** ff.]



very intense homosexuality set up; on the top of this (virtually in the conscious) there persisted the earlier sadistic and predominantly masochistic sexual current; the ego had on the whole changed its attitude towards sexuality, for it now repudiated sexuality and rejected the dominant masochistic aims with anxiety, just as it had reacted to the deeper homosexual aims with the formation of a phobia. Thus the result of the dream was not so much the triumph of a masculine current, as a reaction against a feminine and passive one. It would be very forced to ascribe the quality of masculinity to this reaction. The truth is that the ego has no sexual currents, but only an interest in its own self-protection and in the preservation of its narcissism.

Let us now consider the phobia. It came into existence on the level of the genital organization, and shows us the relatively simple mechanism of an anxiety-hysteria. The ego, by developing anxiety, was protecting itself against what it regarded as an overwhelming danger, namely, homosexual satisfaction. But the process of repression left behind it a trace which cannot be overlooked. The object to which the dangerous sexual aim had been attached had to have its place taken in consciousness by another one. What became conscious was fear not of the *father* but of the *wolf*. Nor did the process stop at the formation of a phobia with a single content. A considerable time afterwards the wolf was replaced by the lion [p. 39]. Simultaneously with sadistic impulses against small animals there was a phobia directed towards them, in their capacity of representatives of the boy's rivals, the possible small children. The origin of the butterfly phobia is of especial interest. It was like a repetition of the mechanism that produced the wolf phobia in the dream. Owing to a chance stimulus an old experience, the scene with Grusha, was activated; her threat of castration thus produced deferred effects, though at the time it was uttered it had made no impression.<sup>1</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 146

<sup>1</sup> The Grusha scene was, as I have said, a spontaneous product of the patient's memory, and no construction or stimulation by the physician played any part in evoking it. The gaps in it were filled up by the analysis in a fashion which must be regarded as unexceptionable, if any value at all is attached to the analytic method of work. The only possible rationalistic explanation of the phobia would be the following. There is nothing extraordinary, it might be said, in a child that was inclined to be nervous having had an anxiety attack in connection with a yellow-striped butterfly, probably as a result of some inherited tendency to anxiety. (See Stanley Hall, 'A Synthetic Genetic Study of Fear', 1914.) In ignorance of the true causation of his fear, this explanation would proceed, the patient looked about for something in his childhood to which he could connect it; he made use of the chance similarity of names and the recurrence of the stripes as a ground for the construction of an imaginary adventure with the nursery-maid whom he still remembered. When, however, we observe that the trivial details of this event (which, according to this view, was in itself an innocent one)—the scrubbing, the pail and the broom—had enough power over the patient's later life to determine his object-choice permanently and compulsively, then the butterfly phobia seems to have acquired an inexplicable importance. The state of things on this hypothesis is thus seen to be at least as remarkable as on mine, and any advantage that might be claimed for a rationalistic reading of the scene has melted away. The Grusha scene is of particular value to us, since in relation to it we can prepare our judgement upon the less certain primal scene.

It may truly be said that the anxiety that was concerned in the formation of these phobias was a fear of castration. This statement involves no contradiction of the view that the anxiety originated from the repression of homosexual libido. Both modes of expression refer to the same process: namely, the withdrawal of libido by the ego from the homosexual wishful impulse, the libido having then become converted into free anxiety and subsequently bound in phobias.<sup>1</sup> The first method of statement merely mentions in addition the motive by which the ego was actuated.

If we look into the matter more closely we shall see that our patient's first illness (leaving the disturbance of appetite out of account) is not exhausted when we have extracted the phobia from it. It must be regarded as a true hysteria showing not merely anxiety-symptoms but also phenomena of conversion. A portion of the homosexual impulse was retained by the organ concerned in it; from that time forward, and equally during his adult life, his bowel behaved like a hysterically affected organ. The unconscious repressed homosexuality withdrew into his bowel. It was precisely this trait of hysteria which was of such great service in helping to clear up his later illness.

We must now summon up our courage to attack the still more complicated structure of the obsessional neurosis. Let us once more bear the situation in mind: a dominant masochistic

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **148**

<sup>1</sup> [Freud's subsequent change of view on the relation between repression and anxiety is explained in his *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (**1926d**), especially in Chapter IV and Chapter XI, A (b).]

sexual current and a repressed homosexual one, and an ego deep in hysterical repudiation of them. What processes transformed this condition into one of obsessional neurosis?

