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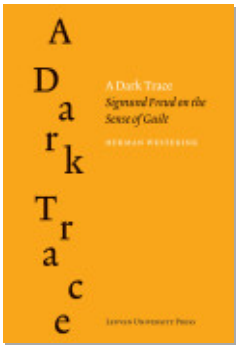
Chapter 2. Dark Traces



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Chapter 2
Dark traces

2.1 Introduction

In November 1896 Freud's father had died. It affected him deeply, and he wrote to Fliess of an uprooted feeling.[1] The death of his father led to a certain degree of self-analysis. Only a few weeks after abandoning his belief in neurotics in September 1897, he announced that he had begun a self-analysis.[2] This was to be the method by which he sought to clarify his intellectual thoughts. Later, Freud wrote in the foreword to the second edition of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1908) that he had only recently realized that the book was at least partly the product of his reaction to the death of his father.[3]

According to the seduction theory, fathers were all possible incest committers. Given that neuroses were quite common, the natural conclusion is that there must indeed be a great many defective fathers. Even Freud's own father could not remain completely beyond suspicion. Then, however, he recognized the failings of the seduction theory and developed an interest in child sexuality. No longer were the parental (incestuous) desires central, but those of the children. In the spring of 1897 he sent Fliess draft N, in which he made clear that he saw the hostile impulses toward parents as an integral part of neurosis.[4] He now thought that sons harboured a death wish against their fathers and daughters against their mothers. These impulses were generally repressed, owing to compassion for ill or dying parents, for example. For that matter he also noted that the seeds of his own self-reproaches lay in his childhood jealousy of his infant brother Julius, who only lived for a few months.[5]

This theme of son versus father quickly manifests itself again in a letter to Fliess. That autumn Freud noted that his self-analysis had confirmed, *inter alia*, that sons desire their mothers and are jealous of their fathers.[6] For Freud this is not a pathological phenomenon but part of early childhood. It was in this connection that he first mentioned Oedipus, the main character in Sophocles' tragedy.

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[1] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.202.

[2] Idem, p.268. Whatever we may call it, Freud in the late 1890s subjected himself to a thorough self-scrutiny, an elaborate, penetrating, and unceasing census of his fragmentary memories, his concealed wishes and emotions. P. Gay, *Freud*, p.97. This self-analysis was not something completely new in his life. As early as the 1880s Freud kept a dream diary, and his letters to Martha Bernays also reveal some self-analysis. E. Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud, Vol. I*, pp.351-352.

[3] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, p.xxvi.

[4] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.250.

[5] Idem, p.268.

[6] Idem, p.272.

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Research into the origins of morality and unpleasure led Freud away from neurotic patients: he no longer trusted their stories. That is to say, he no longer knew whether they were fantasies or might now and again be actual childhood experiences. He found self-analysis more trustworthy, despite it being more complex and painful personally. His self-analysis largely analysed dreams[7] and associations. For confirmation of his findings he turned to a mixture of clinical experiences, literary sources and philosophical ideas.

His self-analysis also meant abandoning the "pathological versus normal" scheme. Neurotics form recurring memories from pathological complaints and symptoms. When he began his self-analysis he was also concerned with the recurrence of memories, but now their analysis served to expose general human psychic structures.

2.2 Your guilt isn't the same as mine

Freud himself knew exactly when self-analysis had produced its first major results – in a dream he had on 24 July 1895.[8] Freud was receiving guests, including a certain Irma, in a large hall. He took her aside in order to answer a letter she had sent him. He reproached her for not having accepted his "solution" and said to her, "If you still get pains, it's really only your fault". Irma then made it clear that she was still in a lot of pain and Freud subsequently examined her. He discovered spots in her mouth and called upon one of the other guests for assistance. This Dr M. confirmed an infection, one which Freud knew he had not caused but which he suspected of having been caused by an injection with an improperly sterilized needle by a friend, Otto.

Freud's own analysis of this dream is extensively reported in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.[9] The core of the dream is clear: (self-)reproaches and wishes. His ultimate conclusion was that the dream was a wish fulfilment, namely not to be the cause of someone else's pain and ailments.[10] This also makes clear what he understood by wish: an attempt to reduce unpleasure and (thereby) experience pleasure.[11]

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[7] Freud's interest in dreams has deep roots, deeper than his dreambook of the 1880s. His identification with the biblical dreamer Joseph (S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, p.484) indicates an influence from early childhood of his father reading the bible. H. Stroeken, *Dromen. Brein en betekenis*, Uitgeverij Boom, Amsterdam, 2005, p.72.

[8] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, pp.106-107. On this dream see D. Anzieu, *Freud's Self-Analysis*, Hogarth Press, London, 1986, pp.135-155; A. Meyrhöfer, *Eine Wissenschaft des Träumens*, pp.141-149.

[9] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, pp.107-121.

[10] Idem, pp.118-119. "This group of thoughts seemed to have put itself at my disposal, so that I could produce evidence of how highly conscious I was." Idem, p.120.

[11] Idem, *SE V*, p.598.

The central theme of reproach and guilt is also connected to various other feelings. The most important of these are irritation, revenge and fear. Irritation precedes reproach: in his dream he is irritated by the fact that Irma will not listen to his solution to her problem. His reproach of her directly follows this irritation. Revenge is also expressed in the dream. Freud sees the reproach that not he, but Otto was evidently responsible for the infection as revenge towards "Otto". He avenges himself also upon "Irma": a patient who is not faithfully obedient suffers in the dream from her ailments and is "subjected" to medical investigation. She cannot escape the truth. This is also revenge. Finally, he himself harbours feelings of revenge against Dr M: he is the one with the physical disability (he limps) and his diagnosis of the ailment is incorrect. In the dream Freud thus deals with the people who could reproach him. Finally, fear plays a role in the dream. He is intensely frightened when Irma begins to speak about her complaints. This fear is also related to reproach. There is equally the fear that he himself is responsible for her complaints.

There is an additional element: distrust. We must not forget that Freud saw himself at this time as monomaniacal, someone abandoned by his colleagues who had to forge new paths largely on his own. In the dream the avoidance of guilt by reproach is also a way to express distance vis-à-vis colleagues. This is a "just" (wish-fulfilling) distance, for their judgment and methods cannot be trusted. Others are responsible for Irma's persistent maladies. In short, blaming others serves here to support the ego. On the other hand, this distrust reflects back upon himself. After all, the dream shows that contact with patients made a much deeper impression upon him than he had thought and very probably more than he liked.

