aroused waking thought, tallies to some extent with the view which other writers have sought to apply to the entire activity of dream-construction.[1]

[1] [At this point there followed in the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh editions (from 1914 to 1922) two self-contained essays by Otto Rank, bearing the titles 'Dreams and Creative Writing' and 'Dreams and Myths'. These were omitted from the *Gesammelte Schriften*, 1924, with a comment by Freud (3, 150) that they were 'naturally not included in a collected edition of my works'. They were, however, not re-inserted in the subsequent (eighth) edition of 1930. See the Editor's Introduction, p. xxi.]

CHAPTER VII

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE DREAM-PROCESSES[1]

AMONG the dreams which have been reported to me by other people, there is one which has special claims upon our attention at this point. It was told to me by a woman patient who had herself heard it in a lecture on dreams: its actual source is still unknown to me. Its content made an impression on the lady, however, and she proceeded to 're-dream' it, that is, to repeat some of its elements in a dream of her own, so that, by taking it over in this way, she might express her agreement with it on one particular point.

The preliminaries to this model dream were as follows. A father had been watching beside his child's sick-bed for days and nights on end. After the child had died, he went into the next room to lie down, but left the door open so that he could see from his bedroom into the room in which his child's body was laid out, with tall candles standing round it. An old man had been engaged to keep watch over it, and sat beside the body murmuring prayers. After a few hours' sleep, the father had a dream that *his child was standing beside his bed, caught him by the arm and whispered to him reproachfully: 'Father, don't you see I'm burning?'* He woke up, noticed a bright glare of light from the next room, hurried into it and found that the old watchman had dropped off to sleep and that the wrappings and one of the arms of his beloved child's dead body had been burned by a lighted candle that had fallen on them.

The explanation of this moving dream is simple enough and, so my patient told me, was correctly given by the lecturer. The glare of light shone through the open door into the sleeping man's eyes and led him to the conclusion which he would have arrived at if he had been awake, namely that a candle had fallen over and set something alight in the neighbourhood of the body.

[1] [Some light has been thrown on the difficulties presented in the later sections of this chapter by Freud's early correspondence with Wilhelm Fliess (Freud, 1950*a*). Cf. the Editor's Introduction (p. xv ff.).]

It is even possible that he had felt some concern when he went to sleep as to whether the old man might not be incompetent to carry out his task.

Nor have I any changes to suggest in this interpretation except to add that the content of the dream must have been overdetermined and that the words spoken by the child must have been made up of words which he had actually spoken in his lifetime and which were connected with important events in the father's mind. For instance, '*I'm burning*' may have been spoken during the fever of the child's last illness, and '*Father, don't you see?*' may have been derived from some other highly emotional situation of which we are in ignorance.

But, having recognized that the dream was a process with a meaning, and that it can be inserted into the chain of the dreamer's psychical experiences, we may still wonder why it was that a dream occurred at all in such circumstances, when the most rapid possible awakening was called for. And here we shall observe that this dream, too, contained the fulfilment of a wish. The dead child behaved in the dream like a living one: he himself warned his father, came to his bed, and caught him by the arm, just as he had probably done on the occasion from the memory of which the first part of the child's words in the dream were derived. For the sake of the fulfilment of this wish the father prolonged his sleep by one moment. The dream was preferred to a waking reflection because it was able to show the child as once more alive. If the father had woken up first and then made the inference that led him to go into the next room, he would, as it were, have shortened his child's life by that moment of time.

There can be no doubt what the peculiar feature is which attracts our interest to this brief dream. Hitherto we have been principally concerned with the secret meaning of dreams and the method of discovering it and with the means employed by the dream-work for concealing it. The problems of dream-interpretation have hitherto occupied the centre of the picture. And now we come upon a dream which raises no problem of interpretation and the meaning of which is obvious, but which, as we see, nevertheless retains the essential characteristics that differentiate dreams so strikingly from waking life and consequently call for explanation. It is only after we have disposed of everything that has to do with the work of interpretation that

we can begin to realize the incompleteness of our psychology of dreams.

But before starting off along this new path, it will be well to pause and look around, to see whether in the course of our journey up to this point we have overlooked anything of importance. For it must be clearly understood that the easy and agreeable portion of our journey lies behind us. Hitherto, unless I am greatly mistaken, all the paths along which we have travelled have led us towards the light—towards elucidation and fuller understanding. But as soon as we endeavour to penetrate more deeply into the mental process involved in dreaming, every path will end in darkness. There is no possibility of *explaining* dreams as a psychical process, since to explain a thing means to trace it back to something already known, and there is at the present time no established psychological knowledge under which we could subsume what the psychological examination of dreams enables us to infer as a basis for their explanation. On the contrary, we shall be obliged to set up a number of fresh hypotheses which touch tentatively upon the structure of the apparatus of the mind and upon the play of forces operating in it. We must be careful, however, not to pursue these hypotheses too far beyond their first logical links, or their value will be lost in uncertainties. Even if we make no false inferences and take all the logical possibilities into account, the probable incompleteness of our premises threatens to bring our calculation to a complete miscarriage. No conclusions upon the construction and working methods of the mental instrument can be arrived at or at least fully proved from even the most painstaking investigation of dreams or of any other mental function taken *in isolation*. To achieve this result, it will be necessary to correlate all the established implications derived from a comparative study of a whole series of such functions. Thus the psychological hypotheses to which we are led by an analysis of the processes of dreaming must be left, as it were, in suspense, until they can be related to the findings of other enquiries which seek to approach the kernel of the same problem from another angle.

(A)

THE FORGETTING OF DREAMS

I suggest, therefore, that we should first turn to a topic that raises a difficulty which we have not hitherto considered but which is nevertheless capable of cutting the ground from under all our efforts at interpreting dreams. It has been objected on more than one occasion that we have in fact no knowledge of the dreams that we set out to interpret, or, speaking more correctly, that we have no guarantee that we know them as they actually occurred. (See p. 45 ff.)

In the first place, what we remember of a dream and what we exercise our interpretative arts upon has been mutilated by the untrustworthiness of our memory, which seems quite especially incapable of retaining a dream and may well have lost precisely the most important parts of its content. It quite frequently happens that when we seek to turn our attention to one of our dreams we find ourselves regretting the fact that, though we dreamt far more, we can remember nothing but a single fragment which is itself recollected with peculiar uncertainty.

Secondly, there is every reason to suspect that our memory of dreams is not only fragmentary but positively inaccurate and falsified. On the one hand it may be doubted whether what we dreamt was really as disconnected and hazy as our recollection of it; and on the other hand it may also be doubted whether a dream was really as connected as it is in the account we give of it, whether in attempting to reproduce it we do not fill in what was never there, or what has been forgotten, with new and arbitrarily selected material, whether we do not add embellishments and trimmings and round it off so that there is no possibility of deciding what its original content may have been. Indeed one author, Spitta (1882, [338]),[1] goes to the point of suggesting that in so far as a dream shows any kind of order or coherence, these qualities are only introduced into it when we try to recall it to mind. [Cf. p. 47.] Thus there seems to be a

[1] [Added in text in 1914 and transferred to footnote in 1930:] So too Foucault [1906, 141 f.] and Tannery [1898]

danger that the very thing whose value we have undertaken to assess may slip completely through our fingers.

Hitherto in interpreting dreams we have disregarded such warnings. On the contrary, we have accepted it as being just as important to interpret the smallest, least conspicuous and most uncertain constituents of the content of dreams as those that are most clearly and certainly preserved. The dream of Irma's injection contained the phrase 'I *at once* called in Dr. M.' [p. 111]; and we assumed that even this detail would not have found its way into the dream unless it had had some particular origin. It was thus that we came upon the story of the unfortunate patient to whose bedside I had 'at once' called in my senior colleague. In the apparently absurd dream which treated the difference between 51 and 56 as a negligible quantity, the number 51 was mentioned several times. [See p. 435.] Instead of regarding this as a matter of course or as something indifferent, we inferred from it that there was a *second* line of thought in the latent content of the dream leading to the number 51; and along this track we arrived at my fears of 51 years being the limit of my life, in glaring contrast to the dream's dominant train of thought which was lavish in its boasts of a long life. In the '*Non vixit*' dream [p. 421 ff.] there was an inconspicuous interpolation which I overlooked at first: '*As P. failed to understand him, Fl. asked me*', etc. When the interpretation was held up, I went back to these words and it was they that led me on to the childhood phantasy which turned out to be an intermediate nodal point in the dream-thoughts. [See p. 483 f.] This was arrived at by way of the lines:

> Selten habt ihr mich *verstanden*,
> Selten auch verstand ich Euch,
> Nur wenn wir im *Kot* uns fander
> So verstanden wir uns gleich.[1]

Examples could be found in every analysis to show that precisely the most trivial elements of a dream are indispensable to its interpretation and that the work in hand is held up if attention is not paid to these elements until too late. We have

[1] [Literally: 'Rarely have you *understood* me, and rarely too have I understood you. Not until we both found ourselves in the *mud* did we promptly understand each other.' Heine, *Buch der Lieder*, 'Die Heimkehr', LXXVIII.]

attached no less importance in interpreting dreams to every shade of the form of words in which they were laid before us. And even when it happened that the text of the dream as we had it was meaningless or inadequate—as though the effort to give a correct account of it had been unsuccessful—we have taken this defect into account as well. In short, we have treated as Holy Writ what previous writers have regarded as an arbitrary improvisation, hurriedly patched together in the embarrassment of the moment. This contradiction stands in need of an explanation.

The explanation is in our favour, though without putting the other writers in the wrong. In the light of our newly-won understanding of the origin of dreams the contradiction disappears completely. It is true that we distort dreams in attempting to reproduce them; here we find at work once more the process which we have described as the secondary (and often ill-conceived) revision of the dream by the agency which carries out normal thinking [p. 488 ff.]. But this distortion is itself no more than a part of the revision to which the dream-thoughts are regularly subjected as a result of the dream-censorship. The other writers have at this point noticed or suspected the part of dream-distortion which operates manifestly; *we* are less interested, since we know that a much more far-reaching process of distortion, though a less obvious one, has already developed the dream out of the hidden dream-thoughts. The only mistake made by previous writers has been in supposing that the modification of the dream in the course of being remembered and put into words is an *arbitrary* one and cannot be further resolved and that it is therefore calculated to give us a misleading picture of the dream.[1] They have underestimated the extent to which psychical events are determined. There is nothing arbitrary about them. It can be shown quite generally that if an element is left undetermined by one train of thought, its determination is immediately effected by a second one. For instance, I may try to think of a number arbitrarily. But this is impossible: the number that occurs to me will be unambiguously and necessarily determined by thoughts of mine, though they may be

[1] [A misunderstanding in a contrary direction of the mportance of the text of dreams is discussed towards the end of Freud's paper on the technical uses of dream-interpretation in therapeutic analyses (1911*e*).]

remote from my immediate intention.[1] The modifications to which dreams are submitted under the editorship of waking life are just as little arbitrary. They are associatively linked to the material which they replace, and serve to show us the way to that material, which may in its turn be a substitute for something else.

In analysing the dreams of my patients I sometimes put this assertion to the following test, which has never failed me. If the first account given me by a patient of a dream is too hard to follow I ask him to repeat it. In doing so he rarely uses the same words. But the parts of the dream which he describes in different terms are by that fact revealed to me as the weak spot in the dream's disguise: they serve my purpose just as Hagen's was served by the embroidered mark on Siegfried's cloak.[2] That is the point at which the interpretation of the dream can be started. My request to the patient to repeat his account of the dream has warned him that I was proposing to take special pains in solving it; under pressure of the resistance, therefore, he hastily covers the weak spots in the dream's disguise by replacing any expressions that threaten to betray its meaning by other less revealing ones. In this way he draws my attention to the expression which he has dropped out. The trouble taken by the dreamer in preventing the solution of the dream gives me a basis for estimating the care with which its cloak has been woven.

Previous writers have had less justification in devoting so much space to the *doubt* with which our judgement receives accounts of dreams. For this doubt has no intellectual warrant. There is in general no guarantee of the correctness of our memory; and yet we yield to the compulsion to attach belief to its data far more often than is objectively justified. Doubt

[1] [*Footnote added* 1909:] See my *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* [1901*b*, Chapter XII(A), Nos. 2 to 7.—No. 2 relates to a letter written by Freud to Fliess on August 27, 1899 (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 116), while he was correcting the proofs of the present volume, in which he prophesied that the book would contain 2,467 misprints. (See below, p. 532 *n.*)]

[2] [There was only one spot on Siegfried's body where he could be wounded. By a trick, Hagen persuaded Kriemhild, who alone knew where the spot was, to embroider a small cross on Siegfried's cloak at the vital point. It was there that Hagen later stabbed him. (*Nibelungenlied*, XV and XVI.)]

whether a dream or certain of its details have been correctly reported is once more a derivative of the dream-censorship, of resistance to the penetration of the dream-thoughts into consciousness.[1] This resistance has not been exhausted even by the displacements and substitutions it has brought about; it persists in the form of doubt attaching to the material which has been allowed through. We are especially inclined to misunderstand this doubt since it is careful never to attack the more intense elements of a dream but only the weak and indistinct ones. As we already know, however, a complete reversal of all psychical values takes place between the dream-thoughts and the dream [p. 330]. Distortion is only made possible by a withdrawal of psychical value; it habitually expresses itself by that means and is occasionally content to require nothing more. If, then, an indistinct element of a dream's content is in addition attacked by doubt, we have a sure indication that we are dealing with a comparatively direct derivative of one of the proscribed dream-thoughts. The state of things is what it was after some sweeping revolution in one of the republics of antiquity or the Renaissance. The noble and powerful families which had previously dominated the scene were sent into exile and all the high offices were filled by newcomers. Only the most impoverished and powerless members of the vanquished families, or their remote dependants, were allowed to remain in the city; and even so they did not enjoy full civic rights and were viewed with distrust. The distrust in this analogy corresponds to the doubt in the case we are considering. That is why in analysing a dream I insist that the whole scale of estimates of certainty shall be abandoned and that the faintest possibility that something of this or that sort may have occurred in the dream shall be treated as complete certainty. In tracing any element of a dream it will be found that unless this attitude is firmly adopted the analysis will come to a standstill. If any doubt is thrown upon the value of the element in question, the psychical result in the patient is that none of the involuntary ideas underlying that element comes into his head. This result is not a self-evident one. It would not make nonsense if someone were to say: 'I don't know for certain whether such and such a thing came into the dream, but here is what occurs to me in connection with it.' But in fact

[1] [For the same mechanism of doubt in cases of hysteria see a passage near the beginning of Part I of the case history of 'Dora' (1905*e*).]

no one ever does say this; and it is precisely the fact that doubt produces this interrupting effect upon an analysis that reveals it as a derivative and tool of psychical resistance. Psychoanalysis is justly suspicious. One of its rules is that *whatever interrupts the progress of analytic work is a resistance.*[1]

The *forgetting* of dreams, too, remains inexplicable unless the power of the psychical censorship is taken into account. In a number of cases the feeling of having dreamt a great deal during the night and of only having retained a little of it may in fact have some other meaning, such as that the dream-work has been perceptibly proceeding all through the night but has only left a short dream behind. [Cf. pp. 279 f., 489, and 576.] It is no doubt true that we forget dreams more and more as time passes after waking; we often forget them in spite of the most painstaking efforts to recall them. But I am of opinion that the extent of this forgetting is as a rule over-estimated; and there is a similar over-estimation of the extent to which the gaps in a dream limit our knowledge of it. It is often possible by means of analysis to restore all that has been lost by the forgetting of the dream's content; at least, in quite a number of cases one can reconstruct from a single remaining fragment not, it is true, the dream—which is in any case a matter of no importance—but all the dream-thoughts. This demands a certain amount of attention and self-discipline in carrying out the analysis; that is all—but it shows that there was no lack of a hostile [i.e. resistant] purpose at work in the forgetting of the dream.[2]

[1] [*Footnote added* 1925:] The proposition laid down in these peremptory terms—'whatever interrupts the progress of analytic work is a resistance'—is easily open to misunderstanding. It is of course only to be taken as a technical rule, as a warning to analysts. It cannot be disputed that in the course of an analysis various events may occur the responsibility for which cannot be laid upon the patient's intentions. His father may die without his having murdered him; or a war may break out which brings the analysis to an end. But behind its obvious exaggeration the proposition is asserting something both true and new. Even if the interrupting event is a real one and independent of the patient, it often depends on him how great an interruption it causes; and resistance shows itself unmistakably in the readiness with which he accepts an occurrence of this kind or the exaggerated use which he makes of it.