The transformation did not occur spontaneously, through internal development, but through an outside influence. Its visible effect was that the patient's relation to his father, which stood in the foreground, and which had so far found expression in the wolf phobia, was now manifested in obsessional piety. I cannot refrain from pointing out that the course of events in this part of the patient's history affords an unmistakable confirmation of an assertion which I made in *Totem and Taboo* upon the relation of the totem animal to the deity.<sup>1</sup> I there decided in favour of the view that the idea of God was not a development from the totem, but replaced it after arising independently from a root common to both ideas. The totem, I maintained, was the first father-surrogate, and the god was a later one, in which the father had regained his human shape. And we find the same thing with our patient. In his wolf phobia he had gone through the stage of the totemic father-surrogate; but that stage was now broken off, and, as a result of new relations between him and his father, was replaced by a phase of religious piety.

The influence that provoked this transformation was the acquaintance which he obtained through his mother's agency with the doctrines of religion and with the Bible story. This educational measure had the desired effect. The sadistic-masochistic sexual organization came slowly to an end, the wolf phobia quickly vanished, and, instead of sexuality being repudiated with anxiety, a higher method of suppressing it made its appearance. Piety became the dominant force in the child's life. These victories, however, were not won without struggles, of which his blasphemous thoughts were an indication, and of which the establishment of an obsessive exaggeration of religious ceremonial was the result.

Apart from these pathological phenomena, it may be said that in the present case religion achieved all the aims for the sake of which it is included in the education of the individual. It put a restraint on his sexual impulses by affording them a sublimation and a safe mooring; it lowered the importance of his family relationships, and thus protected him from the threat of isolation by giving him access to the great community of mankind.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **149**

<sup>1</sup> *Totem and Taboo* (1912-13), *Standard Ed.*, **13**, **148**.

The untamed and fear-ridden child became social, well-behaved, and amenable to education.

The chief motive force of the influence which religion had on him was his identification with the figure of Christ, which came particularly easily to him owing to the accident of the date of his birth. Along this path his extravagant love of his father, which had made the repression necessary, found its way at length to an ideal sublimation. As Christ, he could love his father, who was now called God, with a fervour which had sought in vain to discharge itself so long as his father had been a mortal. The means by which he could bear witness to this love were laid down by religion, and they were not haunted by that sense of guilt from which his individual feelings of love could not set themselves free. In this way it was still possible for him to drain off his deepest sexual current, which had already been precipitated in the form of unconscious homosexuality; and at the same time his more superficial masochistic impulsion found an incomparable sublimation, without much renunciation, in the story of the Passion of Christ, who, at the behest of his divine Father and in his honour, had let himself be ill-treated and sacrificed. So it was that religion did its work for the hard-pressed child—by the combination which it afforded the believer of satisfaction, of sublimation, of diversion from sensual processes to purely spiritual ones, and of access to social relationships.<sup>1</sup>

The opposition which he at first offered to religion had three different points of origin. To begin with, there was, in general, his characteristic (which we have seen exemplified already) of fending off all novelties. Any position of the libido which he had once taken up was obstinately defended by him from fear of what he would lose by giving it up and from distrust of the probability of a complete substitute being afforded by the new position that was in view. This is an important and fundamental psychological peculiarity, which I described in my *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905d) as a susceptibility to ‘fixation’.<sup>2</sup> Under the name of psychical ‘inertia’ Jung has attempted to erect it into the principal cause of all the failures of neurotics. I think he is wrong in this; for this factor has a far more general

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page 150

<sup>1</sup> [The value of religion to the individual is further discussed in *The Future of an Illusion* (1927c).]

<sup>2</sup> [*Standard Ed.*, 7, 242-3.]

application and plays an important part in the lives of the non-neurotic as well. Great mobility or sluggishness of libidinal cathexes (as well as of other kinds of energetic cathexes) are special characteristics which attach to many normal people and by no means to all neurotics, and which have hitherto not been brought into relation with other qualities. They are, as it were, like prime numbers, not further divisible. We only know one thing about them, and that is that mobility of the mental cathexes is a quality which shows striking diminution with the advance of age. This has given us one of the indications of the limits within which psycho-analytic treatment is effective. There are some people, however, who retain this mental plasticity far beyond the usual age-limit, and others who lose it very prematurely. If the latter are neurotics, we make the unwelcome discovery that it is impossible to undo developments in them which, in apparently similar circumstances, have been easily dealt with in other people. So that in considering the conversion of psychical energy no less than of physical, we must make use of the concept of an *entropy*, which opposes the undoing of what has already occurred.<sup>1</sup>