This was how Freud's analysis of this dream linked guilt feelings with other feelings. He was thus investigating sense of guilt. The question, however, is the same as that posed at the end of the previous chapter: where do these feelings come from?

It was the death of Freud's own father which permitted him to pursue this question more deeply. He wrote to Fliess about a dream he had had the night after the funeral: a placard in a barber's shop read "you are requested to close the eyes".[12] He recognized the barber's shop; he had had to wait there before the funeral and almost arrived too late. His family were rather displeased. In addition, he had insisted on an austere funeral in accordance with his father's wishes. The sentence on the placard thus also meant that one must fulfil one's duty to the dead – and this was a double meaning at that. The first meaning had to do with closing the eyes of a dead person, a "duty" with respect to the dead. The second meaning had to do with "apology", a reference to his family's hoped-for forbearance.[13] Freud saw this dream as an attempt to escape self-reproach: he fulfilled his duty in both regards.

[12] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.202. See also D. Anzieu, *Freud's Self-Analysis*, p.169-174.

[13] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.202.

The Irma dream evidenced his own feelings of guilt. The dream about his dead father showed him the link between his feelings of guilt and his relationship with his father.[14] This is one of a series of dreams in which family relations and feelings of guilt are explicitly or implicitly present. In this vein, Freud wrote briefly to Fliess about a dream about "Hella" and a dream in which he ran naked up a staircase.[15] It was crystal clear to him that his dream about Hella was actually a dream about his daughter Mathilde. He noted that this dream expressed the wish to designate the father as the cause of a neurosis. This dream thus appears to confirm the seduction theory. This was not true of the second dream. In that dream he was running naked up a staircase, was suddenly followed by a woman, which frightened him and caused him to freeze in his tracks. This dream was about the difficulty of recognizing his own incestuous desires, although he did have them. (Freezing in his tracks meant that he could no longer continue to run up the stairs.) But are these desires for his daughter? This same dream is also described in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, but in another version.[16] In this version Freud is running "incompletely dressed" up the staircase but coming the other way is an elderly housemaid. Then, full of shame, he stops on the steps. He is running here into a sexual encounter and is ashamed. This version is no longer about someone running away from incestuous desires, but on the contrary running towards them. While in the first version we had a woman (daughter, wife, mother, maid), in the second we find an older person (housemaid, mother). The first version of the dream could still mean that the father wanted to seduce his daughter, but in the second version a new (inverted) trail is discovered: the dream has to do with the (child's) desire for a parent figure.

Via these and other analyses of his own and his patients' dreams, Freud returned repeatedly to these themes: hostility towards the father and "tender feelings" for the mother. In the earliest stage of his self-analysis he was primarily interested in the analysis of unconscious sense of guilt which was expressed in dreams and which also appears in veiled form in these same dreams. These are stories of guilt feelings which led him to his final definition of a dream: a dream is a (veiled) fulfilment of an (unconscious, repressed) wish.[17] Dream analysis also demonstrates that the deepest motives for desire are found in early childhood. It is there that all themes of hostility towards the father and love for the mother are in play. It was in this way, that is, via dream analysis, that Freud collected the material with which he ultimately constructed the Oedipus complex.

[14] "The Irma dream made him aware of his guilt feelings, but did not explain them to him. The "Close the eyes" dream made him realise that those feelings involved his father. His new awareness had a liberating effect. For about six months after that, he stopped complaining of fatigue, moments of depression, or an intellectual block." D. Anzieu, *Freud's Self-Analysis*, p.175.

[15] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.249.

[16] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, pp.238-240.

[17] Idem, pp.121ff, Idem, *SE V*, p.674.

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Are all dreams wish fulfilments? At first sight anxiety dreams appear to contradict this. These dreams do not appear to have anything to do with wish fulfilments, but exactly the opposite. Analysis of anxiety dreams is also self-analysis. Thus Freud describes another remarkable mother dream in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.[18] "It is dozens of years since I myself had a true anxiety dream", begins Freud, "but I remember one from my seventh or eighth year". It is a dream in which he sees his "beloved mother" with peaceful sleeping expression carried into the room by people with birds' beaks. Freud remembers awaking in fear and panic. At first sight the dream is about a fear of the death of the mother, and when his mother is called to it appears she is not dead. In this interpretation the dream is not a wish fulfilment, but waking up from the nightmare to discover the worst has not happened is a relief. Hence, the dream is a relief from anxiety, but anxiety for what exactly? For Freud it is also clear that the dream has a sexual meaning. A closer interpretation of the dream shows a link between the birds' beaks and the German verb *vögeln,* meaning "to copulate". Anxiety is the reaction to this: anxiety as a consequence of an "obscure" sexual desire.

Anzieu's analysis of Freud's dreams demonstrates a clear link with guilt feelings.[19] Anzieu interprets Freud's introduction (and specifically the outwardly superfluous remark that it had been years since his last anxiety dream) to the dream about Irma as an exculpation: "I am innocent" – I haven't had cause to have a nightmare in a long time – I haven't had an incestuous dream in a long time. "No, I am not guilty".[20] Even more important than this, however, is Freud's brief remark regarding the link between anxiety and wish.[21] One of the earliest experiences is wishing. It subsequently releases unpleasure – initially in the form of a self-reproach. Both memory and reproach are repressed from consciousness where they are replaced by the development of a counter-symptom (consciousness). When the repressed feeling returns so do the feelings of self-reproach, but primarily as hollow sense of guilt. This sense of guilt then links up with other ideas. As affect, reproach can transform into other affects, such as anxiety or shame. Anxiety is thus an effect of self-reproach which has returned from the unconscious to consciousness. We return now to the girl with her sense of guilt from the previous chapter. That sense of guilt was a reaction to an injustice which was experienced with desire. In the case of the girl this was masturbation. And in Freud's case? According to Anzieu, also masturbation in part: the eight-year-old Freud had certainly had a particularly difficult time observing the prohibition against masturbation (seen against the background of the Victorian period). Anxiety first links to the fear of punishment as a consequence of violating that prohibition. Yet at a deeper level anxiety stems from violation of the prohibition against incest and the fear of being

[18] Idem, pp.583-584.