[2] [*Footnote added* 1919:] I may quote the following dream from my *Introductory Lectures* [Freud, 1916–17, Lecture VII] as an example of the meaning of doubt and uncertainty in a dream and of its content being

Convincing evidence of the fact that the forgetting of dreams is tendentious and serves the purpose of resistance[1] is afforded when it is possible to observe in analyses a preliminary stage of forgetting. It not infrequently happens that in the middle of the work of interpretation an omitted portion of the dream comes to light and is described as having been forgotten till that moment. Now a part of a dream that has been rescued from oblivion in this way is invariably the most important part; it always lies on the shortest road to the dream's solution and has for that reason

at the same time shrunk down to a single element; in spite of this the dream was successfully analysed after a short delay:

'A sceptical woman patient had a longish dream in the course of which some people told her about my book on jokes and praised it highly. Something came in then about *a "channel", perhaps it was another book that mentioned a channel, or something else about a channel . . . she didn't know . . . it was all so indistinct.*

'No doubt you will be inclined to expect that the element "channel", since it was so indistinct, would be inaccessible to interpretation. You are right in suspecting a difficulty; but the difficulty did not arise from the indistinctness: both the difficulty and the indistinctness arose from another cause. Nothing occurred to the dreamer in connection with "channel", and *I* could of course throw no light on it. A little later—it was the next day, in point of fact—she told me that she had thought of something that *might* have something to do with it. It was a joke, too,—a joke she had heard. On the steamer between Dover and Calais a well-known author fell into conversation with an Englishman. The latter had occasion to quote the phrase: "Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas. [It is only a step from the sublime to the ridiculous.]" Yes, replied the author, "*le Pas de Calais*"—meaning that he thought France sublime and England ridiculous. But the *Pas de Calais* is a channel—the English Channel. You will ask whether I think this had anything to do with the dream. Certainly I think so; and it provides the solution of the puzzling element of the dream. Can you doubt that this joke was already present before the dream occurred, as the unconscious thought behind the element "channel"? Can you suppose that it was introduced as a subsequent invention? The association betrayed the scepticism which lay concealed behind the patient's ostensible admiration; and her resistance against revealing this was no doubt the common cause both of her delay in producing the association and of the indistinctness of the dream-element concerned. Consider the relation of the dream-element to its unconscious background: it was, as it were, a fragment of that background, an allusion to it, but it was made quite incomprehensible by being isolated.'

[1] On the purposes of forgetting in general see my short paper on the psychical mechanism of forgetting (Freud, 1898*b*). [*Added* 1909:] Later included [with modifications] as the first chapter in my *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (Freud, 1901*b*).

been exposed to resistance more than any other part. Among the specimen dreams scattered through this volume, there is one in which a part of its content was added like this as an afterthought.[1] It is the travel dream in which I revenged myself on two disagreeable fellow-travellers and which I had to leave almost uninterpreted on account of its gross indecency. [See p. 455 ff.] The omitted portion ran as follows: '*I said* [in English], *referring to one of Schiller's works: "It is from . . ." but, noticing the mistake, I corrected myself: "It is by . . ." "Yes", the man commented to his sister, "he said that right."* '[2]

Self-corrections in dreams, which seem so marvellous to some writers, need not occupy our attention. I will indicate instead the recollection which served as the model for my verbal error in this dream. When I was nineteen[3] years old I visited England for the first time and spent a whole day on the shore of the Irish Sea. I naturally revelled in the opportunity of collecting the marine animals left behind by the tide and I was occupied with a starfish—the words '*Hollthurn*' and '*holothurians* [sea-slugs]' occurred at the beginning of the dream—when a charming little girl came up to me and said: 'Is it a starfish? Is it alive?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'he is alive', and at once, embarrassed at my mistake, repeated the sentence correctly. The dream replaced the verbal error which I then made by another into which a German is equally liable to fall. '*Das Buch ist von Schiller*' should be translated not with a 'from' but with a 'by'. After all that we have heard of the purposes of the dream-work and its reckless choice of methods for attaining them, we shall not be surprised to hear that it effected this replacement because of the magnificent piece of condensation that was made possible by the identity of sound of the English 'from' and the German adjective '*fromm*' ['pious']. But how did my blameless memory of the sea-shore come to be in the dream? It served as the most innocent possible example of my using a word indicating gender

[1] [Another instance will be found on p. 155 *n*. Yet another occurs in the analysis of Dora's second dream (Freud, 1905*e*, Section III).]

[2] [*Footnote added* 1914:] Corrections such as this in the usages of foreign languages are not infrequent in dreams but are more often attributed to other people. Maury (1878, 143) once dreamt, at a time when he was learning English, that, in telling someone that he had visited him the day before, he used the words 'I called for you yesterday'. Whereupon the other answered correctly: 'You should have said "I called *on* you yesterday".'

[3] [See p. 714.]

or sex in the wrong place—of my bringing in sex (the word 'he') where it did not belong. This, incidentally, was one of the keys to the solution of the dream. No one who has heard, furthermore, the origin attributed to the title of Clerk-Maxwell's '*Ma*tter and *Mo*tion' [mentioned in the dream, p. 456] will have any difficulty in filling in the gaps: *Mo*lière's 'Le *Ma*lade Imaginaire'—'La *ma*tière est-elle laudable?'[1]—A *mo*tion of the bowels.

Moreover I am in a position to offer an ocular demonstration of the fact that the forgetting of dreams is to a great extent a product of resistance. One of my patients will tell me he has had a dream but has forgotten every trace of it: it is therefore just as though it had never happened. We proceed with our work. I come up against a resistance; I therefore explain something to the patient and help him by encouragement and pressure to come to terms with some disagreeable thought. Hardly have I succeeded in this than he exclaims: 'Now I remember what it was I dreamt.' The same resistance which interfered with our work that day also made him forget the dream. By overcoming this resistance I have recalled the dream to his memory.

In just the same way, when a patient reaches some particular point in his work, he may be able to remember a dream which he had dreamt three or four or even more days before and which had hitherto remained forgotten.[2]

Psycho-analytic experience[3] has provided us with yet another proof that the forgetting of dreams depends far more upon resistance than upon the fact, stressed by the authorities, that the waking and sleeping states are alien to each other [p. 45]. It not infrequently happens to me, as well as to other analysts and to patients under treatment, that, having been woken up, as one might say, by a dream, I immediately afterwards, and in full possession of my intellectual powers, set about interpreting it. In such cases I have often refused to rest till I have arrived at a complete understanding of the dream; yet it has

[1] ['Is the matter laudable?'—Old medical terminology for 'Is the excretion healthy?'—The next phrase is in English in the original.]

[2] [*Footnote added* 1914:] Ernest Jones has described [1912*b*] an analogous case which often occurs: while a dream is being analysed the patient may recollect a second one which was dreamt during the same night but whose very existence had not been suspected.

[3] [This paragraph and the next were added in 1911.]

sometimes been my experience that after finally waking up in the morning I have entirely forgotten both my interpretative activity and the content of the dream, though knowing that I have had a dream and interpreted it.[1] It happens far more often that the dream draws the findings of my interpretative activity back with it into oblivion than that my intellectual activity succeeds in preserving the dream in my memory. Yet there is no such psychical gulf between my interpretative activity and my waking thoughts as the authorities suppose to account for the forgetting of dreams.

Morton Prince (1910 [141]) has objected to my explanation of the forgetting of dreams on the ground that that forgetting is only a special case of the amnesia attaching to dissociated mental states, that it is impossible to extend my explanation of this special amnesia to other types and that my explanation is consequently devoid of value even for its immediate purpose. His readers are thus reminded that in the course of all his descriptions of these dissociated states he has never attempted to discover a dynamic explanation of such phenomena. If he had, he would inevitably have found that repression (or, more precisely, the resistance created by it) is the cause both of the dissociations and of the amnesia attaching to their psychical content.

An observation which I have been able to make in the course of preparing this manuscript has shown me that dreams are no more forgotten than other mental acts and can be compared, by no means to their disadvantage, with other mental functions in respect of their retention in the memory. I had kept records of a large number of my own dreams which for one reason or another I had not been able to interpret completely at the time or had left entirely uninterpreted. And now, between one and two years later, I have attempted to interpret some of them for the purpose of obtaining more material in illustration of my views. These attempts have been successful in every instance; indeed the interpretation may be said to have proceeded more easily after this long interval than it did at the time when the dream was a recent experience. A possible explanation of this is that in the meantime I have overcome some of the internal resistances which previously obstructed me. When making these

[1] [Cf. Postscript to the 'Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy' (Freud, 1922*c*).]

subsequent interpretations I have compared the dream-thoughts that I elicited at the time of the dream with the present, usually far more copious, yield, and I have always found that the old ones are included among the new. My astonishment at this was quickly halted by the reflection that I had long been in the habit of getting my patients, who sometimes tell me dreams dating from earlier years, to interpret them—by the same procedure and with the same success—as though they had dreamt them the night before. When I come to discuss anxiety-dreams I shall give two examples of postponed interpretations like these. [See p. 583 ff.] I was led into making my first experiment of this kind by the justifiable expectation that in this as in other respects dreams would behave like neurotic symptoms. When I treat a psychoneurotic—a hysteric, let us say—by psycho-analysis, I am obliged to arrive at an explanation for the earliest and long since vanished symptoms of his illness no less than for the contemporary ones which brought him to me for treatment; and I actually find the earlier problem easier to solve than the immediate one. As long ago as in 1895 I was able to give an explanation in *Studies on Hysteria* [Breuer and Freud, 1895 (Frau Cäcilie M., in Case History V)] of the first hysterical attack which a woman of over forty had had in her fifteenth year.[1]

And here I will mention a number of further, somewhat disconnected, points on the subject of interpreting dreams, which may perhaps help to give readers their bearings should they feel inclined to check my statements by subsequent work upon their own dreams.

No one should expect that an interpretation of his dreams will fall into his lap like manna from the skies. Practice is needed even for perceiving endoptic phenomena or other sensa-

[1] [Added in the text in 1919 and transferred to a footnote in 1930:] Dreams which occur in the earliest years of childhood and are retained in the memory for dozens of years, often with complete sensory vividness, are almost always of great importance in enabling us to understand the history of the subject's mental development and of his neurosis. Analysis of such dreams protects the physician from errors and uncertainties which may lead, among other things, to theoretical confusion. [The example of the 'Wolf Man's' dream was no doubt especially in Freud's mind (1918*b*).]

tions from which our attention is normally withheld; and this is so even though there is no psychical motive fighting against such perceptions. It is decidedly more difficult to get hold of 'involuntary ideas'. Anyone who seeks to do so must familiarize himself with the expectations raised in the present volume and must, in accordance with the rules laid down in it, endeavour during the work to refrain from any criticism, any *parti pris*, and any emotional or intellectual bias. He must bear in mind Claude Bernard's[1] advice to experimenters in a physiological laboratory: 'travailler comme une bête'—he must work, that is, with as much persistence as an animal and with as much disregard of the result. If this advice is followed, the task will no longer be a hard one.

The interpretation of a dream cannot always be accomplished at a single sitting. When we have followed a chain of associations, it not infrequently happens that we feel our capacity exhausted; nothing more is to be learnt from the dream that day. The wisest plan then is to break off and resume our work another day: another part of the dream's content may then attract our attention and give us access to another stratum of dream-thoughts. This procedure might be described as 'fractional' dream-interpretation.

It is only with the greatest difficulty that the beginner in the business of interpreting dreams can be persuaded that his task is not at an end when he has a complete interpretation in his hands—an interpretation which makes sense, is coherent and throws light upon every element of the dream's content. For the same dream may perhaps have another interpretation as well, an 'over-interpretation', which has escaped him. It is, indeed, not easy to form any conception of the abundance of the unconscious trains of thought, all striving to find expression, which are active in our minds. Nor is it easy to credit the skill shown by the dream-work in always hitting upon forms of expression that can bear several meanings—like the Little Tailor in the fairy story who hit seven flies at a blow. My readers will always be inclined to accuse me of introducing an unnecessary amount of ingenuity into my interpretations; but actual experience would teach them better. [See p. 297 f. *n.*]

On the other hand,[2] I cannot confirm the opinion, first stated

[1] [The French physiologist (1813–78).]

[2] [This paragraph was added in 1919.]

by Silberer [e.g. 1914, Part II, Section 5], that all dreams (or many dreams, or certain classes of dreams) require two different interpretations, which are even stated to bear a fixed relation to each other. One of these interpretations, which Silberer calls the 'psycho-analytic' one, is said to give the dream some meaning or other, usually of an infantile-sexual kind; the other and more important interpretation, to which he gives the name of 'anagogic', is said to reveal the more serious thoughts, often of profound import, which the dream-work has taken as its material. Silberer has not given evidence in support of this opinion by reporting a series of dreams analysed in the two directions. And I must object that the alleged fact is non-existent. In spite of what he says, the majority of dreams require no 'over-interpretation' and, more particularly, are insusceptible to an anagogic interpretation. As in the case of many other theories put forward in recent years, it is impossible to overlook the fact that Silberer's views are influenced to some extent by a purpose which seeks to disguise the fundamental circumstances in which dreams are formed and to divert interest from their instinctual roots. In a certain number of cases I have been able to confirm Silberer's statements. Analysis showed that in such cases the dream-work found itself faced with the problem of transforming into a dream a series of highly abstract thoughts from waking life which were incapable of being given any direct representation. It endeavoured to solve the problem by getting hold of another group of intellectual material, somewhat loosely related (often in a manner which might be described as 'allegorical') to the abstract thoughts, and at the same time capable of being represented with fewer difficulties. The *abstract* interpretation of a dream that has arisen in this way is given by the dreamer without any difficulty; the *correct* interpretation of the material that has been interpolated must be looked for by the technical methods which are now familiar to us.[1]

The question whether it is possible to interpret *every* dream must be answered in the negative.[2] It must not be forgotten

[1] [Freud also discussed this point in a long footnote in his paper 'A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams' (1917*d*) and towards the end of his 'Dreams and Telepathy' (1922*a*).]

[2] [This question is considered at greater length in Freud, 1925*i*, Section A.]

that in interpreting a dream we are opposed by the psychical forces which were responsible for its distortion. It is thus a question of relative strength whether our intellectual interest, our capacity for self-discipline, our psychological knowledge and our practice in interpreting dreams enable us to master our internal resistances. It is always possible to go *some* distance: far enough, at all events, to convince ourselves that the dream is a structure with a meaning, and as a rule far enough to get a glimpse of what that meaning is. Quite often an immediately succeeding dream allows us to confirm and carry further the interpretation we have tentatively adopted for its predecessor. A whole series of dreams, continuing over a period of weeks or months, is often based upon common ground and must accordingly be interpreted in connection with one another. [Cf. pp. 193 and 362.] In the case of two consecutive dreams it can often be observed that one takes as its central point something that is only on the periphery of the other and *vice versa*, so that their interpretations too are mutually complementary. I have already given instances which show that different dreams dreamt on the same night are, as a quite general rule, to be treated in their interpretation as a single whole. [See p. 333 f.]

There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unravelled and which moreover adds nothing to our knowledge of the content of the dream. This is the dream's navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown. [Cf. p. 111 *n.*] The dream-thoughts to which we are led by interpretation cannot, from the nature of things, have any definite endings; they are bound to branch out in every direction into the intricate network of our world of thought. It is at some point where this meshwork is particularly close that the dream-wish grows up, like a mushroom out of its mycelium.

But we must return to the facts concerning the forgetting of dreams, for we have failed to draw one important conclusion from them. We have seen that waking life shows an unmistakable inclination to forget any dream that has been formed in the course of the night—whether as a whole directly after waking, or bit by bit in the course of the day; and we have

recognized that the agent chiefly responsible for this forgetting is the mental resistance to the dream which has already done what it could against it during the night. But if all this is so, the question arises how it comes about that a dream can be formed at all in the face of this resistance. Let us take the most extreme case, in which waking life has got rid of a dream as though it had never occurred. A consideration of the interplay of psychical forces in this case must lead us to infer that the dream would in fact not have occurred at all if the resistance had been as strong during the night as during the day. We must conclude that during the night the resistance loses some of its power, though we know it does not lose the whole of it, since we have shown the part it plays in the formation of dreams as a distorting agent. But we are driven to suppose that its power may be diminished at night and that this makes the formation of dreams possible. This makes it easy to understand how, having regained its full strength at the moment of waking, it at once proceeds to get rid of what it was obliged to permit while it was weak. Descriptive psychology tells us that the principal *sine qua non* for the formation of dreams is that the mind shall be in a state of sleep; and we are now able to explain this fact: *the state of sleep makes the formation of dreams possible because it reduces the power of the endopsychic censorship.*

It is no doubt tempting to regard this as the only possible inference that can be drawn from the facts of the forgetting of dreams, and to make it the basis for further conclusions as to the conditions of energy prevailing during sleeping and waking. For the moment, however, we will stop at this point. When we have entered a little more deeply into the psychology of dreams we shall find that the factors making possible the formation of dreams can be viewed in another way as well. It may be that the resistance against the dream-thoughts becoming conscious can be evaded without any reduction having taken place in its power. And it seems a plausible idea that *both* of the two factors favouring the formation of dreams—the reduction and the evasion of the resistance—are simultaneously made possible by the state of sleep. I will break off here, though I shall pick up the argument again presently. [Cf. p. 573 f.]

There is another set of objections to our method of interpreting dreams with which we must now deal. Our procedure

consists in abandoning all those purposive ideas which normally govern our reflections, in focusing our attention on a single element of the dream and in then taking note of whatever involuntary thoughts may occur to us in connection with it. We then take the next portion of the dream and repeat the process with *it*. We allow ourselves to be led on by our thoughts regardless of the direction in which they carry us and drift on in this way from one thing to another. But we cherish a confident belief that in the end, without any active intervention on our part, we shall arrive at the dream-thoughts from which the dream originated.

Our critics argue against this along the following lines. There is nothing wonderful in the fact that a single element of the dream should lead us *somewhere*; every idea can be associated with *something*. What *is* remarkable is that such an aimless and arbitrary train of thought should happen to bring us to the dream-thoughts. The probability is that we are deceiving ourselves. We follow a chain of associations from one element, till, for one reason or another, it seems to break off. If we then take up a second element, it is only to be expected that the originally unrestricted character of our associations will be narrowed. For we still have the earlier chain of thoughts in our memory, and for that reason, in analysing the second dream-idea, we are more likely to hit upon associations which have something in common with associations from the first chain. We then delude ourselves into thinking that we have discovered a thought which is a connecting point between two elements of the dream. Since we give ourselves complete liberty to connect thoughts as we please and since in fact the only transitions from one idea to another which we exclude are those which operate in normal thinking, we shall find no difficulty in the long run in concocting out of a number of 'intermediate thoughts' something which we describe as the dream-thoughts and which—though without any guarantee, since we have no other knowledge of what the dream-thoughts are—we allege to be the psychical substitute for the dream. But the whole thing is completely arbitrary; we are merely exploiting chance connections in a manner which gives an effect of ingenuity. In this way anyone who cares to take such useless pains can worry out any interpretation he pleases from any dream.