A second point of attack was afforded by the circumstance that religious doctrine is itself based upon a by no means unambiguous relation to God the Father, and in fact bears the stamp of the ambivalent attitude which presided over its origin. The patient's own ambivalence, which he possessed in a high degree of development, helped him to detect the same feature in religion, and he brought to bear on that feature those acute powers of criticism whose presence could not fail to astonish us in a child of four and a half.

But there was a third factor at work, which was certainly the most important of all, and to the operation of which we must ascribe the pathological products of his struggle against religion. The truth was that the mental current which impelled him to turn to men as sexual objects and which should have been

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **151**

<sup>1</sup> [Entropy is the force which, according to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, tends to make certain physical changes irreversible.—The topic of 'psychical inertia' was discussed by Freud at the end of his paper on 'A Case of Paranoia Running Counter to the Psycho-Analytic Theory of the Disease' (1915f). Though this was published earlier than the present case history, it was probably written later. An Editor's footnote at the end of that paper gives a number of references to other passages in which Freud considered the same topic.]

sublimated by religion was no longer free; a portion of it was cut off by repression and so withdrawn from the possibility of sublimation and tied to its original sexual aim. In virtue of this state of things, the repressed portion kept making efforts to forge its way through to the sublimated portion or to drag down the latter to itself. The first ruminations which he wove round the figure of Christ already involved the question whether that sublime son could also fulfil the sexual relationship to his father which the patient had retained in his unconscious. The only result of his repudiation of these efforts was the production of apparently blasphemous obsessive thoughts, in which his physical affection for God asserted itself in the form of a debasement. A violent defensive struggle against these compromises then inevitably led to an obsessive exaggeration of all the activities which are prescribed for giving expression to piety and a pure love of God. Religion won in the end, but its instinctual foundations proved themselves to be incomparably stronger than the durability of the products of their sublimation. As soon as the course of events presented him with a new father-surrogate, who threw his weight into the scale against religion, it was dropped and replaced by something else. Let us further bear in mind, as an interesting complication, that his piety originated under the influence of women (his mother and his nurse), while it was a masculine influence that set him free from it.

The origin of this obsessional neurosis on the basis of the sadistic-anal organization confirms on the whole what I have said elsewhere on the predisposition to obsessional neurosis (1913i). The previous existence, however, of a severe hysteria in the present case makes it more obscure in this respect.

I will conclude my survey of the patient's sexual development by giving some brief glimpses of its later vicissitudes. During the years of puberty a markedly sensual, masculine current, with a sexual aim suitable to the genital organization, made its appearance in him; it must be regarded as normal, and its history occupied the period up to the time of his later illness. It was connected directly with the Grusha scene, from which it borrowed its characteristic feature—a compulsive falling in love that came on and passed off by sudden fits. This current had to struggle against the inhibitions that were derived from his infantile neurosis. There had been a violent revulsion in the direction of women, and he had thus won his way to complete

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 152

masculinity. From that time forward he retained women as his sexual object; but he did not enjoy this possession, for a powerful, and now entirely unconscious, inclination towards men, in which were united all the forces of the earlier phases of his development, was constantly drawing him away from his female objects and compelling him in the intervals to exaggerate his dependence upon women. He kept complaining during the treatment that he could not bear having to do with women, and all our labours were directed towards disclosing to him his unconscious relation to men. The whole situation might be summarized in the shape of a formula. His childhood had been marked by a wavering between activity and passivity, his puberty by a struggle for masculinity, and the period after he had fallen ill by a fight for the object of his masculine desires. The precipitating cause of his neurosis was not one of the types of onset which I have been able to put together as special cases of 'frustration,'<sup>1</sup> and it thus draws attention to a gap in that classification. He broke down after an organic affection of the genitals had revived his fear of castration, shattered his narcissism, and compelled him to abandon his hope of being personally favoured by destiny. He fell ill, therefore, as the result of a *narcissistic* 'frustration'. This excessive strength of his narcissism was in complete harmony with the other indications of an inhibited sexual development: with the fact that so few of his psychical trends were concentrated in his heterosexual object-choice, in spite of all its energy, and that his homosexual attitude, standing so much nearer to narcissism, persisted in him as an unconscious force with such very great tenacity. Naturally, where disturbances like these are present, psycho-analytic treatment cannot bring about any instantaneous revolution or put matters upon a level with a normal development: it can only get rid of the obstacles and clear the path, so that the influences of life may be able to further development along better lines.