[19] D. Anzieu, *Freud's Self-Analysis*, pp.294-309.

[20] Idem, p.296.

[21] Idem, pp.306ff.

punished by one's father. A crucial role is thus created for an unconscious sense of guilt. With respect to both the incestuous desires and the masturbation, feelings of desire stimulated the sense of guilt. The difference is that the incestuous desires lie more deeply and are more fundamental to the unconscious. Thus we see here in the self-analysis of this anxiety dream that he has discovered a deeper layer. In 1895 he had declared himself still satisfied with regarding masturbation as a trauma. Now he was digging deeper.

Anxiety dreams demonstrate that a wish can be repressed with all one's strength without the person being aware of it. For Freud repression no longer now takes place proceeding from consciousness. Repression is no longer a conscious "not wanting to know". The conflict is partially relocated to the preconscious, a level between the unconscious and consciousness.[22] The preconscious is a kind of storage area for forgotten but not repressed ideas and desires, and those desires and unpleasures which have bubbled up from the unconscious. It is thus the place where the unconscious collides with consciousness. This preconscious has the character of an intermediary and a filter, a stage in which unconscious desires are transfered and halted.[23] In his earliest psychoanalytic work defence was central. The idea then was that consciousness defends against and represses undesirable ideas and that a psychic group forms around these repressed ideas. Freud thus reasoned from consciousness to an unconscious. In his self-analysis and in *The Interpretation of Dreams* he now treads the path in the other direction and is faced with the problem that the unconscious does not have direct, but rather mediated access to consciousness. It is this train of thought which gives birth to the preconscious.[24]

The Interpretation of Dreams ends with an explanation of the relationship between unconscious, preconscious and consciousness as well as the vicissitudes of desire, wish and excitation.[25] Freud wrote that he developed his theories on dreams and the unconscious on his own account.[26] In order to test them Freud sought affiliation with philosophy – and not with physiology[27] – this time not with Jerusalem, but Theodor Lipps.[28] In *Der Begriff des Unbewußten in der Psychologie* [The Concept of the Unconscious in Psychology], 1896, and other works he defended the idea

[22] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, pp.593-594.

[23] For example idem, pp.541-542.

[24] See also P. Gay, *Freud*, pp.128-129.

[25] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, pp.610ff.

[26] Idem, p.611.

[27] Interestingly, this turn to philosophy instead of physiology can also be noticed in some reflections on Fechner in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Describing the "scene of action of dreams" Freud presents the idea of a "psychical locality" which should (explicitly) not be regarded "in any anatomical fashion" though it is located in the "mental apparatus". Idem, p.536.

[28] "I have set myself the task of building a bridge between my germinating metapsychology and that contained in the literature and have therefore immersed myself in the study of Lipps, who I suspect has the clearest mind among present-day philosophical writers." S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.286.

that every consciousness is based upon an "unconscious preliminary stage".[29] He called that unconscious "real ego" and Freud now extended this to call the unconscious a "true psychical reality".[30] Differing from Lipps is the subdivision of the unconscious into an actual unconscious and a preconscious. This final chapter of *The Interpretation of Dreams* is thus a confrontation with philosophy and ultimately with morality. After the primacy and functioning of the unconscious was comprehensively treated, he closed with the observation that the morally offensive character of the dream should not lead to a (self-)accusation by the dreamer. After all, we are dealing here with desires proceeding from psychic and not material reality. We are dealing with fantasies, not offences.[31] Dreams are "not my fault."

Thus *The Interpretation of Dreams* ends with a theme which played a role in Freud's self-analysis from the beginning: self-reproach. It is primarily via an analysis of his own guilt feelings that Freud eventually got on the trail of general human unconscious processes: the theme of the hostility toward the father and desire for the mother, and "their fate".[32]

2.3 The dead kill

The many comments to Fliess regarding the ups and downs of his self-analysis indicate that Freud was completely caught up in it between 1897 and 1898. Other interests only appear sporadically in the correspondence. Freud's enthusiasm for a book by Rudolf Kleinpaul (1845-1918) entitled *Die Lebendigen und die Toten in Volksglauben, Religion und Sage* [The Living and the Dead in Folk Belief, Religion and Legend], 1898, is thus striking. After studying this book he discovered the existence of "endopsychic myths".[33] By this is meant that all kinds of ideas, such as those which appear in the various myths and sagas of various peoples and periods, stem from the same desires. Concepts regarding immortality, revenge and the hereafter should thus originally stem from unconscious ideas. In other words, all kinds of "thought-illusions" are "projected" outwards in the future or hereafter.

This book by Kleinpaul is principally about folk belief, religion and legends of the dead and death.[34] His point of departure is unambiguous: the belief in spirits or souls which one finds in many forms of belief can generally be traced back to "images of the survivors". Spirits are thus not beings from the other side, but images of the deceased which "live on in memory, which occupy the fantasy and

[29] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, pp.611-613; G. Gödde, *Traditionslinien des "Unbewußten"*, pp.182ff.

[30] Idem, p.185.

[31] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, p.620.

[32] P. Gay, *Freud*, p.129.

[33] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.286.

[34] R. Kleinpaul, *Die Lebendigen und die Toten in Volksglauben, Religion und Sage*, Göschen'sche Verlagshandlung, Leipzig, 1898.

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appear to those left behind in dreams and in the imagination".[35] These thoughts do not mean that many folk beliefs must be dispensed with as foolishness. "In a certain sense the people are right to believe in spirits, indeed they must".[36] What Kleinpaul is interested in is not the equation of an illusion with nonsense and falseness. His concerns lie elsewhere. He is interested in the phenomenon that deceased loved ones return as malignant beings. Thus the living focus on doing everything possible to create distance between themselves and the dead (burying the body, the belief in the hereafter in heaven, the island of the dead separated from the world of the living by a river). In the end the reason is a desire to keep the dead far away, for they are malevolent. If they return they do so as an apparition or demon. In order to lend support to his thesis, Kleinpaul drew on a selection of sources, in part the same as those Freud used: Greek myths, Shakespeare, Goethe.