If we were in fact met by objections such as these, we might

defend ourselves by appealing to the impression made by our interpretations, to the surprising connections with other elements of the dream which emerge in the course of our pursuing a single one of its ideas, and to the improbability that anything which gives such an exhaustive account of the dream could have been arrived at except by following up psychical connections which had already been laid down. We might also point out in our defence that our procedure in interpreting dreams is identical with the procedure by which we resolve hysterical symptoms; and there the correctness of our method is warranted by the coincident emergence and disappearance of the symptoms, or, to use a simile, the assertions made in the text are borne out by the accompanying illustrations. But we have no reason for evading the problem of how it is possible to reach a pre-existing goal by following the drift of an arbitrary and purposeless chain of thoughts; since, though we may not be able to solve the problem, we can completely cut the ground from under it.

For it is demonstrably untrue that we are being carried along a purposeless stream of ideas when, in the process of interpreting a dream, we abandon reflection and allow involuntary ideas to emerge. It can be shown that all that we can ever get rid of are purposive ideas that are *known* to us; as soon as we have done this, *unknown*—or, as we inaccurately say, 'unconscious'—purposive ideas take charge and thereafter determine the course of the involuntary ideas. No influence that we can bring to bear upon our mental processes can ever enable us to think without purposive ideas; nor am I aware of any states of psychical confusion which can do so.[1] Psychiatrists have been

[1] [*Footnote added* 1914:] It was not until later that my attention was drawn to the fact that Eduard von Hartmann takes the same view on this important matter of psychology: 'In discussing the part played by the unconscious in artistic creation, Eduard von Hartmann (1890, **1**, Section B, Chapter V) made a clear statement of the law in accordance with which the association of ideas is governed by unconscious purposive ideas, though he was unaware of the scope of the law. He set out to prove that "every combination of sensuous presentations, when it is not left purely to chance, but is led to a definite end, requires the help of the Unconscious" (ibid., **1**, 245; English translation, 1884, **1**, 283], and that the part played by conscious interest is to stimulate the unconscious to select the most appropriate idea among the countless possible ones. It is the unconscious which makes the appropriate selection of a purpose for the interest and this "holds good of the association of ideas in abstract thinking as well as in sensuous imagining and artistic combination" and in the production of jokes [ibid., **1**, 247; English translation, **1**, 285 f.]. For this reason a limitation of the association of ideas to an exciting idea and an excited idea (in the sense of a pure association psychology) cannot be upheld. Such a limitation could be justified "only if there are conditions in human life in which man is free not only from every conscious purpose, but also from the sway or co-operation of every unconscious interest, every passing mood. This is, however, a condition hardly ever occurring, for even if one in appearance completely abandons his train of thought to accident, or if one abandons oneself entirely to the involuntary dreams of fancy, yet always other leading interests, dominant feelings and moods prevail at one time rather than at another, and these will always exert an influence on the association of ideas." [Ibid., **1**, 246; English translation, **1**, 284.] "In semi-conscious dreams always only such ideas as correspond to the main [unconscious] interest of the moment occur." [Loc. cit.] The emphasis thus laid upon the influence of feelings and moods on the free sequence of thoughts makes it possible to justify the methodological procedure of psycho-analysis completely from the standpoint of Hartmann's psychology.' (Pohorilles, 1913.)—Du Prel (1885, 107) refers to the fact that after we have vainly tried to recall a name, it often comes into our heads again suddenly and without any warning. He concludes from this that unconscious but none the less purposeful thinking has taken place and that its result has suddenly entered consciousness.

far too ready in this respect to abandon their belief in the connectedness of psychical processes. I know for a fact that trains of thought without purposive ideas no more occur in hysteria and paranoia than they do in the formation or resolution of dreams. It may be that they do not occur in any of the endogenous psychical disorders. Even the deliria of confusional states may have a meaning, if we are to accept Leuret's brilliant suggestion [1834, 131] that they are only unintelligible to us owing to the gaps in them. I myself have formed the same opinion when I have had the opportunity of observing them. Deliria are the work of a censorship which no longer takes the trouble to conceal its operation; instead of collaborating in producing a new version that shall be unobjectionable, it ruthlessly deletes whatever it disapproves of, so that what remains becomes quite disconnected. This censorship acts exactly like the censorship of newspapers at the Russian frontier, which allows foreign journals to fall into the hands of the readers whom it is its business to protect only after a quantity of passages have been blacked out.

It may be that free play of ideas with a fortuitous chain of

associations is to be found in destructive organic cerebral processes; what is regarded as such in the psychoneuroses can always be explained as an effect of the censorship's influence upon a train of thought which has been pushed into the foreground by purposive ideas that have remained hidden.[1] It has been regarded as an unfailing sign of an association being uninfluenced by purposive ideas if the associations (or images) in question seem to be interrelated in what is described as a 'superficial' manner—by assonance, verbal ambiguity, temporal coincidence without connection in meaning, or by any association of the kind that we allow in jokes or in play upon words. This characteristic is present in the chains of thought which lead from the elements of a dream to the intermediate thoughts and from these to the dream-thoughts proper; we have seen instances of this—not without astonishment—in many dream analyses. No connection was too loose, no joke too bad, to serve as a bridge from one thought to another. But the true explanation of this easy-going state of things is soon found. *Whenever one psychical element is linked with another by an objectionable or superficial association, there is also a legitimate and deeper link between them which is subjected to the resistance of the censorship.*[2]

The real reason for the prevalence of superficial associations is not the abandonment of purposive ideas but the pressure of the censorship. Superficial associations replace deep ones if the censorship makes the normal connecting paths impassable. We may picture, by way of analogy, a mountain region, where some general interruption of traffic (owing to floods, for instance) has blocked the main, major roads, but where communications are still maintained over inconvenient and steep footpaths normally used only by the hunter.

Two cases may here be distinguished, though in essence they are the same. In the first of these, the censorship is directed only against the *connection* between two thoughts, which are unobjectionable separately. If so, the two thoughts will enter consciousness in succession; the connection between them will

[1] [*Footnote added* 1909:] This assertion has received striking confirmation from C. G. Jung's analyses in cases of dementia praecox. (Jung, 1907.)

[2] [Everywhere else in this work Freud speaks of 'the censorship of the resistance'. A later clarification of the relation between the concepts of 'resistance' and 'censorship' will be found in Lecture XXIX of the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*).]

remain concealed, but, instead, a superficial link between them will occur to us, of which we should otherwise never have thought. This link is usually attached to some part of the complex of ideas quite other than that on which the suppressed and essential connection is based. The second case is where the two thoughts are in themselves subject to censorship on account of their content. If so, neither of them appears in its true shape but only in a modified one which replaces it; and the two replacing thoughts are chosen in such a way that they have a superficial association that repeats the essential connection which relates the two thoughts that have been replaced. *In both these cases the pressure of the censorship has resulted in a displacement from a normal and serious association to a superficial and apparently absurd one.*

Since we are aware that displacements of this kind occur, we have no hesitation when we are interpreting dreams in relying upon superficial associations as much as upon others.[1]

In the psycho-analysis of neuroses the fullest use is made of these two theorems—that, when conscious purposive ideas are abandoned, concealed purposive ideas assume control of the current of ideas, and that superficial associations are only substitutes by displacement for suppressed deeper ones. Indeed, these theorems have become basic pillars of psycho-analytic technique. When I instruct a patient to abandon reflection of any kind and to tell me whatever comes into his head, I am relying firmly on the presumption that he will not be able to abandon the purposive ideas inherent in the treatment and I feel justified in inferring that what seem to be the most innocent and arbitrary things which he tells me are in fact related to his illness. There is another purposive idea of which the patient

[1] The same considerations apply equally, of course, to cases in which the superficial associations appear openly in the content of the dream, as, for instance, in the two dreams of Maury's quoted above on page 59. (*Pélerinage — Pelletier — pelle; kilomètre — kilogramme — Gilolo — Lobelia —Lopez—lotto.*) My work with neurotic patients has taught me the nature of the memories of which this is a favourite method of representation. They are occasions on which the subject has turned over the pages of encyclopaedias or dictionaries in order (like most people at the inquisitive age of puberty) to satisfy their craving for an answer to the riddles of sex.—[An example of this will be found in the analysis of 'Dora's' second dream (Freud, 1905*e*, Section III).]

has no suspicion—one relating to myself. The full estimate of the importance of these two theorems, as well as more detailed information about them, fall within the province of an account of the technique of psycho-analysis. Here, then, we have reached one of the frontier posts at which, in accordance with our programme, we must drop the subject of dream-interpretation.[1]

There is one true conclusion that we may glean from these objections, namely that we need not suppose that every association that occurs during the work of interpretation had a place in the dream-work during the night. [Cf. pp. 280 and 311.] It is true that in carrying out the interpretation in the waking state we follow a path which leads back from the elements of the dream to the dream-thoughts and that the dream-work followed one in the contrary direction. But it is highly improbable that these paths are passable both ways. It appears, rather, that in the daytime we drive shafts which follow along fresh chains of thought and that these shafts make contact with the intermediate thoughts and the dream-thoughts now at one point and now at another. We can see how in this manner fresh daytime material inserts itself into the interpretative chains. It is probable, too, that the increase in resistance that has set in since the night makes new and more devious detours necessary. The number and nature of the collaterals [see p. 311 *n.*] that we spin in this way during the day is of no psychological importance whatever, so long as they lead us to the dream-thoughts of which we are in search.

[1] [*Footnote added* 1909:] These two theorems, which sounded most unplausible at the time they were made, have since been experimentally employed and confirmed by Jung and his pupils in their studies in word-association. [Jung, 1906.—A most interesting argument on the allied topic of the validity of chains of association starting from numbers selected 'by chance' (see above, p. 514 f.) is developed by Freud in the long footnote added in 1920 to Chapter XII (A, No. 7) of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*).]

(B)

REGRESSION

Having now repelled the objections that have been raised against us, or having at least indicated where our defensive weapons lie, we must no longer postpone the task of setting about the psychological investigations for which we have so long been arming ourselves. Let us summarize the principal findings of our enquiry so far as it has gone. Dreams are psychical acts of as much significance as any others; their motive force is in every instance a wish seeking fulfilment; the fact of their not being recognizable as wishes and their many peculiarities and absurdities are due to the influence of the psychical censorship to which they have been subjected during the process of their formation; apart from the necessity of evading this censorship, other factors which have contributed to their formation are a necessity for the condensation of their psychical material, a regard for the possibility of its being represented in sensory images and—though not invariably—a demand that the structure of the dream shall have a rational and intelligible exterior. Each of these propositions opens a way to fresh psychological postulates and speculations; the mutual relation between the wish which is the dream's motive force and the four conditions to which the dream's formation is subject, as well as the interrelations between the latter, require to be investigated; and the place of dreams in the nexus of mental life has to be assigned.

It was with a view to reminding us of the problems which have still to be solved that I opened the present chapter with an account of a dream. There was no difficulty in interpreting that dream—the dream of the burning child—even though its interpretation was not given fully in our sense. I raised the question of why the dreamer dreamt it at all instead of waking up, and recognized that one of his motives was a wish to represent his child as still alive. Our further discussions will show us that yet another wish also played a part. [See below, pp. 570–1.] Thus it was in the first instance for the sake of

fulfilling a wish that the process of thought during sleep was transformed into a dream.

If we eliminate the wish-fulfilment, we shall see that only one feature is left to distinguish the two forms of psychical event. The dream-thought would have run: 'I see a glare coming from the room where the dead body is lying. Perhaps a candle has fallen over and my child may be burning.' The dream repeated these reflections unaltered, but it represented them in a situation which was actually present and which could be perceived through the senses like a waking experience. Here we have the most general and the most striking psychological characteristic of the process of dreaming: a thought, and as a rule a thought of something that is wished, is objectified in the dream, is represented as a scene, or, as it seems to us, is experienced.

How, then, are we to explain this characteristic peculiarity of the dream-work, or, to put the question more modestly, how are we to find a place for it in the nexus of psychical processes?

If we look into the matter more closely we shall observe that two almost independent features stand out as characteristic of the form taken by this dream. One is the fact that the thought is represented as an immediate situation with the 'perhaps' omitted, and the other is the fact that the thought is transformed into visual images and speech.

In this particular dream the change made in the thoughts by the conversion of the expectation expressed by them into the present tense may not seem particularly striking. This is because of what can only be described as the unusually subordinate part played in this dream by wish-fulfilment. Consider instead another one, in which the dream-wish was not detached from the waking thoughts that were carried over into sleep—for instance, the dream of Irma's injection [p. 106 ff.]. There the dream-thought that was represented was in the optative: 'If only Otto were responsible for Irma's illness!' The dream repressed the optative and replaced it by a straightforward present: 'Yes, Otto is responsible for Irma's illness.' This, then, is the first of the transformations which is brought about in the dream-thoughts even by a distortionless dream. We need not linger long over this first peculiarity of dreams. We can deal with it by drawing attention to conscious phantasies—to day-dreams—which treat their ideational content in just the same manner.

While Daudet's Monsieur Joyeuse[1] was wandering, out of work, through the streets of Paris (though his daughters believed that he had a job and was sitting in an office), he was dreaming of developments that might bring him influential help and lead to his finding employment—and he was dreaming in the present tense. Thus dreams make use of the present tense in the same manner and by the same right as day-dreams. The present tense is the one in which wishes are represented as fulfilled.

But dreams differ from day-dreams in their second characteristic: namely, in the fact of their ideational content being transformed from thoughts into sensory images, to which belief is attached and which appear to be experienced. I must add at once that not every dream exhibits this transformation from idea into sensory image. There are dreams which consist only of thoughts but which cannot on that account be denied the essential nature of dreams. My 'Autodidasker' dream [p. 298 ff.] was of that kind; it included scarcely more sensory elements than if I had thought its content in the daytime. And in every dream of any considerable length there are elements which have not, like the rest, been given a sensory form, but which are simply thought or known, in the kind of way in which we are accustomed to think or know things in waking life. It should also be remembered here that it is not only in dreams that such transformations of ideas into sensory images occur: they are also found in hallucinations and visions, which may appear as independent entities, so to say, in health or as symptoms in the psychoneuroses. In short, the relation which we are examining now is not in any respect an exclusive one. Nevertheless it remains true that this characteristic of dreams, when it is present, strikes us as being their most notable one; so that it would be impossible for us to imagine the dream-world without it. But in order to arrive at an understanding of it we must embark upon a discussion that will take us far afield.

As the starting-point for our enquiry, I should like to pick out one from among many remarks made upon the theory of dreaming by those who have written on the subject. In the course of a

[1] [In *Le Nabab* (cf. p. 491). A slip made by Freud over this name in his first draft of this sentence is discussed by him in his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*), Chapter VII, towards the end of Section A.]

short discussion on the topic of dreams, the great Fechner (1889, **2,** 520–1) puts forward the idea that *the scene of action of dreams is different from that of waking ideational life.* [Cf. above, p. 48.] This is the only hypothesis that makes the special peculiarities of dream-life intelligible.[1]

What is presented to us in these words is the idea of *psychical locality.* I shall entirely disregard the fact that the mental apparatus with which we are here concerned is also known to us in the form of an anatomical preparation, and I shall carefully avoid the temptation to determine psychical locality in any anatomical fashion. I shall remain upon psychological ground, and I propose simply to follow the suggestion that we should picture the instrument which carries out our mental functions as resembling a compound microscope or a photographic apparatus, or something of the kind. On that basis, psychical locality will correspond to a point inside the apparatus at which one of the preliminary stages of an image comes into being. In the microscope and telescope, as we know, these occur in part at ideal points, regions in which no tangible component of the apparatus is situated. I see no necessity to apologize for the imperfections of this or of any similar imagery. Analogies of this kind are only intended to assist us in our attempt to make the complications of mental functioning intelligible by dissecting the function and assigning its different constituents to different component parts of the apparatus. So far as I know, the experiment has not hitherto been made of using this method of dissection in order to investigate the way in which the mental instrument is put together, and I can see no harm in it. We are justified, in my view, in giving free rein to our speculations so long as we retain the coolness of our judgement and do not mistake the scaffolding for the building. And since at our first approach to something unknown all that we need is the assistance of provisional ideas, I shall give preference in the first instance to hypotheses of the crudest and most concrete description.

Accordingly, we will picture the mental apparatus as a compound instrument, to the components of which we will give the

[1] [In a letter to Fliess of February 9, 1898 (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 83), Freud writes that this passage in Fechner is the only sensible remark he has found in the literature on dreams.]

name of 'agencies',[1] or (for the sake of greater clarity) 'systems'. It is to be anticipated, in the next place, that these systems may perhaps stand in a regular spatial relation to one another, in the same kind of way in which the various systems of lenses in a telescope are arranged behind one another. Strictly speaking, there is no need for the hypothesis that the psychical systems are actually arranged in a *spatial* order. It would be sufficient if a fixed order were established by the fact that in a given psychical process the excitation passes through the systems in a particular *temporal* sequence. In other processes the sequence may perhaps be a different one; that is a possibility that we shall leave open. For the sake of brevity we will in future speak of the components of the apparatus as 'ψ-systems'.