I shall now bring together some peculiarities of the patient's mentality which were revealed by the psycho-analytic treatment but were not further elucidated and were accordingly not susceptible to direct influence. Such were his tenacity of fixation, which has already been discussed, his extraordinary propensity to ambivalence, and (as a third trait in a constitution which deserves the name of archaic) his power of maintaining

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **153**

1 'Types of Onset of Neurosis' **(1912c)**.

simultaneously the most various and contradictory libidinal cathexes, all of them capable of functioning side by side. His constant wavering between these (a characteristic which for a long time seemed to block the way to recovery and progress in the treatment) dominated the clinical picture during his adult illness, which I have scarcely been able to touch upon in these pages. This was undoubtedly a trait belonging to the general character of the unconscious, which in his case had persisted into processes that had become conscious. But it showed itself only in the products of affective impulses; in the region of pure logic he betrayed, on the contrary, a peculiar skill in unearthing contradictions and inconsistencies. So it was that his mental life impressed one in much the same way as the religion of Ancient Egypt, which is so unintelligible to us because it preserves the earlier stages of its development side by side with the end-products, retains the most ancient gods and their attributes along with the most modern ones, and thus, as it were, spreads out upon a two-dimensional surface what other instances of evolution show us in the solid.

I have now come to the end of what I had to say about this case. There remain two problems, of the many that it raises, which seem to me to deserve special emphasis. The first relates to the phylogenetically inherited schemata, which, like the categories of philosophy, are concerned with the business of 'placing' the impressions derived from actual experience. I am inclined to take the view that they are precipitates from the history of human civilization. The Oedipus complex, which comprises a child's relation to his parents, is one of them—is, in fact, the best known member of the class. Wherever experiences fail to fit in with the hereditary schema, they become remodelled in the imagination—a process which might very profitably be followed out in detail. It is precisely such cases that are calculated to convince us of the independent existence of the schema. We are often able to see the schema triumphing over the experience of the individual; as when in our present case the boy's father became the castrator and the menace of his infantile sexuality in spite of what was in other respects an inverted Oedipus complex. A similar process is at work where a nurse comes to play the mother's part or where the two become fused together. The contradictions between experience and the

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12,  
Page 154



schema seem to supply the conflicts of childhood with an abundance of material.

The second problem is not far removed from the first, but it is incomparably more important. If one considers the behaviour of the four-year-old child towards the re-activated primal scene,<sup>1</sup> or even if one thinks of the far simpler reactions of the one-and-a-half-year-old child when the scene was actually experienced, it is hard to dismiss the view that some sort of hardly definable knowledge, something, as it were, preparatory to an understanding, was at work in the child at the time.<sup>2</sup> We can form no conception of what this may have consisted in; we have nothing at our disposal but the single analogy—and it is an excellent one—of the far-reaching *instinctive*<sup>3</sup> knowledge of animals.

If human beings too possessed an instinctive endowment such as this, it would not be surprising that it should be very particularly concerned with the processes of sexual life, even though it could not be by any means confined to them. This instinctive factor would then be the nucleus of the unconscious, a primitive kind of mental activity, which would later be dethroned and overlaid by human reason, when that faculty came to be acquired, but which in some people, perhaps in every one, would retain the power of drawing down to it the higher mental processes. Repression would be the return to this instinctive stage, and man would thus be paying for his great new acquisition with his liability to neurosis, and would be bearing witness by the possibility of the neuroses to the existence of those earlier, instinct-like, preliminary stages. The significance of the traumas of early childhood would lie in their contributing material to this unconscious which would save it from being worn away by the subsequent course of development.

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **155**

<sup>1</sup> I may disregard the fact that it was not possible to put this behaviour into words until twenty years afterwards; for all the effects that we traced back to the scene had already been manifested in the form of symptoms, obsessions, etc., in the patient's childhood and long before the analysis. It is also a matter of indifference in this connection whether we choose to regard it as a primal *scene* or as a primal *phantasy*.