A central idea is that "the dead kill"[37] for "the dead draw the living to them".[38] Kleinpaul puts this idea forward based on the experiential fact that couples in love often die quickly after one another. By way of example he cites the devil which comes for Faust and Brutus who is visited by the ghost of Julius Caesar just before his own death.[39] Freud's interest in Kleinpaul's book comes at a noteworthy moment, namely in the period of his self-analysis and the working through of the death of his father. At that time, as evidenced in *The Interpretation of Dreams,* he regularly identified himself with Goethe's Faust (or Mephistopheles) and also with Brutus.[40]

Freud saw the idea that the dead can kill as the culmination of Kleinpaul's book. He said as much in *Totem and Taboo* which, after his initial enthusiasm to Fliess, is the first time he discussed the work again.[41] Freud endorsed this idea, subsequently linked it to compulsive (self-)reproach and from there to the origins of morality and religion. We shall return in a later chapter to *Totem and Taboo,* but it is worthwhile examining this passage further. Indeed, we see here how the self-analysis, in combination with his interest in Kleinpaul's work, was fundamentally reworked in this later publication. He adopted Kleinpaul's idea and linked it with clinical experiences. "When a wife has lost her husband or a daughter her mother, it not unfrequently happens that the survivor is overwhelmed

[35] Idem, foreword iii.

[36] Idem, iv.

[37] *Die Toten töten; jeder Tote streckt gleichsam eine Hand zum Grabe heraus, die er den Lebenden reicht und mit der er sie zu sich ins Grab hinunterzieht*. Idem. pp.107-108.

[38] Idem, p.106.

[39] Idem, pp.108-109.

[40] For example S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, p.142; *SE V*, p.424, p.483, We may add here Don Juan who is also mentioned by Kleinpaul as being visited by a ghost who foretells his death. Mozart's Don Giovanni was one of Freud's favourite operas. P. Gay, *Freud*, p.168.

[41] S. Freud. *Totem and Taboo. Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics, SE XIII*, pp.58-59.

by tormenting doubts", that is, "obsessional self-reproaches", he put forward.[42] (It is naturally of note that he failed to mention the variant of this in the scenario in which a son loses his father.) These self-reproaches occur whether the death of a loved one has been brought about by carelessness and neglect or not. Freud believed that this compulsion to self-reproach is understandable and in a certain sense justified, not because the loved one did indeed die of negligence, but because there is something within us, an unconscious "wish", which is not dissatisfied with death.[43] A similarly hidden hostility can be seen, for example, in cases of intense emotional fixation.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams* the cries of a malevolent spirit play a role in Freud's "non-vixit" dream which dates from October 1898 – after he had read Kleinpaul.[44] In the first part of this dream he is on his way to Brücke's laboratory, quietly entered (the deceased) Professor Fleischl's room when Fleischl himself entered the room and sat down at his table. In the second part of the dream Freud's friend Fl. (Fliess) had come to Vienna. It was July. Freud met him on the street while the latter was conversing with a deceased friend P. The trio then sat at a table. Fl. told them about the death of his sister. P. did not understand him at which point Fl. turned to Freud and asked how much he had told P. about him. Freud then told Fl. that P. was no longer alive (and thus could not understand anything). He then said, noting the error immediately, "Non vixit" ("he did not live") instead of "Non vivit" ("he is not alive"). He then gave P. a piercing look which caused him to turn pale, then blue and then slowly to dissolve into nothingness. This pleases him and he now understands that Fleischl, too, was only a ghost. He is then certain that a person only exists as long as another so desires and that one could get rid of him with a wish.[45]

Freud's first concern is the slip "Non vixit" when he meant to say "Non vivit". He views the moment when he made P. vanish by looking at him as central to the dream. Via the association with a monument for Emperor Joseph II, Freud was able to explain the slip and also discover P.'s first name (Josef [Breuer?][46]). The dream's closing observations, the month of July and the Emperor, also yield a connection: Freud noted that in the dream he was identifying himself with Brutus who had murdered his father Julius Caesar. The association with Julius Caesar eventually made a link possible to Freud's younger brother Julius, who died young.[47] In short, this dream gives voice to all kinds of hostile desires against loved ones (his father,

[42] Idem, p.60.

[43] Idem.

[44] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, pp.421ff, pp.480ff. On this dream see also D. Anzieu, *Freud's Self-Analysis*, pp.379-388; P. Gay, *Freud*, pp.116-117.

[45] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, p.421.

[46] Freud makes an association with Josef Paneth, his successor in Brücke's laboratory. Anzieu argues that this Josef is likely to be Breuer. D. Anzieu, *Freud's Self-Analysis*, p.382.

[47] Idem, p.384.

his teacher Breuer, his friend Fliess, his brother Julius). The extra dimension in this dream is the return of the dead as ghosts. Freud identified with Brutus, Julius Caesar's foster son, who had murdered his father, but also the man who just before a battle saw the ghost of his dead father and heard foretold that he would soon die. The ghost is thus a remnant of all loved ones one wishes dead; the ghost is the demon who comes to exact revenge on whoever is responsible for his death. We see here the combination of hostile feelings on the one hand and guilt feelings on the other.

2.4 "Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all"

In September 1897 Freud gave up his belief in neurotics. He no longer believed in seduction as the cause of mental problems. In mid-October Oedipus appears in his work for the first time.[48] The transition in the Freud-Fliess correspondence was formed by remarks regarding dreams and childhood memories which primarily concerned Freud's mother and his jealousy of his little brother Julius. Thus there is a dream in which he is persuaded to steal money.[49] Closer analysis (and a conversation with his mother) revealed that Freud had not been led astray, but that the housemaid had been a thief. He had not been led astray, but he had identified with her ("I = she").[50] Another memory had to do with a thought which had recurred for twenty-nine years about a scene in which his mother "was nowhere to be found" and, at the request of his older brother Phillip, he eventually went to look for her in a wardrobe. At that moment his mother returned and reproached his brother for locking little Sigmund up in the wardrobe. In short, this recurring memory is about desire for his mother. And that is why Freud wrote: "I have found, in my own case too, (the phenomenon of) being in love with my mother and jealous of my father, and I now consider it a universal event in early childhood".[51] It was in connection with this thought that he referred to Oedipus. Everyone can, in a certain sense, understand this myth: "everyone in the audience was once a budding Oedipus in fantasy and each recoils in horror from the dream fulfilment here transplanted into reality",[52] but it is indeed a fantasy repressed with all one's might. This first version of the Oedipus complex is certainly the result of self-analysis after the death of his father, but has its origin in his desire for his mother.