The first thing that strikes us is that this apparatus, compounded of ψ-systems, has a sense or direction. All our psychical activity starts from stimuli (whether internal or external) and ends in innervations.[2] Accordingly, we shall ascribe a sensory and a motor end to the apparatus. At the sensory end there lies a system which receives perceptions; at the motor end there lies another, which opens the gateway to motor activity. Psychical processes advance in general from the perceptual end to the motor end. Thus the most general schematic picture of the psychical apparatus may be represented thus (Fig. 1):

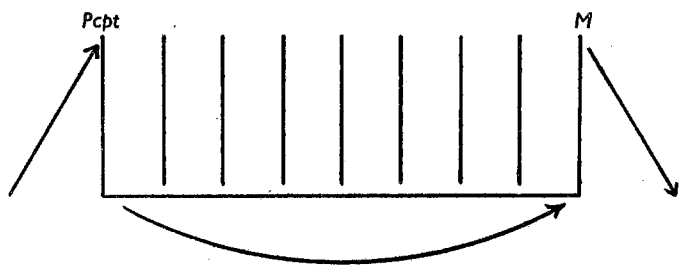

FIG. 1.

[1] ['*Instanzen*', literally 'instances', in a sense similar to that in which the word occurs in the phrase 'a Court of First Instance'.]

[2] ['Innervation' is a highly ambiguous term. It is very frequently used in a structural sense, to mean the anatomical distribution of nerves in some organism or bodily region. Freud uses it more often (though not invariably) to mean the transmission of energy into a system of nerves, or (as in the present instance) specifically into an *efferent* system—to indicate, that is to say, a process tending towards discharge.]

This, however, does no more than fulfil a requirement with which we have long been familiar, namely that the psychical apparatus must be constructed like a reflex apparatus. Reflex processes remain the model of every psychical function.

Next, we have grounds for introducing a first differentiation at the sensory end. A trace is left in our psychical apparatus of the perceptions which impinge upon it. This we may describe as a 'memory-trace'; and to the function relating to it we give the name of 'memory'. If we are in earnest over our plan of attaching psychical processes to systems, memory-traces can only consist in permanent modifications of the elements of the systems. But, as has already been pointed out elsewhere,[1] there are obvious difficulties involved in supposing that one and the same system can accurately retain modifications of its elements and yet remain perpetually open to the reception of fresh occasions for modification. In accordance, therefore, with the principle which governs our experiment, we shall distribute these two functions on to different systems. We shall suppose that a system in the very front of the apparatus receives the perceptual stimuli but retains no trace of them and thus has no memory, while behind it there lies a second system which transforms the momentary excitations of the first system into permanent traces. The schematic picture of our psychical apparatus would then be as follows (Fig. 2):

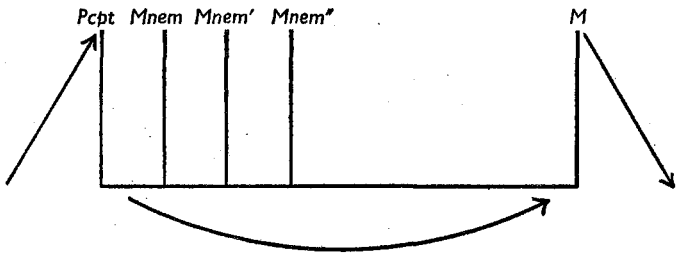

FIG. 2.

It is a familiar fact that we retain permanently something more than the mere *content* of the perceptions which impinge

[1] [By Breuer in a footnote to Section I of his theoretical contribution to Breuer and Freud, 1895, where, among other things, he writes: 'The mirror of a reflecting telescope cannot at the same time be a photographic plate.']

upon the system *Pcpt.* Our perceptions are linked with one another in our memory—first and foremost according to simultaneity of occurrence. We speak of this fact as 'association'. It is clear, then, that, if the *Pcpt.* system has no memory whatever, it cannot retain any associative traces; the separate *Pcpt.* elements would be intolerably obstructed in performing their function if the remnant of an earlier connection were to exercise an influence upon a fresh perception. We must therefore assume the basis of association lies in the mnemic systems. Association would thus consist in the fact that, as a result of a diminution in resistances and of the laying down of facilitating paths, an excitation is transmitted from a given *Mnem.* element more readily to one *Mnem.* element than to another.

Closer consideration will show the necessity for supposing the existence not of one but of several such *Mnem.* elements, in which one and the same excitation, transmitted by the *Pcpt.* elements, leaves a variety of different permanent records. The first of these *Mnem.* systems will naturally contain the record of association in respect to *simultaneity in time*; while the same perceptual material will be arranged in the later systems in respect to other kinds of coincidence, so that one of these later systems, for instance, will record relations of similarity, and so on with the others. It would of course be a waste of time to try to put the psychical significance of a system of this kind into words. Its character would lie in the intimate details of its relations to the different elements of the raw material of memory, that is—if we may hint at a theory of a more radical kind—in the degrees of conductive resistance which it offered to the passage of excitation from those elements.

At this point I will interpolate a remark of a general nature which may perhaps have important implications. It is the *Pcpt.* system, which is without the capacity to retain modifications and is thus without memory, that provides our consciousness with the whole multiplicity of sensory qualities. On the other hand, our memories—not excepting those which are most deeply stamped on our minds—are in themselves unconscious. They can be made conscious; but there can be no doubt that they can produce all their effects while in an unconscious condition. What we describe as our 'character' is based on the memory-traces of our impressions; and, moreover, the impressions which have had the greatest effect on us—those of our

earliest youth—are precisely the ones which scarcely ever become conscious. But if memories become conscious once more, they exhibit no sensory quality or a very slight one in comparison with perceptions. A most promising light would be thrown on the conditions governing the excitation of neurones if it could be confirmed that *in the ψ-systems memory and the quality that characterizes consciousness are mutually exclusive.*[1]

The assumptions we have so far put forward as to the construction of the psychical apparatus at its sensory end have been made without reference to dreams or to the psychological information that we have been able to infer from them. Evidence afforded by dreams will, however, help us towards understanding another portion of the apparatus. We have seen [see p. 143 ff.] that we were only able to explain the formation of dreams by venturing upon the hypothesis of there being two psychical agencies, one of which submitted the activity of the other to a criticism which involved its exclusion from consciousness. The critical agency, we concluded, stands in a closer relation to consciousness than the agency criticized: it stands like a screen between the latter and consciousness. Further, we found reasons [p. 489] for identifying the critical agency with the agency which directs our waking life and determines our voluntary, conscious actions. If, in accordance with our assumptions, we replace these agencies by systems, then our last conclusion must lead us to locate the critical system at the motor end of the apparatus. We will now introduce the two systems

[1] [*Footnote added* 1925:] I have since suggested that consciousness actually arises *instead of* the memory-trace. See my 'Note upon the "Mystic Writing-Pad"' (1925*a*). [Cf. also Chapter IV of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920*g*), where the same point is made.—The whole of the present discussion on memory will be made more intelligible by a study of these two passages from Freud's later writings. But still more light is thrown on it by some of his earlier reflections on the subject revealed in the Fliess correspondence (Freud, 1950*a*). See, for instance, Section 3 of Part I of the 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (written in the autumn of 1895) and Letter 52 (written on December 6, 1896). This letter, incidentally, contains what is evidently an early version of the 'schematic picture' represented above as well as the first appearance of the abbreviations by which the various systems are here distinguished. The equivalent English symbols are self-explanatory: '*Cs.*' for the 'conscious' system, '*Pcs.*' for the 'preconscious', '*Ucs.*' for the 'unconscious', '*Pcpt.*' for the 'perceptual' and '*Mnem.*' for the 'mnemic' systems.]

into our schematic picture and give them names to express their relation to consciousness (Fig. 3):

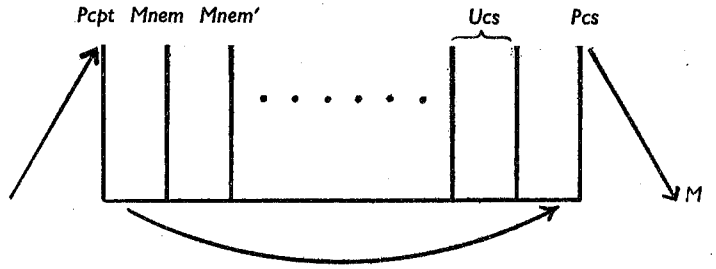

FIG. 3.

We will describe the last of the systems at the motor end as 'the preconscious', to indicate that the excitatory processes occurring in it can enter consciousness without further impediment provided that certain other conditions are fulfilled: for instance, that they reach a certain degree of intensity, that the function which can only be described as 'attention' is distributed in a particular way [see p. 593], and so on. This is at the same time the system which holds the key to voluntary movement. We will describe the system that lies behind it as 'the unconscious', because it has no access to consciousness *except via the preconscious*, in passing through which its excitatory process is obliged to submit to modifications.[1]

In which of these systems, then, are we to locate the impetus to the construction of dreams? For simplicity's sake, in the system *Ucs.* It is true that in the course of our future discussion we shall learn that this is not entirely accurate, and that the process of forming dreams is obliged to attach itself to dream-thoughts belonging to the preconscious system [p. 562]. But when we consider the dream-wish, we shall find that the motive force for producing dreams is supplied by the *Ucs.* [p. 561]; and

[1] [*Footnote added* 1919:] If we attempted to proceed further with this schematic picture, in which the systems are set out in linear succession, we should have to reckon with the fact that the system next beyond the *Pcs.* is the one to which consciousness must be ascribed—in other words, that *Pcpt.* = *Cs.* [See below, p. 615 ff. For a fuller discussion of this see Freud, 1917*d*.—Freud's later 'schematic picture' of the mind, first given in *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*), Chapter II, and repeated (with some modifications) in the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*), Lecture XXXI, lays more stress on structure than on function.]

owing to this latter factor we shall take the unconscious system as the starting-point of dream-formation. Like all other thought-structures, this dream-instigator will make an effort to advance into the *Pcs.* and from there to obtain access to consciousness.

Experience shows us that this path leading through the preconscious to consciousness is barred to the dream-thoughts during the daytime by the censorship imposed by resistance. During the night they are able to obtain access to consciousness; but the question arises as to how they do so and thanks to what modification. If what enabled the dream-thoughts to achieve this were the fact that at night there is a lowering of the resistance which guards the frontier between the unconscious and the preconscious, we should have dreams which were in the nature of ideas and which were without the hallucinatory quality in which we are at the moment interested. Thus the lowering of the censorship between the two systems *Ucs.* and *Pcs.* can only explain dreams formed like 'Autodidasker' and not dreams like that of the burning child which we took as the starting-point of our investigations.

The only way in which we can describe what happens in hallucinatory dreams is by saying that the excitation moves in a *backward* direction. Instead of being transmitted towards the *motor* end of the apparatus it moves towards the *sensory* end and finally reaches the perceptual system. If we describe as 'progressive' the direction taken by psychical processes arising from the unconscious during waking life, then we may speak of dreams as having a 'regressive' character.[1]

This regression, then, is undoubtedly one of the psychological characteristics of the process of dreaming; but we must remember that it does not occur only in dreams. Intentional

[1] [*Footnote added* 1914:] The first hint at the factor of regression is to be found as far back as in Albertus Magnus [the thirteenth century Scholastic writer]. The '*imaginatio*', he tells us, constructs dreams out of the stored-up images of sensory objects; and the process is carried out in a reverse direction to that in waking life. (Quoted by Diepgen, 1912, 14.) —Hobbes writes in the *Leviathan* (1651, Pt. I, Chapter 2): 'In sum, our dreams are the reverse of our waking imaginations, the motion, when we are awake, beginning at one end, and when we dream at another.' (Quoted by Havelock Ellis, 1911, 109.)—[Breuer, in Section I of Chapter III of Breuer and Freud, 1895, speaks (in connection with hallucinations) of 'a "retrogressive" excitation, emanating from the organ of memory, and acting upon the perceptual apparatus by means of ideas'.]

recollection and other constituent processes of our normal thinking involve a retrogressive movement in the psychical apparatus from a complex ideational act back to the raw material of the memory-traces underlying it. In the waking state, however, this backward movement never extends beyond the mnemic images; it does not succeed in producing a hallucinatory revival of the *perceptual* images. Why is it otherwise in dreams? When we were considering the work of condensation in dreams we were driven to suppose that the intensities attaching to ideas can be completely transferred by the dream-work from one idea to another [p. 330]. It is probably this alteration in the normal psychical procedure which makes possible the cathexis of the system *Pcpt.* in the reverse direction, starting from thoughts, to the pitch of complete sensory vividness.

We must not delude ourselves into exaggerating the importance of these considerations. We have done no more than give a name to an inexplicable phenomenon. We call it 'regression' when in a dream an idea is turned back into the sensory image from which it was originally derived. But even this step requires justification. What is the point of this nomenclature if it teaches us nothing new? I believe the name 'regression' is of help to us in so far as it connects a fact that was already known to us with our schematic picture, in which the mental apparatus was given a sense or direction. And it is at this point that that picture begins to repay us for having constructed it. For an examination of it, without any further reflection, reveals a further characteristic of dream-formation. If we regard the process of dreaming as a regression occurring in our hypothetical mental apparatus, we at once arrive at the explanation of the empirically established fact that all the logical relations belonging to the dream-thoughts disappear during the dream-activity or can only find expression with difficulty [p. 312]. According to our schematic picture, these relations are contained not in the *first Mnem.* systems but in *later* ones; and in case of regression they would necessarily lose any means of expression except in perceptual images. *In regression the fabric of the dream-thoughts is resolved into its raw material.*

What modification is it that renders possible a regression which cannot occur in daytime? We must be content with some conjectures on this point. No doubt it is a question of changes in the cathexes of energy attaching to the different systems,

changes which increase or diminish the facility with which those systems can be passed through by the excitatory process. But in any apparatus of this kind the same results upon the passage of excitations might be produced in more than one way. Our first thoughts will of course be of the state of sleep and the changes in cathexis which it brings about at the sensory end of the apparatus. During the day there is a continuous current from the *Pcpt.* system flowing in the direction of motor activity; but this current ceases at night and could no longer form an obstacle to a current of excitation flowing in the opposite sense. Here we seem to have the 'shutting-out of the external world', which some authorities regard as the theoretical explanation of the psychological characteristics of dreams. (See p. 51.)

In explaining regression in dreams, however, we must bear in mind the regressions which also occur in pathological waking states; and here the explanation just given leaves us in the lurch. For in those cases regression occurs in spite of a sensory current flowing without interruption in a forward direction. My explanation of hallucinations in hysteria and paranoia and of visions in mentally normal subjects is that they are in fact regressions —that is, thoughts transformed into images—but that the only thoughts that undergo this transformation are those which are intimately linked with memories that have been suppressed or have remained unconscious.

For instance, one of my youngest hysterical patients, a twelve-year-old boy, was prevented from falling asleep by '*green faces with red eyes*' which terrified him. The source of this phenomenon was a suppressed, though at one time conscious, memory of a boy whom he had often seen four years earlier. This boy had presented him with an alarming picture of the consequences of bad habits in children, including masturbation —a habit with which my patient was now reproaching himself in retrospect. His mother had pointed out at the time that the ill-behaved boy had a *greenish face* and *red* (i.e. red-rimmed) *eyes*. Here was the origin of his bogey, whose only purpose, incidentally, was to remind him of another of his mother's predictions—that boys of that sort grow into idiots, can learn nothing at school and die young. My little patient had fulfilled one part of the prophecy, for he was making no progress at his school, and, as was shown from his account of the involuntary thoughts that occurred to him, he was terrified of the other part.

I may add that after a short time the treatment resulted in his being able to sleep, in his nervousness disappearing and his being awarded a mark of distinction at the end of his school-year.

In the same connection I will give the explanation of a vision that was described to me by another hysterical patient (a woman of forty) as having happened before she fell ill. One morning she opened her eyes and saw her brother in the room, though, as she knew, he was in fact in an insane asylum. Her small son was sleeping in the bed beside her. To save the child from having a *fright* and *falling into convulsions* when he saw his *uncle*, she pulled the *sheet* over his face, whereupon the apparition vanished. This vision was a modified version of a memory from the lady's childhood; and, though it was conscious, it was intimately related to all the unconscious material in her mind. Her nurse had told her that her mother (who had died very young, when my patient was only eighteen months old) had suffered from epileptic or hysterical *convulsions*, which went back to a *fright* caused by her brother (my patient's *uncle*) appearing to her disguised as a ghost with a *sheet* over his head. Thus the vision contained the same elements as the memory: the brother's appearance, the sheet, the fright and its results. But the elements had been arranged in a different context and transferred on to other figures. The obvious motive of the vision, or of the thoughts which it replaced, was her concern lest her little boy might follow in the footsteps of his uncle, whom he greatly resembled physically.

The two instances that I have quoted are neither of them entirely devoid of connection with the state of sleep and for that reason are perhaps not well chosen for what I want them to prove. I will therefore refer the reader to my analysis of a woman suffering from hallucinatory paranoia (Freud, 1896*b* [Part III]) as well as to the findings in my still unpublished studies on the psychology of the psychoneuroses,[1] for evidence that in such instances of the regressive transformation of thoughts we must not overlook the influence of memories, mostly from childhood, which have been suppressed or have remained unconscious. The thoughts which are connected with a memory of this kind and which are forbidden expression by the censorship are, as it were, attracted by the memory into regression as being the form of representation in which the memory itself

[1] [Never published under any such title.]

is couched. I may also recall that one of the facts arrived at in the *Studies on Hysteria* [Breuer and Freud, 1895—e.g. in Breuer's first case history] was that when it was possible to bring infantile scenes (whether they were memories or phantasies) into consciousness, they were seen like hallucinations and lost that characteristic only in the process of being reported. It is moreover a familiar observation that, even in those whose memory is not normally of a visual type, the earliest recollections of childhood retain far into life the quality of sensory vividness.