<sup>2</sup> I must once more emphasize the fact that these reflections would be vain if the dream and the neurosis had not themselves occurred in infancy.

<sup>3</sup> [The German word used here and in what follows is '*instinktiv*' not '*triebhaft*', which is regularly translated 'instinctual'.]

I am aware that expression has been given in many quarters to thoughts like these, which emphasize the hereditary, phylo-genetically acquired factor in mental life. In fact, I am of opinion that people have been far too ready to find room for them and ascribe importance to them in psycho-analysis. I consider that they are only admissible when psycho-analysis strictly observes the correct order of precedence, and, after forcing its way through the strata of what has been acquired by the individual, comes at last upon traces of what has been inherited.<sup>1</sup>

---

[PEP] This page can be read in German in GESAMMELTE WERKE Vol 12, Page **156**

<sup>1</sup> (*Footnote added 1923:*) I will once more set out here the chronology of the events mentioned in this case history.

*Born on Christmas Day.*

*1 ½ years old:* Malaria. Observation of his parents copulating; or observation of them when they were together, into which he later introduced a phantasy of them copulating.

*Just before 2 ½:* Scene with Grusha.

*2 ½:* Screen memory of his parents' departure with his sister. This showed him alone with his Nanya and so disowned Grusha and his sister.

*Before 3 ¼:* His mother's laments to the doctor.

*3 ¼:* Beginning of his seduction by his sister. Soon afterwards the threat of castration from his Nanya.

*3 ½:* The English governess. Beginning of the change in his character.

*4:* The wolf dream. Origin of the phobia.

*4 ½:* Influence of the Bible story. Appearance of the obsessional symptoms.

*Just before 5:* Hallucination of the loss of his finger.

*5:* Departure from the first estate.

*After 6:* Visit to his sick father [compulsion to breathe out].

**8:}**  
**10:}**

Final outbreaks of the obsessional neurosis.

[17: Breakdown, precipitated by gonorrhoea.]

[23: Beginning of treatment.]

[The dates of the following events are not exactly established: *Between primal scene (1 ½) and seduction (3 ¼):* Disturbance of appetite.

*Same period:* Dumb water-carrier.

*Before 4:* Possible observation of dogs copulating.

*After 4:* Anxiety at swallow-tail butterfly.]

It will have been easy to guess from my account that the patient was a Russian. I parted from him, regarding him as cured, a few weeks before the unexpected outbreak of the Great War [1914]; and I did not see him again until the shifting chances of the war had given the Central European Powers access to South Russia. He then came to Vienna and reported that immediately after the end of the treatment

he had been seized with a longing to tear himself free from my influence. After a few months' work, a piece of the transference which had not hitherto been overcome was successfully dealt with. Since then the patient has felt normal and has behaved unexceptionably, in spite of the war having robbed him of his home, his possessions, and all his family relationships. It may be that his very misery, by gratifying his sense of guilt, contributed to the consolidation of his recovery.

[Some further notes on the later history of the case may be of interest. The original course of treatment lasted from February, 1910, to July, 1914. The patient returned to Vienna in the spring of 1919, and Freud treated him again

from November, 1919, till February, 1920. In some further remarks on the case, at the beginning of his 'Analysis Terminable and Interminable' (1937c), Freud reports that after this second treatment the patient continued living in Vienna and on the whole maintained his health, though with occasional interruptions. These later episodes were dealt with, on Freud's advice, by one of his pupils, Dr. Ruth Mack Brunswick. She herself reported in detail on this later phase of the treatment, which extended from October, 1926, to February, 1927 (Brunswick, 1928). Her report was reprinted in *The Psycho-Analytic Reader*, edited by R. Fliess (1948), with an added note by Dr. Mack Brunswick (dated September, 1945) giving a short account of the patient's further history up to 1940. A still later report, on his great external difficulties during the Second World War, and his reaction to them, has since been published by Muriel Gardiner (1952). A full account of the case will be found in the second volume of Ernest Jones's biography (1955), pp. 306-12. Still more recently several chapters of autobiography by the patient himself have appeared in *The Wolf Man and Sigmund Freud* (1971) edited by Muriel Gardiner. The book also includes reprints of Freud's original case history (in the present translation, but with virtually all the editorial matter removed) and the later reports by Brunswick and Gardiner, as well as a considerable amount of fresh material and commentary by Dr. Gardiner.]