[48] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.272.

[49] Idem, p.269.

[50] Idem, p.271.

[51] Idem, p.272.

[52] Idem.

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Yet Freud did not delve more deeply into the Oedipus myth at this juncture. His interest shifted to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.[53] He already referred to this play in the letter in which he renounced his belief in neurotics.[54] Now he was not interested here in the question as to why Hamlet hesitated so long before murdering his uncle, thus revenging his father. He swore to the ghost of his father to take revenge for his murder, but doubts remained. It is Hamlet's conscience which stands in his way, a conscience which in no way hinders him from killing other people. Hamlet unconsciously recognizes himself in his uncle who killed his father out of love for his mother. His uncle did what he most deeply longed to do. Subsequently Hamlet has the opportunity (via revenge) to definitively take his father's place. The ghost seduces him into carrying out his deepest desires. Yet it is exactly these desires which have been repressed with all his might as intolerable. This explains his hesitation: "thus conscience doth make cowards of us all".[55] Freud concludes, "his conscience is his unconscious sense of guilt", his unconscious consciousness of guilt.[56] That unconscious sense of guilt colours this tragedy: it stands in the way of a normal sexual relationship with Ophelia and eventually leads Hamlet to his fate (a "punishment" compelled) comparable to his father's.

"His conscience is his unconscious sense of guilt." The big difference, Freud opined, between the Oedipus myth and the Hamlet tragedy is that Hamlet continued to repress what Oedipus, albeit unwittingly, realized (killing the father and possessing the mother). Hamlet is not conscious of his guilt feelings, although he is of his conscience. That the conscience "is" an unconscious sense of guilt cannot also be read as "is the same as". What Freud is driving at is that at the base of conscience lies an unconscious sense of guilt.

2.5 The dark trace of an old guilt

In the first part of *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud discusses all kinds of extant theories regarding dreams including those which deal with moral and immoral feelings. He differentiates two traditions.[57] One tradition states that within a dream the conscience is, as it were, "in sleep" and consequently no censorship of dream content takes place.[58] There is another tradition which asserts that the

[53] Idem, pp.272-273. Compare also S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, pp.264-266, and also S. Freud, *Psychopathic Characters on the Stage, SE VII*, pp.309-310. In this short paper on "the stage" Freud associates opera (Carmen) as the depiction of the (conscious) tragic struggle between "love and duty" with Hamlet's unconscious conflicts. Idem, p.308.

[54] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.265.

[55] W. Shakespeare, *Hamlet, Prince of Danmark*, act 3, scene 1, in *The Complete works of William Shakespeare*, Spring Books, London, 1976, p.960.

[56] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.273.

[57] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, pp.66ff.

[58] Idem, p.66.

conscience continues to function normally while dreaming, but that the dreamer is challenged by sins or vices. Freud mentions here in particular the 1875 work by F.W. Hildebrandt, *Das Traumleben und seine Verwerthung* [Dreams and their Interpretation].[59] He regularly and approvingly refers to this work, but exactly at the point that he begins to discuss morality he differs from him. Calling upon Kant's categorical imperative, Hildebrandt believes that the most fundamental aspect of being human is morality: the more impure the life, the more impure the dream.[60] In his *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* [Critique on Practical Reason], 1788, Kant saw moral law as essential for humanity and as the most important motive to which human will must be attuned. Everything that Kant refers to as "pathological" motives must be subjected to this rational law. He thus saw any eventual self-reproach as the consequence of knowingly straying from this law.[61] For Hildebrandt, an immoral dream is an unwished for dream, for it is in conflict with morality. Just as in Kant, free will is central here: an individual is responsible for the ideas in his dreams. That means "that a sin committed in a dream bears with it at least an obscure minimum of guilt".[62] Freud did not agree with this conceptualization of free will, guilt and responsibility, but he thought highly of Hildebrandt's book. After all, he also saw dreams as wish fulfilments and the key to plumbing the depths of the human soul. The problem is firstly that both traditions explain away the immoral character of dreams too easily, that is, as one's own guilt and responsibility owing to an inadequate moral standard. For Freud dreams were not about unwanted (undesired) ideas, but about repression.[63] He thus argued for recognition of an autonomous mental cause for immorality in dreams. It is the quest for this source which led him to the Oedipus complex.

His discussion of the Oedipus complex in *The Interpretation of Dreams* takes place in the chapter on dream material and its sources. In that chapter he first deals with recent events that provide the material for dreams.[64] He then deals with childhood memories which return in dreams.[65] He subsequently mentions the somatic sources of dreams.[66] Finally there is a category he calls "typical dreams".[67]

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[59] F.W. Hildebrandt, *Der Traum und seine Verwerthung für's Leben. Eine psychologische Studie*, Gebrüder Senf, Leipzig, 1881, pp.43-60. On Hildebrandt's book Freud writes: "of all the contributions to the study of dreams which I have come across, it is the most perfect in form and the richest in ideas." S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, p.67.

[60] Idem.

[61] I. Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1992, part I, chapter 3. Rieff has rightfully argued that Freud must be regarded an anti-Kantian. That is to say, in Kant's thought the will is motivated by the Law, whereas, in short, in Freud's view morality (Law) is motivated by the will (which is defined in terms of drives, need, etcetera). Ph. Rieff, *The Mind of the Moralist*, p.54.

[62] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, p.70.

[63] Idem, p.72.

[64] Idem, pp.165-188.

[65] Idem, pp.189-219.

[66] Idem, pp.220-240.

[67] Idem, pp.241-276.

Typical dreams are those which for everyone have the same source and which for everyone have the same meaning.[68] Among these are a trio of recurring themes in dreams. The first are dreams in which shame or nakedness is central.[69] The second are dreams about the death of a loved one.[70] It is this section which concerns us. The third group are the so-called "ordeal dreams", generally adolescent dreams about exams and relationships with teachers.[71]

Mothers are central to the first group; fathers quickly become important in the second. Freud discusses dreams about the death of loved ones in which the dreamer experiences profound pain over this death. This painful affect emerges from the wish that the person should die. Thus they are not dealing with an actual wish, but with a resurfacing childhood memory.