If we now bear in mind how great a part is played in the dream-thoughts by infantile experiences or by phantasies based upon them, how frequently portions of them re-emerge in the dream-content and how often the dream-wishes themselves are derived from them, we cannot dismiss the probability that in dreams too the transformation of thoughts into visual images may be in part the result of the attraction which memories couched in visual form and eager for revival bring to bear upon thoughts cut off from consciousness and struggling to find expression. On this view a dream might be described as *a substitute for an infantile scene modified by being transferred on to a recent experience.* The infantile scene is unable to bring about its own revival and has to be content with returning as a dream.

This indication of the way in which infantile scenes (or their reproductions as phantasies) function in a sense as models for the content of dreams, removes the necessity for one of the hypotheses put forward by Scherner and his followers in regard to internal sources of stimulation. Scherner [1861] supposes that, when dreams exhibit particularly vivid or particularly copious visual elements, there is present a state of 'visual stimulation', that is, of internal excitation in the organ of vision [cf. p. 227]. We need not dispute this hypothesis, but can content ourselves with assuming that this state of excitation applies merely to the *psychical* perceptual system of the visual organ; we may, however, further point out that the state of excitation has been set up by a *memory*, that it is a *revival* of a visual excitation which was originally an immediate one. I cannot produce any good example from my own experience of an *infantile* memory producing this kind of result. My dreams are in general less rich in sensory elements than I am led to suppose is the case in other people. But in the case of my most vivid and beautiful dream of the last few years I was easily able to trace back the hallucinatory clarity of the dream's content to the sensory qualities of recent or fairly recent impressions. On p. 463 ff. I recorded a dream in which the deep blue colour of the water, the brown of the smoke coming from the ship's funnels, and the dark brown and red of the buildings left behind a profound impression on me. This dream, if any, should be traceable to a visual stimulus. What was it that had brought my visual organ into this state of stimulation? A recent impression, which attached itself to a number of earlier ones. The colours which I saw were in the first instance those of a box of toy bricks with which, on the day before the dream, my children had put up a fine building and shown it off for my admiration. The big bricks were of the same dark red and the small ones were of the same blue and brown. This was associated with colour impressions from my last travels in Italy: the beautiful blue of the Isonzo and the lagoons and the brown of the Carso.[1] The beauty of the colours in the dream was only a repetition of something seen in my memory.

Let us bring together what we have found out about the peculiar propensity of dreams to recast their ideational content into sensory images. We have not explained this feature of the dream-work, we have not traced it back to any known psychological laws; but we have rather picked it out as something that suggests unknown implications and we have characterized it with the word 'regressive'. We have put forward the view that in all probability this regression, wherever it may occur, is an effect of a resistance opposing the progress of a thought into consciousness along the normal path, and of a simultaneous attraction exercised upon the thought by the presence of memories possessing great sensory force.[2] In the case of dreams, regression may perhaps be further facilitated by the cessation of the progressive current which streams in during the daytime from the sense organs; in other forms of regression, the absence

[1] [The limestone plateau behind Trieste.]

[2] [*Footnote added* 1914:] In any account of the theory of repression it would have to be laid down that a thought becomes repressed as a result of the combined influence upon it of *two* factors. It is pushed from the one side (by the censorship of the *Cs.*) and pulled from the other (by the *Ucs.*), in the same kind of way in which people are conveyed to the top of the Great Pyramid. [*Added* 1919:] Cf. [the opening pages of] my paper on repression (Freud, 1915*d*).

of this accessory factor must be made up for by a greater intensity of the other motives for regression. Nor must we forget to observe that in these pathological cases of regression as well as in dreams the process of transference of energy must differ from what it is in regressions occurring in normal mental life, since in the former cases that process makes possible a complete hallucinatory cathexis of the perceptual systems. What we have described, in our analysis of the dream-work, as 'regard for representability' might be brought into connection with the *selective attraction* exercised by the visually recollected scenes touched upon by the dream-thoughts.

It is further to be remarked[1] that regression plays a no less important part in the theory of the formation of neurotic symptoms than it does in that of dreams. Three kinds of regression are thus to be distinguished: (*a*) *topographical* regression, in the sense of the schematic picture of the ψ-systems which we have explained above; (*b*) *temporal* regression, in so far as what is in question is a harking back to older psychical structures; and (*c*) *formal* regression, where primitive methods of expression and representation take the place of the usual ones. All these three kinds of regression are, however, one at bottom and occur together as a rule; for what is older in time is more primitive in form and in psychical topography lies nearer to the perceptual end. [Cf. Freud, 1917*d*.]

Nor can we leave the subject of regression in dreams[2] without setting down in words a notion by which we have already repeatedly been struck and which will recur with fresh intensity when we have entered more deeply into the study of the psychoneuroses: namely that dreaming is on the whole an example of regression to the dreamer's earliest condition, a revival of his childhood, of the instinctual impulses which dominated it and of the methods of expression which were then available to him. Behind this childhood of the individual we are promised a picture of a phylogenetic childhood—a picture of the development of the human race, of which the individual's development is in fact an abbreviated recapitulation influenced by the chance circumstances of life. We can guess how much to the

[1] [This paragraph was added in 1914.]
[2] [This paragraph was added in 1919.]

point is Nietzsche's assertion that in dreams 'some primaeval relic of humanity is at work which we can now scarcely reach any longer by a direct path'; and we may expect that the analysis of dreams will lead us to a knowledge of man's archaic heritage, of what is psychically innate in him. Dreams and neuroses seem to have preserved more mental antiquities than we could have imagined possible; so that psycho-analysis may claim a high place among the sciences which are concerned with the reconstruction of the earliest and most obscure periods of the beginnings of the human race.

It may well be that this first portion of our psychological study of dreams will leave us with a sense of dissatisfaction. But we can console ourselves with the thought that we have been obliged to build our way out into the dark. If we are not wholly in error, other lines of approach are bound to lead us into much the same region and the time may then come when we shall find ourselves more at home in it.

(C)

WISH-FULFILMENT

The dream of the burning child at the beginning of this chapter gives us a welcome opportunity of considering the difficulties with which the theory of wish-fulfilment is faced. It will no doubt have surprised all of us to be told that dreams are nothing other than fulfilments of wishes, and not only on account of the contradiction offered by anxiety-dreams. When analysis first revealed to us that a meaning and a psychical value lay concealed behind dreams, we were no doubt quite unprepared to find that that meaning was of such a uniform character. According to Aristotle's accurate but bald definition, a dream is thinking that persists (in so far as we are asleep) in the state of sleep. [Cf. p. 2.] Since, then, our daytime thinking produces psychical acts of such various sorts—judgements, inferences, denials, expectations, intentions, and so on—why should it be obliged during the night to restrict itself to the production of wishes alone? Are there not, on the contrary, numerous dreams which show us psychical acts of other kinds—worries, for instance—transformed into dream-shape? And was not the dream with which we began this chapter (a quite particularly transparent one) precisely a dream of this sort? When the glare of light fell on the eyes of the sleeping father, he drew the worrying conclusion that a candle had fallen over and might have set the dead body on fire. He turned this conclusion into a dream by clothing it in a sensory situation and in the present tense. What part was played in this by wish-fulfilment? can we fail to see in it the predominating influence of a thought persisting from waking life or stimulated by a new sense-impression? All this is quite true and compels us to enter more closely into the part played by wish-fulfilment in dreams and into the importance of waking thoughts which persist into sleep.

We have already been led by wish-fulfilment itself to divide dreams into two groups. We have found some dreams which appeared openly as wish-fulfilments, and others in which the wish-fulfilment was unrecognizable and often disguised by every

possible means. In the latter we have perceived the dream-censorship at work. We found the undistorted wishful dreams principally in children; though *short*, frankly wishful dreams *seemed* (and I lay emphasis upon this qualification) to occur in adults as well.

We may next ask where the wishes that come true in dreams originate. What contrasting possibilities or what alternatives have we in mind in raising this question? It is the contrast, I think, between the consciously perceived life of daytime and a psychical activity which has remained unconscious and of which we can only become aware at night. I can distinguish three possible origins for such a wish. (1) It may have been aroused during the day and for external reasons may not have been satisfied; in that case an acknowledged wish which has not been dealt with is left over for the night. (2) It may have arisen during the day but been repudiated; in that case what is left over is a wish which has not been dealt with but has been suppressed. (3) It may have no connection with daytime life and be one of those wishes which only emerge from the suppressed part of the mind and become active in us at night. If we turn again to our schematic picture of the psychical apparatus, we shall localize wishes of the first kind in the system *Pcs.*; we shall suppose that wishes of the second kind have been driven out of the system *Pcs.* into the *Ucs.*, where, if at all, they continue to exist; and we shall conclude that wishful impulses of the third kind are altogether incapable of passing beyond the system *Ucs.* The question then arises whether wishes derived from these different sources are of equal importance for dreams and have equal power to instigate them.

If we cast our minds over the dreams that are at our disposal for answering this question, we shall at once be reminded that we must add a fourth source of dream-wishes, namely the current wishful impulses that arise during the night (e.g. those stimulated by thirst or sexual needs). In the next place, we shall form the opinion that the place of origin of a dream-wish probably has no influence on its capacity for instigating dreams. I may recall the little girl's dream which prolonged a trip on the lake that had been interrupted during the day and the other children's dreams which I have recorded. [See p. 127 ff.] They were explained as being due to unfulfilled, but unsuppressed, wishes from the previous day. Instances of a wish that has been

suppressed in the daytime finding its way out in a dream are exceedingly numerous. I will add a further very simple example of this class. The dreamer was a lady who was rather fond of making fun of people and one of whose friends, a woman younger than herself, had just become engaged. All day long she had been asked by her acquaintances whether she knew the young man and what she thought of him. She had replied with nothing but praises, with which she had silenced her real judgement; for she would have liked to tell the truth—that he was a '*Dutzendmensch*' [literally a 'dozen man', a very commonplace sort of person—people like him are turned out by the *dozen*]. She dreamt that night that she was asked the same question, and replied with the formula: '*In the case of repeat orders it is sufficient to quote the number.*' We have learnt, lastly, from numerous analyses that wherever a dream has undergone distortion the wish has arisen from the unconscious and was one which could not be perceived during the day. Thus it seems at a first glance as though all wishes are of equal importance and equal power in dreams.

I cannot offer any proof here that the truth is nevertheless otherwise; but I may say that I am strongly inclined to suppose that dream-wishes are more strictly determined. It is true that children's dreams prove beyond a doubt that a wish that has not been dealt with during the day can act as a dream-instigator. But it must not be forgotten that it is a *child*'s wish, a wishful impulse of the strength proper to children. I think it is highly doubtful whether in the case of an adult a wish that has not been fulfilled during the day would be strong enough to produce a dream. It seems to me, on the contrary, that, with the progressive control exercised upon our instinctual life by our thought-activity, we are more and more inclined to renounce as unprofitable the formation or retention of such intense wishes as children know. It is possible that there are individual differences in this respect, and that some people retain an infantile type of mental process longer than others, just as there are similar differences in regard to the diminution of visual imagery, which is so vivid in early years. But in general, I think, a wish that has been left over unfulfilled from the previous day is insufficient to produce a dream in the case of an adult. I readily admit that a wishful impulse originating in the conscious will *contribute* to the instigation of a dream, but it will probably not

do more than that. The dream would not materialize if the preconscious wish did not succeed in finding reinforcement from elsewhere.

From the unconscious, in fact. *My supposition is that a conscious wish can only become a dream-instigator if it succeeds in awakening an unconscious wish with the same tenor and in obtaining reinforcement from it.* From indications derived from the psycho-analysis of the neuroses, I consider that these unconscious wishes are always on the alert, ready at any time to find their way to expression when an opportunity arises for allying themselves with an impulse from the conscious and for transferring their own great intensity on to the latter's lesser one.[1] It will then *appear* as though the conscious wish alone had been realized in the dream; only some small peculiarity in the dream's configuration will serve as a finger-post to put us on the track of the powerful ally from the unconscious. These wishes in our unconscious, ever on the alert and, so to say, immortal, remind one of the legendary Titans, weighed down since primaeval ages by the massive bulk of the mountains which were once hurled upon them by the victorious gods and which are still shaken from time to time by the convulsion of their limbs. But these wishes, held under repression, are themselves of infantile origin, as we are taught by psychological research into the neuroses. I would propose, therefore, to set aside the assertion made just now [p. 551], that the place of origin of dream-wishes is a matter of indifference and replace it by another one to the following effect: *a wish which is represented in a dream must be an infantile one.* In the case of adults it originates from the *Ucs.*, in the case of children, where there is as yet no division or censorship between the *Pcs.* and the *Ucs.*, or where that division is only gradually being set up, it is an unfulfilled, unrepressed wish from waking

[1] They share this character of indestructibility with all other mental acts which are truly unconscious, i.e. which belong to the system *Ucs.* only. These are paths which have been laid down once and for all, which never fall into disuse and which, whenever an unconscious excitation re-cathects them, are always ready to conduct the excitatory process to discharge. If I may use a simile, they are only capable of annihilation in the same sense as the ghosts in the underworld of the Odyssey —ghosts which awoke to new life as soon as they tasted blood. Processes which are dependent on the preconscious system are destructible in quite another sense. The psychotherapy of the neuroses is based on this distinction. [See below, p. 577 f.]

life. I am aware that this assertion cannot be proved to hold universally; but it can be proved to hold frequently, even in unsuspected cases, and it cannot be *contradicted* as a general proposition.

In my view, therefore, wishful impulses left over from conscious waking life must be relegated to a secondary position in respect to the formation of dreams. I cannot allow that, as contributors to the content of dreams, they play any other part than is played, for instance, by the material of sensations which become currently active during sleep. (See pp. 228–9.) I shall follow the same line of thought in now turning to consider those psychical instigations to dreaming, left over from waking life, which are *other* than wishes. When we decide to go to sleep, we may succeed in temporarily bringing to an end the cathexes of energy attaching to our waking thoughts. Anyone who can do this easily is a good sleeper; the first Napoleon seems to have been a model of this class. But we do not always succeed in doing so, nor do we always succeed completely. Unsolved problems, tormenting worries, overwhelming impressions—all these carry thought-activity over into sleep and sustain mental processes in the system that we have named the preconscious. If we wish to classify the thought-impulses which persist in sleep, we may divide them into the following groups: (1) what has not been carried to a conclusion during the day owing to some chance hindrance; (2) what has not been dealt with owing to the insufficiency of our intellectual power—what is unsolved; (3) what has been rejected and suppressed during the daytime. To these we must add (4) a powerful group consisting of what has been set in action in our *Ucs.* by the activity of the preconscious in the course of the day; and finally (5) the group of daytime impressions which are indifferent and have for that reason not been dealt with.

There is no need to underestimate the importance of the psychical intensities which are introduced into the state of sleep by these residues of daytime life, and particularly of those in the group of unsolved problems. It is certain that these excitations continue to struggle for expression during the night; and we may assume with equal certainty that the state of sleep makes it impossible for the excitatory process to be pursued in the habitual manner in the preconscious and brought to an end

by becoming conscious. In so far as our thought-processes are able to become conscious in the normal way at night, we are simply not asleep. I am unable to say what modification in the system *Pcs.* is brought about by the state of sleep;[1] but there can be no doubt that the psychological characteristics of sleep are to be looked for essentially in modifications in the cathexis of this particular system—a system that is also in control of access to the power of movement, which is paralysed during sleep. On the other hand, nothing in the psychology of dreams gives me reason to suppose that sleep produces any modifications other than secondary ones in the state of things prevailing in the *Ucs.* No other course, then, lies open to excitations occurring at night in the *Pcs.* than that followed by wishful excitations arising from the *Ucs.*; the preconscious excitations must find reinforcement from the *Ucs.* and must accompany the unconscious excitations along their circuitous paths. But what is the relation of the preconscious residues of the previous day to *dreams*? There is no doubt that they find their way into dreams in great quantity, and that they make use of the content of dreams in order to penetrate into consciousness even during the night. Indeed they occasionally dominate the content of a dream and force it to carry on the activity of daytime. It is certain, too, that the day's residues may be of any other character just as easily as wishes; but it is highly instructive in this connection, and of positively decisive importance for the theory of wish-fulfilment, to observe the condition to which they must submit in order to be received into a dream.

Let us take one of the dreams I have already recorded—for instance, the one in which my friend Otto appeared with the signs of Graves' disease. (See p. 269 ff.) I had been worried during the previous day by Otto's looks; and, like everything else concerned with him, this worry affected me closely. And it pursued me, as I may assume, into my sleep. I was probably anxious to discover what could be wrong with him. This worry found expression during the night in the dream I have described, the content of which was in the first place nonsensical and in the second place was in no respect the fulfilment of a

[1] [*Footnote added* 1919:] I have tried to penetrate further into an understanding of the state of things prevailing during sleep and of the determining conditions of hallucination in a paper entitled 'A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams' [Freud, 1917*d*].

wish. I then began to investigate the origin of this inappropriate expression of the worry I had felt during the day, and by means of analysis I found a connection through the fact of my having identified my friend with a certain Baron L. and myself with Professor R. There was only one explanation of my having been obliged to choose this particular substitute for my daytime thought. I must have been prepared at all times in my *Ucs.* to identify myself with Professor R., since by means of that identification one of the immortal wishes of childhood—the megalomaniac wish—was fulfilled. Ugly thoughts hostile to my friend, which were certain to be repudiated during the day, had seized the opportunity of slipping through with the wish and getting themselves represented in the dream; but my daytime worry had also found some sort of expression in the content of the dream by means of a substitute. [Cf. p. 267.] The daytime thought, which was not in itself a wish but on the contrary a worry, was obliged to find a connection in some way or other with an infantile wish which was now unconscious and suppressed, and which would enable it—suitably decocted, it is true—to 'originate' in consciousness. The more dominating was the worry, the more far-fetched a link could be established; there was no necessity for there being any connection whatever between the content of the wish and that of the worry, and in fact no such connection existed in our example.

It may perhaps be useful[1] to continue our examination of the same question by considering how a dream behaves when the dream-thoughts present it with material which is the complete reverse of a wish-fulfilment—well-justified worries, painful reflections, distressing realizations. The many possible outcomes can be classed under the two following groups. (A) The dream-work may succeed in replacing all the distressing ideas by contrary ones and in suppressing the unpleasurable affects attaching to them. The result will be a straightforward dream of satisfaction, a palpable 'wish-fulfilment', about which there seems no more to be said. (B) The distressing ideas may make their way, more or less modified but none the less quite recognizable, into the manifest content of the dream. This is the case which raises doubts as to the validity of the wish theory of dreams and needs further investigation. Dreams of this sort with a distressing

[1] [This paragraph and the two following ones were added in 1919.]

content may either be experienced with indifference, or they may be accompanied by the whole of the distressing affect which their ideational content seems to justify, or they may even lead to the development of anxiety and to awakening.

Analysis is able to demonstrate that these unpleasurable dreams are wish-fulfilments no less than the rest. An unconscious and repressed wish, whose fulfilment the dreamer's ego could not fail to experience as something distressing, has seized the opportunity offered to it by the persisting cathexis of the distressing residues of the previous day; it has lent them its support and by that means rendered them capable of entering a dream. But whereas in Group A the unconscious wish coincided with the conscious one, in Group B the gulf between the unconscious and the conscious (between the repressed and the ego) is revealed and the situation in the fairy tale of the three wishes which were granted by the fairy to the husband and wife is realized. (See below, p. 580 f. *n.*) The satisfaction at the fulfilment of the repressed wish may turn out to be so great that it counterbalances the distressing feelings attaching to the day's residues [cf. p. 470]; in that case the feeling-tone of the dream is indifferent, in spite of its being on the one hand the fulfilment of a wish and on the other the fulfilment of a fear. Or it may happen that the sleeping ego takes a still larger share in the constructing of the dream, that it reacts to the satisfying of the repressed wish with violent indignation and itself puts an end to the dream with an outburst of anxiety. Thus there is no difficulty in seeing that unpleasurable dreams and anxiety-dreams are just as much wish-fulfilments in the sense of our theory as are straightforward dreams of satisfaction.

Unpleasurable dreams may also be 'punishment-dreams'. [See p. 473 ff.] It must be admitted that their recognition means in a certain sense a new addition to the theory of dreams. What is fulfilled in them is equally an unconscious wish, namely a wish that the dreamer may be punished for a repressed and forbidden wishful impulse. To that extent dreams of this kind fall in with the condition that has been laid down here that the motive force for constructing a dream must be provided by a wish belonging to the unconscious. A closer psychological analysis, however, shows how they differ from other wishful dreams. In the cases forming Group B the dream-constructing

wish is an unconscious one and belongs to the repressed, while in punishment-dreams, though it is equally an unconscious one, it must be reckoned as belonging not to the repressed but to the 'ego'. Thus punishment-dreams indicate the possibility that the ego may have a greater share than was supposed in the construction of dreams. The mechanism of dream-formation would in general be greatly clarified if instead of the opposition between 'conscious' and 'unconscious' we were to speak of that between the 'ego' and the 'repressed'. This cannot be done, however, without taking account of the processes underlying the psychoneuroses, and for that reason it has not been carried out in the present work. I will only add that punishment-dreams are not in general subject to the condition that the day's residues shall be of a distressing kind. On the contrary, they occur most easily where the opposite is the case—where the day's residues are thoughts of a satisfying nature but the satisfaction which they express is a forbidden one. The only trace of these thoughts that appears in the manifest dream is their diametric opposite, just as in the case of dreams belonging to Group A. The essential characteristic of punishment-dreams would thus be that in their case the dream-constructing wish is not an unconscious wish derived from the repressed (from the system *Ucs.*), but a punitive one reacting against it and belonging to the ego, though at the same time an unconscious (that is to say, preconscious) one.[1]

I will report a dream of my own[2] in order to illustrate what I have just said, and in particular the way in which the dream-work deals with a residue of distressing anticipations from the previous day.

'Indistinct beginning. *I said to my wife that I had a piece of news for her, something quite special. She was alarmed and refused to listen. I assured her that on the contrary it was something that she would be very glad to hear, and began to tell her that our son's officers' mess had sent a sum of money* (5000 *Kronen?*) . . . *something about distinction . . . distribution. . . . Meanwhile I had gone with her into a small*

[1] [*Footnote added* 1930:] This would be the appropriate point for a reference to the 'super-ego', one of the later findings of psycho-analysis. [Cf. p. 476, *n.* 2.—A class of dreams which are an exception to the 'wish-theory' (those which occur in traumatic neuroses) is discussed in Chapter II of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920*g*) and in the last pages of Lecture XXIX in the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*).]

[2] [This paragraph and the two following ones were added as a footnote in 1919, and incorporated in the text in 1930.]

room, like a store-room, to look for something. Suddenly I saw my son appear. He was not in uniform but in tight-fitting sports clothes (like a seal?), with a little cap. He climbed up on to a basket that was standing beside a cupboard, as though he wanted to put something on the cupboard. I called out to him: no reply. It seemed to me that his face or forehead was bandaged. He was adjusting something in his mouth, pushing something into it. And his hair was flecked with grey. I thought: "Could he be as exhausted as all that? And has he got false teeth?" Before I could call out again I woke up, feeling no anxiety but with my heart beating rapidly. My bedside clock showed that it was two thirty.'

Once again it is impossible for me to present a complete analysis. I must restrict myself to bringing out a few salient points. Distressing anticipations from the previous day were what gave rise to the dream: we had once more been without news of our son at the front for over a week. It is easy to see that the content of the dream expressed a conviction that he had been wounded or killed. Energetic efforts were clearly being made at the beginning of the dream to replace the distressing thoughts by their contrary. I had some highly agreeable news to communicate—something about money being sent . . . distinction . . . distribution. (The sum of money was derived from an agreeable occurrence in my medical practice; it was an attempt at a complete diversion from the topic.) But these efforts failed. My wife suspected something dreadful and refused to listen to me. The disguises were too thin and references to what it was sought to repress pierced through them everywhere. If my son had been killed, his fellow-officers would send back his belongings and I should have to distribute what he left among his brothers and sisters and other people. A 'distinction' is often awarded to an officer who has fallen in battle. Thus the dream set about giving direct expression to what it had first sought to deny, though the inclination towards wish-fulfilment was still shown at work in the distortions. (The change of locality during the dream is no doubt to be understood as what Silberer [1912] has described as 'threshold symbolism'. [Cf. above, p. 504 f.]) We cannot tell, it is true, what it was that provided the dream with the motive force for thus giving expression to my distressing thoughts. My son did not appear as someone 'falling' but as someone 'climbing'. He had in fact been a keen mountaineer. He was not in uniform but in sports clothes; this

meant that the place of the accident that I *now* feared had been taken by an *earlier*, sporting one; for he had had a fall during a ski-ing expedition and broken his thigh. The way in which he was dressed, on the other hand, which made him look like a seal, at once recalled someone younger—our funny little grandson; while the grey hair reminded me of the latter's father, our son-in-law, who had been hard hit by the war. What could this mean? . . . but I have said enough of it.—The locality in a store-closet and the cupboard from which he wanted to take something ('on which he wanted to put something' in the dream)—these allusions reminded me unmistakably of an accident of my own which I had brought on myself when I was between two and three years old.[1] I had climbed up on to a stool in the store-closet to get something nice that was lying on a cupboard or table. The stool had tipped over and its corner had struck me behind my lower jaw; I might easily, I reflected, have knocked out all my teeth. The recollection was accompanied by an admonitory thought: 'that serves you right'; and this seemed as though it was a hostile impulse aimed at the gallant soldier. Deeper analysis at last enabled me to discover what the concealed impulse was which might have found satisfaction in the dreaded accident to my son: it was the envy which is felt for the young by those who have grown old, but which they believe they have completely stifled. And there can be no question that it was precisely the *strength* of the painful emotion which would have arisen if such a misfortune had really happened that caused that emotion to seek out a repressed wish-fulfilment of this kind in order to find some consolation.[2]

I am now in a position to give a precise account of the part played in dreams by the unconscious wish. I am ready to admit that there is a whole class of dreams the *instigation* to which arises principally or even exclusively from the residues of daytime life; and I think that even my wish that I might at long last become a Professor Extraordinarius might have allowed me to sleep through the night in peace if my worry over my friend's health had not still persisted from the previous day [p. 271]. But the worry alone could not have made a dream. The *motive*

[1] [Cf. p. 17, footnote.]

[2] [This dream is discussed briefly in its possible telepathic aspect at the beginning of Freud's paper on 'Dreams and Telepathy' (1922*a*)].

force which the dream required had to be provided by a wish; it was the business of the worry to get hold of a wish to act as the motive force of the dream.

The position may be explained by an analogy. A daytime thought may very well play the part of *entrepreneur* for a dream; but the *entrepreneur*, who, as people say, has the idea and the initiative to carry it out, can do nothing without capital; he needs a *capitalist* who can afford the outlay, and the capitalist who provides the psychical outlay for the dream is invariably and indisputably, whatever may be the thoughts of the previous day, *a wish from the unconscious*.[1]

Sometimes the capitalist is himself the *entrepreneur*, and indeed in the case of dreams this is the commoner event: an unconscious wish is stirred up by daytime activity and proceeds to construct a dream. So, too, the other possible variations in the economic situation that I have taken as an analogy have their parallel in dream-processes. The *entrepreneur* may himself make a small contribution to the capital; several *entrepreneurs* may apply to the same capitalist; several capitalists may combine to put up what is necessary for the *entrepreneur*. In the same way, we come across dreams that are supported by more than one dream-wish; and so too with other similar variations, which could easily be run through, but which would be of no further interest to us. We must reserve until later what remains to be said of the dream-wish.

The *tertium comparationis* [third element of comparison] in the analogy that I have just used—the quantity[2] put at the disposal of the *entrepreneur* in an appropriate amount—is capable of being applied in still greater detail to the purpose of elucidating the structure of dreams. In most dreams it is possible to detect a central point which is marked by peculiar sensory intensity, as I have shown on pp. 305 [and 329 f.]. This central point is as a rule the direct representation of the wish-fulfilment, for, if we undo the displacements brought about by the dream-work, we find that the *psychical* intensity of the elements in the dream-thoughts has been replaced by the *sensory* intensity of the

[1] [These last two paragraphs are quoted in full by Freud at the end of his analysis of Dora's first dream (1905*e*, Part II), which, he comments, is a complete confirmation of their correctness.]

[2] [Of capital in the case of the analogy, and of psychical energy in the case of a dream.]

elements in the content of the actual dream. The elements in the *neighbourhood* of the wish-fulfilment often have nothing to do with its meaning, but turn out to be derivatives of distressing thoughts that run contrary to the wish. But owing to their being in what is often an artificially established connection with the central element, they have acquired enough intensity to become capable of being represented in the dream. Thus the wish-fulfilment's power of bringing about representation is diffused over a certain sphere surrounding it, within which all the elements—including even those possessing no means of their own—become empowered to obtain representation. In the case of dreams that are actuated by *several* wishes, it is easy to delimit the spheres of the different wish-fulfilments, and gaps in the dream may often be understood as frontier zones between those spheres.[1]

Though the preceding considerations have reduced the importance of the part played by the day's residues in dreams, it is worth while devoting a little more attention to them. It must be that they are essential ingredients in the formation of dreams, since experience has revealed the surprising fact that in the content of every dream some link with a recent daytime impression —often of the most insignificant sort—is to be detected. We have not hitherto been able to explain the necessity for this addition to the mixture that constitutes a dream (see p. 181). And it is only possible to do so if we bear firmly in mind the part played by the unconscious wish and then seek for information from the psychology of the neuroses. We learn from the latter that an unconscious idea is as such quite incapable of entering the preconscious and that it can only exercise any effect there by establishing a connection with an idea which already belongs to the preconscious, by transferring its intensity on to it and by getting itself 'covered' by it. Here we have the fact of 'transference',[2] which provides an explanation of so many striking

[1] [A particularly clear summary of the part played by the 'day's residues' in the construction of dreams will be found in the course of Freud's short paper, 1913*a*.]

[2] [In his later writings Freud regularly used this same word 'transference' ('*Übertragung*') to describe a somewhat different, though not unrelated, psychological process, first discovered by him as occurring in the course of psycho-analytic treatment—namely, the process of 'transferring' on to a contemporary object feelings which originally applied, and still unconsciously apply, to an infantile object. (See, e.g., Freud, 1905*e*, Section IV, and Freud, 1915*a*.) The word occurs also in this other sense in the present volume—e.g. on pp. 184 and 200—and had already been so used by Freud in the last pages of Chapter IV of *Studies on Hysteria* (Breuer and Freud, 1895).]

phenomena in the mental life of neurotics. The preconscious idea, which thus acquires an undeserved degree of intensity, may either be left unaltered by the transference, or it may have a modification forced upon it, derived from the content of the idea which effects the transference. I hope I may be forgiven for drawing analogies from everyday life, but I am tempted to say that the position of a repressed idea resembles that of an American dentist in this country: he is not allowed to set up in practice unless he can make use of a legally qualified medical practitioner to serve as a stalking-horse and to act as a 'cover' in the eyes of the law. And just as it is not exactly the physicians with the largest practices who form alliances of this kind with dentists, so in the same way preconscious or conscious ideas which have already attracted a sufficient amount of the attention that is operating in the preconscious will not be the ones to be chosen to act as covers for a repressed idea. The unconscious prefers to weave its connections round preconscious impressions and ideas which are either indifferent and have thus had no attention paid to them, or have been rejected and have thus had attention promptly withdrawn from them. It is a familiar article in the doctrine of association, and one that is entirely confirmed by experience, that an idea which is bound by a very intimate tie in one direction, tends, as it were, to repel whole groups of new ties. I once attempted to base a theory of hysterical paralyses on this proposition.[1]

If we assume that the same need for transference on the part of repressed ideas which we have discovered in analysing the neuroses is also at work in dreams, two of the riddles of the dream are solved at a blow: the fact, namely, that every analysis of a dream shows some recent impression woven into its texture and that this recent element is often of the most trivial kind [p. 180]. I may add that (as we have already found elsewhere [p. 177]) the reason why these recent and indifferent elements so frequently find their way into dreams as substitutes for the most ancient of all the dream-thoughts is that they have least to fear from the censorship imposed by resistance. But while the

[1] [See Section IV of Freud 1893*c*.]

fact that *trivial* elements are preferred is explained by their freedom from censorship, the fact that *recent* elements occur with such regularity points to the existence of a need for transference. Both groups of impressions satisfy the demand of the repressed for material that is still clear of associations—the indifferent ones because they have given no occasion for the formation of many ties, and the recent ones because they have not yet had time to form them.

It will be seen, then, that the day's residues, among which we may now class the indifferent impressions, not only *borrow* something from the *Ucs.* when they succeed in taking a share in the formation of a dream—namely the instinctual force which is at the disposal of the repressed wish—but that they also *offer* the unconscious something indispensable—namely the necessary point of attachment for a transference. If we wished to penetrate more deeply at this point into the processes of the mind, we should have to throw more light upon the interplay of excitations between the preconscious and the unconscious—a subject towards which the study of the psychoneuroses draws us, but upon which, as it happens, dreams have no help to offer.

I have only one thing more to add about the day's residues. There can be no doubt that it is they that are the true disturbers of sleep and not dreams, which, on the contrary are concerned to guard it. I shall return to this point later. [See p. 577 ff.]

We have so far been studying dream-wishes: we have traced them from their origin in the region of the *Ucs.* and have analysed their relations to the day's residues, which in their turn may either be wishes or psychical impulses of some other kind or simply recent impressions. In this way we have allowed room for every claim that may be raised by any of the multifarious waking thought-activities on behalf of the importance of the part played by them in the process of constructing dreams. It is not impossible, even, that our account may have provided an explanation of the extreme cases in which a dream, pursuing the activities of daytime, arrives at a happy solution of some unsolved problem of waking life.[1] All we need is an example of this kind, so that we might analyse it and trace the source of the infantile or repressed wishes whose help has been enlisted and

[1] [See above, p. 64 f. An instance of this is mentioned in a footnote at the end of Section II of *The Ego and the Id* (Freud, 1923*b*).]

has reinforced the efforts of preconscious activity with such success. But all this has not brought us a step nearer to solving the riddle of why it is that the unconscious has nothing else to offer during sleep but the motive force for the fulfilment of a *wish*. The answer to this question must throw light upon the psychical nature of wishes, and I propose to give the answer by reference to our schematic picture of the psychical apparatus.