Freud now felt obliged to sketch an image of a young child. This description is at odds with his image of the child in his earlier seduction theory in which children were unspoiled and innocent creatures. They were amoral creatures, ignorant of good and evil, but subsequently harshly initiated by the perfidy of others. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* too, children continue to be amoral creatures. This much is clear: "children are completely egoistic", although one cannot hold them responsible for being so.[72] They ruthlessly strive to satisfy their own needs and do so in murderous competition with siblings. Later in childhood there are also "altruistic impulses and morality" awakening.[73] Following Meynert, Freud wrote: a "secondary ego" develops which overlays and inhibits the "primary ego".[74] This primary ego becomes visible in the malicious character of hysterics. With obsessional neurotics, however, it is the secondary ego ('super-morality") which is excessively strong in its repression of the primary ego.[75] What is clear thus far is that this primary ego is amoral while the secondary ego in fact corresponds with moral consciousness.

This differentiation between the primary and secondary ego is thus borrowed from Theodor Meynert (1833-1892) who wrote about it in *Gehirn und Gesittung* [The Brain and Civilized Behaviour], 1889. In this presentation Meynert developed a theory of the development of morality from a Darwinistic rationale. The point of departure is Darwin's struggle for survival. From this principle it follows that every living being is focused on life and survival. Civilization is actually nothing more than the degree to which people have succeeded in pursuing this goal (life) not only for themselves, but also for others. The degree to which the struggle

[68] Idem, p.241.

[69] Idem, pp.242-248.

[70] Idem, pp.248-271. The dreams about the death of loved ones cover the larger part of the elaborations on typical dreams.

[71] Idem, pp.273-276.

[72] Idem, p.250.

[73] Idem.

[74] Idem.

[75] Idem, p.251.

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for survival is checked is the degree of civilized behaviour.[76] This is the point of departure and what follows is a long journey from the lowest to the higher animals (bees and ants, for they are able to express consciousness and form a polity[77]) in order to finally reach the highest level achievable: moral and religious civilized man. From the perspective of the struggle for survival, every organism is an aggressive autocrat. Meynert called this evil or "parasitical."[78] On the other hand, good is a minimalization of evil. The development of civilization is now the same as the repression of "parasitism". This development in nature can also be traced back to the development of the human individual. A child (and also a madman) is initially an elementary "helpless" personality. That is to say, it is his body (primary ego) which receives stimuli and processes them internally. Meynert also calls this the "parasitical ego",[79] living on what it can extract from others and focused on survival. The Darwinistic evolution mechanism gives rise in children to a secondary ego: the development of the brain means the development of the ability to associate and subsequently the ability to be conscious, to think and to be conscientious.[80] The development of this secondary ego is variable and without boundaries (it has an endless tendency to grow). The motives behind this development include fear, compassion and self-love (that is, self-love for the secondary ego). Impulses from the secondary ego are, for example, getting married and having children. Exactly how endless the growth possibilities of the secondary ego are is evident from Meynert's concluding remarks, where he links the idea of immortality and eternal life with the idea that – no matter how improbable it may seem from that which has just been asserted – the soul can survive without being connected to a brain.[81]

Freud introduces this theory of Meynert in order to make clear that a child is fundamentally amoral, not in the sense of being unspoiled and unaware, but innocent of their bad acts. Note here that we are still dealing with sibling competition. Death wishes against them can be explained by egoism.[82]

And what about death wishes against one's parents? Freud first established that when sons have this kind of dream it signifies the harbouring of a death wish against their father and for daughters against their mother.[83] Dreams which include a death wish against a parent go back to early childhood. After all, these desires are awakened very early and the first love object is sought in parents. The child's choice, we gather, falls upon the parent who provides the child with

[76] *Der Grad, in welchem diese Humanität den Kampf um das Dasein mildert, wäre wohl auch der Grad der Gesittung.* Th. Meynert, *Gehirn und Gesittung*, p.141.

[77] Idem, p.162.

[78] Idem, p.166.

[79] Idem, p.169.

[80] Idem, pp.171ff.

[81] Idem, pp.179-179.

[82] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE IV*, p.255.

[83] Idem, p.256.

the greatest satisfaction of its needs. Incidentally, this is not a rational, conscious choice. In fact, Freud is talking about a mechanism of attraction and rejection, as we saw above with the primary ego. Infatuation with the one, hate of the other, both develop early and play an important role in the symptomatics of neuroses (especially obsessional neurosis) and, less clearly, also in most children.[84]

Freud then introduces Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, a tragedy which can serve as a model.[85] It is the story of Oedipus, who is raised abroad because an oracle has told his father Laius that his son would kill him. Far away from home, Oedipus wonders about his origins. An oracle advises him to avoid the land of his birth for it has been foretold that he will kill his father and marry his mother. Despite this warning he goes out and, in fact, kills his father, not knowing that it is his father. Once he solves a sphinx's riddle he is made king of Thebes by the inhabitants and marries the queen, his mother Jocaste. Up until this point Freud treats the story as a model for the fulfilment of the death wish against one parent and infatuation with the other. Years later, when a plague is ravaging the city, an oracle is consulted in order to discover its origin. This is where the real tragedy of *Oedipus Rex* begins. The oracle reports that the plague will vanish when the person who murdered Laius is found and banished. At that point Freud inserts his first citation: "Where shall now be read the fading record of this ancient guilt?"[86]

The interpretation of the tragedy hinges on this. From here on we are no longer dealing with the story as wish fulfilment, but with the story as a model for psychoanalytic work – in psychoanalysis the dark trace of the ancient guilt is read. The quest for the source of the plague, that is, the identification of the guilty party, is a model for a psychoanalytic quest for the unveiling of the causes of dreams. In the tragedy it is Oedipus himself who leads the search for who murdered Laius. He is the detective who ultimately discovers that he himself is the offender. Freud thus uses this myth in order to clarify two things at once: the story as the wish fulfilment of the earliest of childhood desires and as the tragedy of the search for the sources of dreams and fantasies. He then returns to the theme of infatuation and the death wish. This tragedy's appeal depends upon the reader's ability to recognize himself in it.[87] It shows us the wish fulfilments of our childhood. We can thus recognize ourselves in Oedipus. Yet they are repressed desires and Oedipus knows nothing of them. Analogous to the search for the guilty party, recognition only appears to come when we discover in ourselves the repressed desires. In other words, it is the quest for "guilt" which eventually leads to self-recognition in the tragedy of Oedipus. Only by virtue of the discovery of these repressed desires is it

[84] Idem, p.261.