There can be no doubt that that apparatus has only reached its present perfection after a long period of development. Let us attempt to carry it back to an earlier stage of its functioning capacity. Hypotheses, whose justification must be looked for in other directions, tell us that at first the apparatus's efforts were directed towards keeping itself so far as possible free from stimuli; [1] consequently its first structure followed the plan of a reflex apparatus, so that any sensory excitation impinging on it could be promptly discharged along a motor path. But the exigencies of life interfere with this simple function, and it is to them, too, that the apparatus owes the impetus to further development. The exigencies of life confront it first in the form of the major somatic needs. The excitations produced by internal needs seek discharge in movement, which may be described as an 'internal change' or an 'expression of emotion'. A hungry baby screams or kicks helplessly. But the situation remains unaltered, for the excitation arising from an internal need is not due to a force producing a *momentary* impact but to one which is in continuous operation. A change can only come about if in some way or other (in the case of the baby, through outside help) an 'experience of satisfaction' can be achieved which puts an end to the internal stimulus. An essential component of this experience of satisfaction is a particular perception (that of nourishment, in our example) the mnemic image of which remains associated thenceforward with the memory trace of the excitation produced by the need. As a result of the link that has thus been established, next time this need arises a psychical

[1] [This is the so-called 'Principle of Constancy' which is discussed in the opening pages of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920*g*). But it was already a fundamental assumption in some of Freud's earliest psychological writings, e.g. in his posthumously published 'Letter to Josef Breuer' of June 29, 1892 (Freud, 1941*a*). The whole gist of the present paragraph is already stated in Sections 1, 2, 11 and 16 of Part I of his 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' written in the autumn of 1895 (Freud, 1950*a*). Cf. Editor's Introduction, p. xv ff.]

impulse will at once emerge which will seek to re-cathect the mnemic image of the perception and to re-evoke the perception itself, that is to say, to re-establish the situation of the original satisfaction. An impulse of this kind is what we call a wish; the reappearance of the perception is the fulfilment of the wish; and the shortest path to the fulfilment of the wish is a path leading direct from the excitation produced by the need to a complete cathexis of the perception. Nothing prevents us from assuming that there was a primitive state of the psychical apparatus in which this path was actually traversed, that is, in which wishing ended in hallucinating. Thus the aim of this first psychical activity was to produce a 'perceptual identity'[1]—a repetition of the perception which was linked with the satisfaction of the need.

The bitter experience of life must have changed this primitive thought-activity into a more expedient secondary one. The establishment of a perceptual identity along the short path of regression within the apparatus does not have the same result elsewhere in the mind as does the cathexis of the same perception from without. Satisfaction does not follow; the need persists. An internal cathexis could only have the same value as an external one if it were maintained unceasingly, as in fact occurs in hallucinatory psychoses and hunger phantasies, which exhaust their whole psychical activity in clinging to the object of their wish. In order to arrive at a more efficient expenditure of psychical force, it is necessary to bring the regression to a halt before it becomes complete, so that it does not proceed beyond the mnemic image, and is able to seek out other paths which lead eventually to the desired perceptual identity being established from the direction of the external world.[2] This inhibition of the regression and the subsequent diversion of the excitation become the business of a second system, which is in control of voluntary movement—which for the first time, that is, makes use of movement for purposes remembered in advance. But all the complicated thought-activity which is spun out from the mnemic image to the moment at which the perceptual identity

[1] [I.e. something perceptually identical with the 'experience of satisfaction'.]

[2] [*Footnote added* 1919:] In other words, it becomes evident that there must be a means of 'reality-testing' [i.e. of testing things to see whether they are real or not].

is established by the external world—all this activity of thought merely constitutes a roundabout path to wish-fulfilment which has been made necessary by experience.[1] Thought is after all nothing but a substitute for a hallucinatory wish; and it is self-evident that dreams must be wish-fulfilments, since nothing but a wish can set our mental apparatus at work. Dreams, which fulfil their wishes along the short path of regression, have merely preserved for us in that respect a sample of the psychical apparatus's primary method of working, a method which was abandoned as being inefficient. What once dominated waking life, while the mind was still young and incompetent, seems now to have been banished into the night—just as the primitive weapons, the bows and arrows, that have been abandoned by adult men, turn up once more in the nursery. *Dreaming is a piece of infantile mental life that has been superseded.* These methods of working on the part of the psychical apparatus, which are normally suppressed in waking hours, become current once more in psychosis and then reveal their incapacity for satisfying our needs in relation to the external world.[2]

The unconscious wishful impulses clearly try to make themselves effective in daytime as well, and the fact of transference, as well as the psychoses, show us that they endeavour to force their way by way of the preconscious system into consciousness and to obtain control of the power of movement. Thus the censorship between the *Ucs.* and the *Pcs.*, the assumption of whose existence is positively forced upon us by dreams, deserves to be recognized and respected as the watchman of our mental health. Must we not regard it, however, as an act of carelessness on the part of that watchman that it relaxes its activities during the night, allows the suppressed impulses in the *Ucs.* to find expression, and makes it possible for hallucinatory regression to

[1] The wish-fulfilling activity of dreams is justly extolled by Le Lorrain, who speaks of it as 'sans fatigue sérieuse, sans être obligé de recourir à cette lutte opiniâtre et longue qui use et corrode les jouissances poursuivies [incurring no serious fatigue and not being obliged to embark upon the long and obstinate struggle that wears away and spoils enjoyments that have to be pursued]'.

[2] [*Footnote added* 1914:] I have elsewhere carried this train of thought further in a paper on the two principles of mental functioning (Freud, 1911*b*)—the pleasure principle and the reality principle, as I have proposed calling them. [The argument is in fact developed further below, on p. 598 ff.]

occur once more? I think not. For even though this critical watchman goes to rest—and we have proof that its slumbers are not deep—it also shuts the door upon the power of movement. No matter what impulses from the normally inhibited *Ucs.* may prance upon the stage, we need feel no concern; they remain harmless, since they are unable to set in motion the motor apparatus by which alone they might modify the external world. The state of sleep guarantees the security of the citadel that must be guarded. The position is less harmless when what brings about the displacement of forces is not the nightly relaxation in the critical censorship's output of force, but a pathological reduction in that force or a pathological intensification of the unconscious excitations while the preconscious is still cathected and the gateway to the power of movement stands open. When this is so, the watchman is overpowered, the unconscious excitations overwhelm the *Pcs.*, and thence obtain control over our speech and actions; or they forcibly bring about hallucinatory regression and direct the course of the apparatus (which was not designed for their use) by virtue of the attraction exercised by perceptions on the distribution of our psychical energy. To this state of things we give the name of psychosis.

We are now well on the way to proceeding further with the erection of the psychological scaffolding, which we stopped at the point at which we introduced the two systems *Ucs.* and *Pcs.* But there are reasons for continuing a little with our consideration of wishes as the sole psychical motive force for the construction of dreams. We have accepted the idea that the reason why dreams are invariably wish-fulfilments is that they are products of the system *Ucs.*, whose activity knows no other aim than the fulfilment of wishes and which has at its command no other forces than wishful impulses. If we insist, for even a moment longer, upon our right to base such far-reaching psychological speculations upon the interpretation of dreams, we are in duty bound to prove that those speculations have enabled us to insert dreams into a nexus which can include other psychical structures as well. If such a thing as a system *Ucs.* exists (or something analogous to it for the purposes of our discussion), dreams cannot be its only manifestation; every dream may be a wish-fulfilment, but apart from dreams there must be other forms of

abnormal wish-fulfilments. And it is a fact that the theory governing all psychoneurotic symptoms culminates in a single proposition, which asserts that *they too are to be regarded as fulfilments of unconscious wishes.*[1] Our explanation makes the dream only the first member of a class which is of the greatest significance to psychiatrists and an understanding of which implies the solution of the purely psychological side of the problem of psychiatry.[2]

The other members of this class of wish-fulfilments—hysterical symptoms, for instance—possess one essential characteristic, however, which I cannot discover in dreams. I have learnt from the researches which I have mentioned so often in the course of this work that in order to bring about the formation of a hysterical symptom *both* currents of our mind must converge. A symptom is not merely the expression of a realized unconscious wish; a wish from the preconscious which is fulfilled by the same symptom must also be present. So that the symptom will have *at least* two determinants, one arising from each of the systems involved in the conflict. As in the case of dreams, there are no limits to the further determinants that may be present—to the 'overdetermination' of the symptoms.[3] The determinant which does not arise from the *Ucs.* is invariably, so far as I know, a train of thought reacting against the unconscious wish—a self-punishment, for instance. I can therefore make the quite general assertion that *a hysterical symptom develops only where the fulfilments of two opposing wishes, arising each from a different psychical system, are able to converge in a single expression.* (Compare in this connection my most recent formulations on the origin of hysterical symptoms in my paper on hysterical phantasies and their relation to bisexuality. [Freud, 1908*a*.][4]) Examples would serve very little purpose here, since nothing but an exhaustive elucidation of the complications involved

[1] [*Footnote added* 1914:] Or more correctly, one portion of the symptom corresponds to the unconscious wish-fulfilment and another portion to the mental structure reacting against the wish.

[2] [*Footnote added* 1914:] As Hughlings Jackson said: 'Find out all about dreams and you will have found out all about insanity.' [Quoted by Ernest Jones (1911), who had heard it at first hand from Hughlings Jackson.]

[3] [Cf. Freud in Breuer and Freud, 1895, Chapter IV, Section 1, Observation 3.]

[4] [This sentence was added in 1909.]

could carry conviction. I will therefore leave my assertion to stand for itself and only quote an example in order to make the point clear, and not to carry conviction. In one of my women patients, then, hysterical vomiting turned out to be on the one hand the fulfilment of an unconscious phantasy dating from her puberty—of a wish, that is, that she might be continuously pregnant and have innumerable children, with a further wish, added later, that she might have them by as many men as possible. A powerful defensive impulse had sprung up against this unbridled wish. And, since the patient might lose her figure and her good looks as a result of her vomiting, and so might cease to be attractive to anyone, the symptom was acceptable to the punitive train of thought as well; and since it was permitted by both sides it could become a reality. This was the same method of treating a wish-fulfilment as was adopted by the Parthian queen towards the Roman triumvir Crassus. Believing that he had embarked on his expedition out of love of gold, she ordered molten gold to be poured down his throat when he was dead: 'Now', she said, 'you have what you wanted.' But all that we so far know about dreams is that they express the fulfilment of a wish from the unconscious; it seems as though the dominant, preconscious system acquiesces in this after insisting upon a certain number of distortions. Nor is it possible as a general rule to find a train of thought opposed to the dream-wish and, like its counterpart, realized in the dream. Only here and there in dream analyses do we come upon signs of reactive creations, like, for instance, my affectionate feelings for my friend R. in the dream of my uncle [with the yellow beard] (cf. p. 140 ff.). But we can find the missing ingredient from the preconscious elsewhere. Whereas the wish from the *Ucs.* is able to find expression in the dream after undergoing distortions of every kind, the dominant system withdraws into a *wish to sleep*, realizes that wish by bringing about the modifications which it is able to produce in the cathexes within the psychical apparatus, and persists in that wish throughout the whole duration of sleep.[1]

This determined wish on the part of the preconscious to sleep exercises a generally facilitating effect on the formation of dreams. Let me recall the dream dreamt by the man who was

[1] I have borrowed this idea from the theory of sleep put forward by Liébeault (1889), to whom is due the revival in modern times of research into hypnotism.

led to infer from the glare of light coming out of the next room that his child's body might be on fire [p. 509 ff.]. The father drew this inference in a dream instead of allowing himself to be woken up by the glare; and we have suggested that one of the psychical forces responsible for this result was a wish which prolonged by that one moment the life of the child whom he pictured in the dream. Other wishes, originating from the repressed, probably escape us, since we are unable to analyse the dream. But we may assume that a further motive force in the production of the dream was the father's need to sleep; his sleep, like the child's life, was prolonged by one moment by the dream. 'Let the dream go on'—such was his motive—'or I shall have to wake up.' In every other dream, just as in this one, the wish to sleep lends its support to the unconscious wish. On p. 125 f. I described some dreams which appeared openly as dreams of convenience. But in fact all dreams can claim a right to the same description. The operation of the wish to continue sleeping is most easily to be seen in arousal dreams, which modify external sensory stimuli in such a way as to make them compatible with a continuance of sleep; they weave them into a dream in order to deprive them of any possibility of acting as reminders of the external world. That same wish must, however, play an equal part in allowing the occurrence of all other dreams, though it may only be from *within* that they threaten to shake the subject out of his sleep. In some cases, when a dream carries things too far, the *Pcs.* says to consciousness: 'Never mind! go on sleeping! after all it's only a dream!' [See p. 488 f.] But this describes in general the attitude of our dominant mental activity towards dreams, though it may not be openly expressed. I am driven to conclude that *throughout our whole sleeping state we know just as certainly that we are dreaming as we know that we are sleeping*. We must not pay too much attention to the counter-argument that our consciousness is never brought to bear on the latter piece of knowledge and that it is only brought to bear on the former on particular occasions when the censorship feels that it has, as it were, been taken off its guard.

On the other hand,[1] there are some people who are quite clearly aware during the night that they are asleep and dreaming and who thus seem to possess the faculty of consciously directing their dreams. If, for instance, a dreamer of this kind

[1] [This paragraph was added in 1909.]

is dissatisfied with the turn taken by a dream, he can break it off without waking up and start it again in another direction—just as a popular dramatist may under pressure give his play a happier ending. Or another time, if his dream has led him into a sexually exciting situation, he can think to himself: 'I won't go on with this dream any further and exhaust myself with an emission; I'll hold it back for a real situation instead.'

The Marquis d'Hervey de Saint-Denys [1867, 268ff.],[1] quoted by Vaschide (1911, 139), claimed to have acquired the power of accelerating the course of his dreams just as he pleased, and of giving them any direction he chose. It seems as though in his case the wish to sleep had given place to another preconscious wish, namely to observe his dreams and enjoy them. Sleep is just as compatible with a wish of this sort as it is with a mental reservation to wake up if some particular condition is fulfilled (e.g. in the case of a nursing mother or wet-nurse) [p. 223 f.]. Moreover, it is a familiar fact that anyone who takes an interest in dreams remembers a considerably greater number of them after waking.

Ferenczi (1911),[2] in the course of a discussion of some other observations upon the directing of dreams, remarks: 'Dreams work over the thoughts which are occupying the mind at the moment from every angle; they will drop a dream-image if it threatens the success of a wish-fulfilment and will experiment with a fresh solution, till at last they succeed in constructing a wish-fulfilment which satisfies both agencies of the mind as a compromise.'

[1] [This paragraph was added in 1914.]

[2] [This paragraph was added as a footnote in 1914 and included in the text in 1930.]

(D)

AROUSAL BY DREAMS—THE FUNCTION OF DREAMS—ANXIETY-DREAMS

Now that we know that all through the night the preconscious is concentrated upon the wish to sleep, we are in a position to carry our understanding of the process of dreaming a stage further. But first let us summarize what we have learnt so far.

The situation is this. Either residues of the previous day have been left over from the activity of waking life and it has not been possible to withdraw the whole cathexis of energy from them; or the activity of waking life during the course of the day has led to the stirring up of an unconscious wish; or these two events have happened to coincide. (We have already discussed the various possibilities in this connection.) The unconscious wish links itself up with the day's residues and effects a transference on to them; this may happen either in the course of the day or not until a state of sleep has been established. A wish now arises which has been transferred on to the recent material; or a recent wish, having been suppressed, gains fresh life by being reinforced from the unconscious. This wish seeks to force its way along the normal path taken by thought-processes, through the *Pcs.* (to which, indeed, it in part belongs) to consciousness. But it comes up against the censorship, which is still functioning and to the influence of which it now submits. At this point it takes on the distortion for which the way has already been paved by the transference of the wish on to the recent material. So far it is on the way to becoming an obsessive idea or a delusion or something of the kind—that is, *a thought* which has been intensified by transference and distorted in its expression by censorship. Its further advance is halted, however, by the sleeping state of the preconscious. (The probability is that that system has protected itself against the invasion by diminishing its own excitations.) The dream-process consequently enters on a regressive path, which lies open to it precisely owing to the peculiar nature of the state of sleep, and it is led along that path by the attraction exercised on it by groups of memories; some of these memories themselves exist only in the form of

visual cathexes and not as translations into the terminology of the later systems. [Cf. p. 546.] In the course of its regressive path the dream-process acquires the attribute of representability. (I shall deal later with the question of compression [p. 595].) It has now completed the second portion of its zigzag journey. The first portion was a progressive one, leading from the unconscious scenes or phantasies to the preconscious; the second portion led from the frontier of the censorship back again to perceptions. But when the content of the dream-process has become perceptual, by that fact it has, as it were, found a way of evading the obstacle put in its way by the censorship and the state of sleep in the *Pcs.* [Cf. p. 526.] It succeeds in drawing attention to itself and in being noticed by consciousness.

For consciousness, which we look upon in the light of a sense organ for the apprehension of psychical qualities, is capable in waking life of receiving excitations from two directions. In the first place, it can receive excitations from the periphery of the whole apparatus, the perceptual system; and in addition to this, it can receive excitations of pleasure and unpleasure, which prove to be almost the only psychical quality attaching to transpositions of energy in the inside of the apparatus. All other processes in the ψ-systems, including the *Pcs.*, are lacking in any psychical quality and so cannot be objects of consciousness, except in so far as they bring pleasure or unpleasure to perception. We are thus driven to conclude that *these releases of pleasure and unpleasure automatically regulate the course of cathectic processes*. But, in order to make more delicately adjusted performances possible, it later became necessary to make the course of ideas less dependent upon the presence or absence of unpleasure. For this purpose the *Pcs.* system needed to have qualities of its own which could attract consciousness; and it seems highly probable that it obtained them by linking the preconscious processes with the mnemic system of indications of speech, a system not without quality. [See p. 611 *n.*] By means of the qualities of that system, consciousness, which had hitherto been a sense organ for perceptions alone, also became a sense organ for a portion of our thought-processes. Now, therefore, there are, as it were, *two* sensory surfaces, one directed towards perception and the other towards the preconscious thought-processes.