[85] Idem.

[86] Idem. The original German quotation is *Wo findet sich die schwer erkennbar dunkle Spur der alten Schuld? Das dunkle Spur* is thus translated as "a fading record". In my opinion the translation "a dark trace" would have been better, because in later analyses of the sense of guilt Freud occasionally refers to this citation. It is then indeed translated as "dark trace".

[87] Idem, pp.262-263.

clear that *Oedipus Rex* is a depiction of the earliest of fantasies: to kill one's father and marry one's mother. Only then is it clear why *Oedipus Rex* has such appeal.

The earliest childhood wishes are "egoistic".[88] These come from the ego, but which ego did Freud mean? It seems clear to me that this is a reference to Meynert's primary ego. It is clear that these old wishes are repressed, only bubbling up now and again in dreams or appealingly portrayed in a tragedy. Yet these are chiefly repressed because what Meynert calls the secondary ego is assumed by Freud: just like Oedipus, we are unaware of all the desires which clash with our morality. Morality as the characteristic *par excellance* of the secondary ego clouds our view of the primary ego. Morality maintains close relations with unwanted, early desires. It is obvious, in Freud's opinion, that horror and self-punishment thus also have a place in *Oedipus Rex*.[89] He calls this a "secondary revision of the material".[90] From this perspective it is thus not so strange that he is writing about "looking for guilt". Seen from the perspective of the secondary ego, that is an understandable quest. Although the primary ego may indeed not be guilty, the secondary ego may feel guilty.

Oedipus lived in ignorance. Hamlet lived conscientiously and repressed his desires. There is a difference and Freud gives it a name – the comparison of different "cultural epochs of civilization" reveals "a secular advance of repression in the emotional life of mankind".[91] A similar thought fits, for example, Meynert's theories on moral development. In fact, he also says that in his own time repression had experienced a provisional high. The Oedipus tragedy reveals the repressed within a Victorian, bourgeois environment.

2.6 "My 'ought' set before me"

During his period of self-analysis we see in Freud an increasing interest in "developmental psychology". (His approving citation of Meynert, *inter alia*, demonstrates this.) In a letter to Fliess his interest in this topic is evidenced as early as November 1897. He wrote that he found his own discoveries confirmed in a book by the philosopher and psychologist James Mark Baldwin (1861-1934) entitled *Mental Development*, 1895.[92] Like Meynert, Baldwin starts with Darwin's theory of evolution. His point of departure is thus once again thinking in terms of development and growth. Baldwin made clear that he saw an "analogy" between ontogenetic and phylogenetic developments.[93] In other words, the development

[88] Idem, p.367.

[89] Idem, p.264.

[90] Idem.

[91] Idem.

[92] S. Freud, *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*, p.277.

[93] J.M. Baldwin, *Mental Development in the Child and the Race. Methods and Processes*, Routledge, London, 1995, pp.1-20.

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and growth of an individual is analogous to the development (evolution) of the species.

Baldwin heavily emphasizes the ability to imitate. Imitation is the basis of development.[94] This principle also underlies the development of the world of feelings and thought. The development of morality is treated by Baldwin in a section on the development of emotion.[95] The reason for this is simple: moral consciousness is based on sympathy with another; sympathy is imitatively derived from emotions of sympathy expressed by others.[96] He extensively describes how children develop an understanding of others. A child first sees others as objects and only subsequently as people. By virtue of what he calls a "projective stage", the image of the other (the person) is internalized: subjectivity, self-notion, is based on the image of the other/others.[97] It is from this subjectivity that a child is subsequently in a position to see someone else also as a "self", the other as a person with "experiences like mine". He called this an "ejective stage".[98] This is the phase in which the "social self" is born. To sum up, "My sense of myself grows by imitation of you, and my sense of yourself grows in terms of my sense of myself".[99] Ego and alter are by definition social, that is to say, imitatively formed based on one another.

The hallmark of moral consciousness or "ethical feeling" is the "desire" to do good. Yet how can we desire? And what is good? Baldwin here emphasizes authority and obedience.[100] Via the same principle of sympathy, based on projection and ejection, children also internalize what Baldwin calls an "ideal self, my final pattern, my 'ought' set before me".[101] This ideal self is a moral self which theoretically maintains harmony between personal tendencies and social contacts. This is a supplement to Darwin and to Meynert, to whom he refers a few times. For them man is embroiled in a conflict between sympathy and egoism. Baldwin believes this unfair both to the legal characteristics of morality and to the principles which are upheld. Thus according to him children develop not only sympathy versus egoism, but also learn to submit to authority.

Baldwin is not mentioned by Freud further, but this book had a lasting effect for Freud gained an eye for the concept of authority. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* he spoke for the first time about the authority of the father, in the section on absurd dreams.[102] In that part he analysed some dreams about fathers. The first

[94] Idem, pp.81ff, pp.130ff, p.291ff.

[95] Idem, pp.332-348.

[96] Idem, pp.333ff.

[97] Idem, p.336.

[98] Idem, p.338.

[99] Idem.

[100] Idem, pp.343ff.

[101] Idem. p.345.

[102] "A dream is made absurd, then, if a judgement that something 'is absurd' is among the elements included in the dream-thoughts." S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, p.434.

is a patient's dream about an aggrieved father.[103] The second is one of his own dreams about his father. It is a dream in which after his death his father played "a political part among the Magyars and brought them together politically".[104] In the dream he reminded himself that his father looked like the Italian patriot Garibaldi when on his deathbed.[105] It is thus a dream in which his dead father makes a live appearance. As concerns the interpretation of this and other similar dreams, Freud mentions another dream reported to him by a patient. A man who had cared for his dying father dreamed that his father was alive again and spoke to him as he had always done.[106] This was absurd, for he was dead and evidently did not even know it. Freud's interpretation consists of a consistent implication that the dream and its various elements express the dreamer's desire. The dreamer thus wishes that his father were dead, a wish which stems from compassion for the sick man. After his death this merciful wish acquired the character of a self-reproach, as if the wish had contributed to the actual death. This reproach is repressed, but returns in the dream in veiled form.

Dreams about the deceased, Freud states, are difficult to interpret. The reason for this lies in the ambivalence of feelings regarding the deceased. The wish that the deceased be alive again, or that someone who is living die, can alternate. How can this ambivalence be further interpreted? In the first place, what he mentions is known from the Oedipus complex: there is an early rivalry between sons and fathers. In the second place, there is the father's authority. A father simply has authority and children are critical of this.[107] Fathers make demands which force a child to be extra sharp when looking for weaknesses in their father (in order to be able to compete). In other words, Freud suggests that a more powerful authority also strengthens critical feelings. Put another way, the measure of a father's authority eventually also determines the degree of ambivalence.[108]

Freud subsequently continues the analysis of absurdities with two more of his own dreams. The first is again about his father, but the analysis appears to refer to Meynert whom he not only honoured as a teacher but had also regarded as "hostile".[109] The second dream was about Goethe.[110] He states in this connection anew that dreams are egoistic: the death wish towards loved ones is an egoistic wish (the Oedipal desire to possess the mother is as well). In contrast is sympathy, the piety for a loved rival.[111] What is introduced here as the new element is the

[103] Idem, pp.426-427.

[104] Idem, p.427.

[105] Idem, p.428.

[106] Idem, p.430.

[107] Idem, p.435.

[108] Idem.

[109] Idem, pp.435-439.

[110] Idem, pp.439ff.

[111] Idem, pp.439-440.

father's authority. For the time being this notion serves to describe ambivalent feelings in greater depth.

2.7 Primary and secondary processes

Freud saw desires and wishes as coming from the primary ego; he set morality against this. These two are in conflict with one another. We have already seen that the conflict between these two is played out in the preconscious. Dream analyses demonstrate that unconscious wishes can sneak into consciousness in disguise. There is evidently a largely unconscious resistance to desires which conflict with morality. The conflict between desire and morality does not simply correspond with the distinction between unconscious and conscious.

At this time he developed an elaborate topical model to describe the entire mental apparatus. It would lead us too far astray to detail his theories on this subject exactly. Their fundamental principles can be found in his 1895 *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. Elaboration on these ideas can be found in *The Interpretation of Dreams*.[112] He describes the psychical apparatus as a connected whole of nearly autonomous and regularly operating systems. There is thus a perception system which receives stimuli (hunger, pain), and a memory system in which the various perceived stimuli and ideas are associatively bound together. These systems are unconscious and it is here that an accumulation of tension can originate. Subsequently, the unpleasure principle becomes effective, and a diminution of tension is experienced as pleasure. Dreams as wish fulfilments are a means to achieve this ("primary system"). Yet a dream is also a veiled wish fulfilment. A censoring system remains which Freud localized in the preconscious. This, too, is an autonomous mechanism. Repression is not a conscious desire to remain ignorant, but a continuous countermovement against thoughts which repeatedly recur. He is speaking here of censorship ('secondary system").[113] The essence of this is that owing to it an individual is capable of consciously working through an originally intolerable idea: the tension, the affect, is linked anew with other ideas.

Primary and secondary processes are thus two conflicting systems. The question is how this second system relates to the first. How is it capable of acting as a censor? Freud believed that the censorship must not be seen as a kind of distraction from unpleasure, but as a system that "inhibits" the discharge of unpleasurable memories such that the direct release of unpleasure is avoided.[114] In other words, the unpleasure principle itself is the regulator for the reduction of tension in the

[112] S. Freud, *Project for a Scientific Psychology*; S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, pp.536ff, pp.598-609.

[113] For a short outline on the primary and secondary processes see J.-M. Quinodoz, *Reading Freud. A Chronological Exploration of Freud's Writings*, Routledge, London, New York, 2005, p.27.

[114] S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams, SE V*, pp.599-601.

second system. After all, the principle is that tension is not directly discharged or counteracted, but drained off. Containment is essential for this; the second system is, one could say, given time to link the tension with ideas which together form the thought-process.[115] It is exactly for this reason that the dreamer is not frightened awake by each idea within a dream, but sleeps soundly while the dream "thinks through" its own story and logic.

In a later addition to *The Interpretation of Dreams* Freud differentiated between primary and secondary processes as the difference between the pleasure and reality principles.[116] He elaborated this last term in his 1911 *Formulations on the Two Principles of Mental Functioning*. In that short, complex text the reality principle is not a formulation of an adaptation by the individual to real circumstances which makes the immediate need satisfaction impossible. In that case the reality principle would denote a conscious assessment of possibilities, impossibilities and utility. This is not what is meant by the reality principle. He meant that in order for a child to satisfy its needs it must develop a certain degree of control over reality in order to gain "assured pleasure at a later time" for example in the after-life.[117] By thinking and remembering children create links and thereby insight into reality for the express purpose of employing outside reality to satisfy their need for pleasure. The reality principle thus serves the pleasure principle.[118] In this we can again recognize the relationship between primary and secondary processes: the secondary process is not an internalized external morality which prevents each pleasure, but rather a check – censorship – on the gradual discharge of unpleasure that this discharge can also result in pleasure (and thus does not result in new unpleasure). The secondary process serves the primary process.[119] The conflicting primary and secondary processes are essentially a theoretical model that describes the relationship between wish and morality. Sense of guilt forms the tension between the two.[120] Here, we touch upon an ambiguity (or compromise) in Freudian thought: the possibility of pleasure is only safeguarded within a conflictuous structure including sense of guilt.

[115] Idem, p.602.

[116] Idem, p.567 (footnote).

[117] S. Freud, *Formulations on the two Principles of Mental Functioning, SE XII*, p.223. This idea will later be elaborated upon in *The Future of an Illusion*.

[118] "Actually the substitution of the reality principle implies no deposing of the pleasure principle, but only a safeguarding of it." Idem. See also J. Laplanche, J.-B. Pontalis, *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 1967, p.336.

[119] This idea is already presented in *Project for a Scientific Psychology,* when Freud argues that a child is "helpless" not only because it needs others to supply needs, but also because the child itself is defenceless against its own primary processes, that is, the autonomous urges and discharges of unpleasure. It is for these reasons – in combination – that helplessness is the source of moral motives. (The issue of helplessness will later also be elaborated upon in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* and in *The Future of an Illusion*.) S. Freud, *Project for a Scientific Psychology*, pp.317-318.

[120] It is for this reason that *Formulations on the two Principles of Mental Functioning* ends with a short discussion of death wishes against the father and the self-reproaches that emanate from this wish. S. Freud, *Formulations on the two Principles of Mental Functioning*, p.225.