I must assume that the state of sleep makes the sensory surface of consciousness which is directed towards the *Pcs.* far more insusceptible to excitation than the surface directed towards the *Pcpt.* systems. Moreover, this abandonment of interest in thought-processes during the night has a purpose: thinking is to come to a standstill, for the *Pcs.* requires sleep. Once, however, a dream has become a *perception*, it is in a position to excite consciousness, by means of the qualities it has now acquired. This sensory excitation proceeds to perform what is its essential function: it directs a part of the available cathectic energy in the *Pcs.* into attention to what is causing the excitation. [See p. 593.] It must therefore be admitted that every dream has an *arousing* effect, that it sets a part of the quiescent force of the *Pcs.* in action. The dream is then submitted by this force to the influence which we have described as secondary revision with an eye to consecutiveness and intelligibility. That is to say, the dream is treated by it just like any other perceptual content; it is met by the same anticipatory ideas, in so far as its subject-matter allows [p. 499]. So far as this third portion of the dream-process has any direction it is once again a progressive one.

To avoid misunderstandings, a word about the chronological relations of these dream-processes will not be out of place. A very attractive conjecture has been put forward by Goblot [1896, 289 f.], suggested, no doubt, by the riddle of Maury's guillotine dream [p. 26 f.]. He seeks to show that a dream occupies no more than the transition period between sleeping and waking. The process of awakening takes a certain amount of time, and during that time the dream occurs. We imagine that the final dream-image was so powerful that it compelled us to wake; whereas in fact it was only so powerful because at that moment we were already on the point of waking. 'Un rêve c'est un réveil qui commence.'[1]

It has already been pointed out by Dugas [1897*b*] that Goblot would have to disregard many facts before he could assert his thesis generally. Dreams occur from which we do not awaken—for instance, some in which we dream that we are dreaming. With our knowledge of the dream-work, we could not possibly agree that it only covers the period of awakening. It seems probable, on the contrary, that the first portion of the dream-work has already begun during the day, under the control of

[1] ['A dream is an awakening that is beginning.']

the preconscious. Its second portion—the modification imposed by the censorship, the attraction exercised by unconscious scenes, and the forcing of its way to perception—no doubt proceeds all through the night; and in this respect we may perhaps always be right when we express a feeling of having been dreaming all night long, though we cannot say what. [See p. 517.]

But it seems to me unnecessary to suppose that dream-processes really maintain, up to the moment of becoming conscious, the chronological order in which I have described them: that the first thing to appear is the transferred dream-wish, that distortion by the censorship follows, then the regressive change in direction, and so on. I have been obliged to adopt this order in my description; but what happens in reality is no doubt a simultaneous exploring of one path and another, a swinging of the excitation now this way and now that, until at last it accumulates in the direction that is most opportune and one particular grouping becomes the permanent one. Certain personal experiences of my own lead me to suspect that the dream-work often requires more than a day and a night in order to achieve its result; and if this is so, we need no longer feel any amazement at the extraordinary ingenuity shown in the construction of the dream. In my opinion even the demand for the dream to be made intelligible as a perceptual event may be put into effect before the dream attracts consciousness to itself. From then onwards, however, the pace is accelerated, for at that point a dream is treated in the same fashion as anything else that is perceived. It is like a firework, which takes hours to prepare but goes off in a moment.

The dream-process has by now either acquired sufficient intensity through the dream-work to attract consciousness to itself and arouse the preconscious, irrespectively of the time and depth of sleep; or its intensity is insufficient to achieve this and it must remain in a state of readiness until, just before waking, attention becomes more mobile and comes to meet it. The majority of dreams appear to operate with comparatively low psychical intensities, for they mostly wait until the moment of waking. But this also explains the fact that, if we are suddenly woken from deep sleep, we usually perceive something that we have dreamt. In such cases, just as when we wake of our own accord, the first thing we see is the perceptual content that has been constructed by the dream-work and immediately afterwards we see the perceptual content that is offered to us from outside ourselves.

Greater theoretical interest, however, attaches to the dreams which have the power to rouse us in the middle of our sleep. Bearing in mind the expediency which is everywhere else the rule, we may ask why a dream, that is, an unconscious wish, is given the power to interfere with sleep, that is, with the fulfilment of the preconscious wish. The explanation no doubt lies in relations of energy of which we have no knowledge. If we possessed such knowledge, we should probably find that allowing the dream to take its course and expending a certain amount of more or less detached attention on it is an economy of energy compared with holding the unconscious as tightly under control at night as in the daytime. [Cf. p. 578.] Experience shows that dreaming is compatible with sleeping, even if it interrupts sleep several times during the night. One wakes up for an instant and then falls asleep again at once. It is like brushing away a fly in one's sleep: a case of *ad hoc* awakening. If one falls asleep again, the interruption has been disposed of. As is shown by such familiar examples as the sleep of a nursing mother or wet-nurse [p. 223 f.], the fulfilment of the wish to sleep is quite compatible with maintaining a certain expenditure of attention in some particular direction.

At this point an objection arises, which is based on a better knowledge of unconscious processes. I myself have asserted that unconscious wishes are always active. But in spite of this they seem not to be strong enough to make themselves perceptible during the day. If, however, while a state of sleep prevails, an unconscious wish has shown itself strong enough to construct a dream and arouse the preconscious with it, why should this strength fail after the dream has been brought to knowledge? Should not the dream continue to recur perpetually, precisely as the vexatious fly keeps on coming back after it has been driven away? What right have we to assert that dreams get rid of the disturbance of sleep?

It is perfectly true that unconscious wishes always remain active. They represent paths which can always be traversed, whenever a quantity of excitation makes use of them. [Cf. p. 553 *n.*] Indeed it is a prominent feature of unconscious processes that they are indestructible. In the unconscious nothing can be brought to an end, nothing is past or forgotten. This is brought

most vividly home to one in studying the neuroses, and especially hysteria. The unconscious path of thoughts, which leads to discharge in a hysterical attack, immediately becomes traversable once more, when sufficient excitation has accumulated. A humiliation that was experienced thirty years ago acts exactly like a fresh one throughout the thirty years, as soon as it has obtained access to the unconscious sources of emotion. As soon as the memory of it is touched, it springs into life again and shows itself cathected with excitation which finds a motor discharge in an attack. This is precisely the point at which psychotherapy has to intervene. Its task is to make it possible for the unconscious processes to be dealt with finally and be forgotten. For the fading of memories and the emotional weakness of impressions which are no longer recent, which we are inclined to regard as self-evident and to explain as a primary effect of time upon mental memory-traces, are in reality secondary modifications which are only brought about by laborious work. What performs this work is the preconscious, and *psychotherapy can pursue no other course than to bring the Ucs. under the domination of the Pcs.*[1]

Thus there are two possible outcomes for any particular unconscious excitatory process. Either it may be left to itself, in which case it eventually forces its way through at some point and on this single occasion finds discharge for its excitation in movement; or it may come under the influence of the preconscious, and its excitation, instead of being *discharged*, may be *bound* by the preconscious. *This second alternative is the one which occurs in the process of dreaming.* [See p. 601 *n.*] The cathexis from the *Pcs.* which goes halfway to meet the dream after it has become perceptual, having been directed on to it by the excitation in consciousness, binds the dream's unconscious excitation and makes it powerless to act as a disturbance. If it is true that the dreamer wakes for an instant, yet he really *has* brushed away the fly that was threatening to disturb his sleep. It begins to dawn on us that it actually *is* more expedient and economical to allow the unconscious wish to take its course, to leave the path to regression open to it so that it can construct a dream, and then to bind the dream and dispose of it with a small expenditure of preconscious work—rather than to continue

[1] [The last clause of this sentence was printed in spaced type only from 1919 onwards. Cf. p. 553 *n.*]

keeping a tight rein on the unconscious throughout the whole period of sleep. [Cf. p. 577.] It was indeed to be expected that dreaming, even though it may originally have been a process without a useful purpose, would have procured itself some function in the interplay of mental forces. And we can now see what that function is. Dreaming has taken on the task of bringing back under control of the preconscious the excitation in the *Ucs.* which has been left free; in so doing, it discharges the *Ucs.* excitation, serves it as a safety valve and at the same time preserves the sleep of the preconscious in return for a small expenditure of waking activity. Thus, like all the other psychical structures in the series of which it is a member, it constitutes a compromise; it is in the service of both of the two systems, since it fulfils the two wishes in so far as they are compatible with each other. If we turn back to the 'excretion theory' of dreams put forward by Robert [1886], which I explained on p. 78 ff., we shall see at a glance that in its essence we must accept his account of the *function* of dreams, though differing from him in his premises and in his view of the dream-process itself. [See p. 177 f.][1]

The qualification 'in so far as the two wishes are compatible

[1] [*Footnote added* 1914:] Is this the only function that can be assigned to dreams? I know of no other. It is true that Maeder [1912] has attempted to show that dreams have other, 'secondary', functions. He started out from the correct observation that some dreams contain attempts at solving conflicts, attempts which are later carried out in reality and which thus behave as though they were trial practices for waking actions. He therefore drew a parallel between dreams and the play of animals and children, which may be regarded as practice in the operation of innate instincts and as preparation for serious activity later on, and put forward the hypothesis that dreams have a '*fonction ludique*' ['play function']. Shortly before Maeder, Alfred Adler [1911, 215 *n.*], too, had insisted that dreams possessed a function of 'thinking ahead'. (In an analysis which I published in 1905 ['Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria', Part II (1905*e*)], a dream, which could only be regarded as expressing an intention, was repeated every night until it was carried out. [Cf. above, p. 190.])

A little reflection will convince us, however, that this 'secondary' function of dreams has no claim to be considered as a part of the subject of dream-interpretation. Thinking ahead, forming intentions, framing attempted solutions which may perhaps be realized later in waking life, all these, and many other similar things, are products of the unconscious and preconscious activity of the mind; they may persist in the state of

with each other' implies a hint at the possible case in which the function of dreaming may come to grief. The dream-process is allowed to begin as a fulfilment of an unconscious wish; but if this attempted wish-fulfilment jars upon the preconscious so violently that it is unable to continue sleeping, then the dream has made a breach in the compromise and has failed to carry out the second half of its task. In that case the dream is immediately broken off and replaced by a state of complete waking. Here again it is not really the fault of the dream if it has now to appear in the role of a *disturber* of sleep instead of in its normal one of a *guardian* of sleep; and this fact need not prejudice us against its having a useful purpose. This is not the only instance in the organism of a contrivance which is normally useful becoming useless and disturbing as soon as the conditions that give rise to it are somewhat modified; and the disturbance at least serves the new purpose of drawing attention to the modification and of setting the organism's regulative machinery in motion against it. What I have in mind is of course the case of anxiety-dreams, and in order that I may not be thought to be evading this evidence against the theory of wish-fulfilment whenever I come across it, I will at all events give some hints of their explanation.

There is no longer anything contradictory to us in the notion that a psychical process which develops anxiety can nevertheless be the fulfilment of a wish. We know that it can be explained by the fact that the wish belongs to one system, the *Ucs.*, while it has been repudiated and suppressed by the other system, the *Pcs.*[1] Even where psychical health is perfect, the subjugation of

sleep as 'the day's residues' and combine with an unconscious wish (cf. p. 550 ff.) in forming a dream. Thus the dream's function of 'thinking ahead' is rather a function of preconscious waking thought, the products of which may be revealed to us by the analysis of dreams or of other phenomena. It has long been the habit to regard dreams as identical with their manifest content; but we must now beware equally of the mistake of confusing dreams with latent dream-thoughts. [Cf. p. 506 f. *n.* above and a passage at the end of the discussion of Case I in Freud's paper on 'Dreams and Telepathy' (1922*a*).]

[1] [*Footnote added* 1919:] 'A second factor, which is much more important and far-reaching, but which is equally overlooked by laymen is the following. No doubt a wish-fulfilment must bring pleasure; but the question then arises "To whom?" To the person who has the wish, of course. But, as we know, a dreamer's relation to his wishes is a quite peculiar one. He repudiates them and censors them—he has no liking for them,

the *Ucs.* by the *Pcs.* is not complete; the measure of suppression indicates the degree of our psychical normality. Neurotic symptoms show that the two systems are in conflict with each other; they are the products of a compromise which brings the conflict to an end for the time being. On the one hand, they allow the *Ucs.* an outlet for the discharge of its excitation, and provide it with a kind of sally-port, while, on the other hand, they make it possible for the *Pcs.* to control the *Ucs.* to some extent. It is instructive to consider, for instance, the significance of a hysterical phobia or an agoraphobia. Let us suppose that a neurotic patient is unable to cross the street alone—a condition which we rightly regard as a 'symptom'. If we remove this symptom by compelling him to carry out the act of which he believes himself incapable, the consequence will be an attack of anxiety; and indeed the occurrence of an anxiety-attack in the street is often the precipitating cause of the onset of an agoraphobia. We see, therefore, that the symptom has been constructed in order to avoid an outbreak of anxiety; the phobia is erected like a frontier fortification against the anxiety.

Our discussion cannot be carried any further without ex-

in short. So that their fulfilment will give him no pleasure, but just the opposite; and experience shows that this opposite appears in the form of anxiety, a fact which has still to be explained. Thus a dreamer in his relation to his dream-wishes can only be compared to an amalgamation of two separate people who are linked by some important common element. Instead of enlarging on this, I will remind you of a familiar fairy tale [referred to above on p. 557] in which you will find the same situation repeated. A good fairy promised a poor married couple to grant them the fulfilment of their first three wishes. They were delighted, and made up their minds to choose their three wishes carefully. But a smell of sausages being fried in the cottage next door tempted the woman to wish for a couple of them. They were there in a flash; and this was the first wish-fulfilment. But the man was furious, and in his rage wished that the sausages were hanging on his wife's nose. This happened too; and the sausages were not to be dislodged from their new position. This was the second wish-fulfilment; but the wish was the man's, and its fulfilment was most disagreeable for his wife. You know the rest of the story. Since after all they were in fact one—man and wife—the third wish was bound to be that the sausages should come away from the woman's nose. This fairy tale might be used in many other connections; but here it serves only to illustrate the possibility that if two people are not at one with each other the fulfilment of a wish of one of them may bring nothing but unpleasure to the other.' (*Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* [Freud, 1916–17], Lecture XIV.)

amining the part played by the affects in these processes; but we can only do so imperfectly in the present connection. Let us assume, then, that the suppression of the *Ucs.* is necessary above all because, if the course of ideas in the *Ucs.* were left to itself, it would generate an affect which was originally of a pleasurable nature, but became unpleasurable after the process of 'repression' occurred. The purpose, and the result too, of suppression is to prevent this release of unpleasure. The suppression extends over the ideational content of the *Ucs.*, since the release of unpleasure might start from that content. This presupposes a quite specific assumption as to the nature of the generation of affect.[1] It is viewed as a motor or secretory function, the key to whose innervation lies in the ideas in the *Ucs.* Owing to the domination established by the *Pcs.* these ideas are, as it were, throttled, and inhibited from sending out impulses which would generate affect. If, therefore, the cathexis from the *Pcs.* ceases, the danger is that the unconscious excitations may release affect of a kind which (as a result of the repression which has already occurred) can only be experienced as unpleasure, as anxiety.

This danger materializes if the dream-process is allowed to take its course. The conditions which determine its realization are that repressions must have occurred and that the suppressed wishful impulses shall be able to grow sufficiently strong. These determinants are thus quite outside the psychological framework of dream-formation. If it were not for the fact that our topic is connected with the subject of the generation of anxiety by the single factor of the liberation of the *Ucs.* during sleep, I should be able to omit any discussion of anxiety-dreams and avoid the necessity for entering in these pages into all the obscurities surrounding them.

The theory of anxiety-dreams, as I have already repeatedly declared, forms part of the psychology of the neuroses.[2] We have nothing more to do with it when once we have indicated its point of contact with the topic of the dream-process. There is only one thing more that I can do. Since I have asserted that neurotic anxiety arises from sexual sources, I can submit some

[1] [For this assumption cf. p. 468 and footnote.]

[2] [The following sentence was added at this point in 1911, but omitted again in 1925 and subsequently: 'Anxiety in dreams, I should like to insist, is an anxiety problem and not a dream problem.']

anxiety-dreams to analysis in order to show the sexual material present in their dream-thoughts.[1]

I have good reasons for leaving on one side in the present discussion the copious examples afforded by my neurotic patients, and for preferring to quote some anxiety-dreams dreamt by young people.

It is dozens of years since I myself had a true anxiety-dream. But I remember one from my seventh or eighth year, which I submitted to interpretation some thirty years later. It was a very vivid one, and in it I saw *my beloved mother, with a peculiarly peaceful, sleeping expression on her features, being carried into the room by two (or three) people with birds' beaks and laid upon the bed.* I awoke in tears and screaming, and interrupted my parents' sleep. The strangely draped and unnaturally tall figures with birds' beaks were derived from the illustrations to Philippson's Bible.[2] I fancy they must have been gods with falcons' heads from an ancient Egyptian funerary relief. Besides this, the analysis brought to mind an ill-mannered boy, a son of a *concierge*, who used to play with us on the grass in front of the house when we were children, and who I am inclined to think was called Philipp. It seems to me that it was from this boy that I first heard the vulgar term for sexual intercourse, instead of which educated people always use a latin word, 'to copulate', and which was clearly enough indicated by the choice of the falcons' heads.[3] I must have guessed the sexual significance of the word from the face of my young instructor, who was well acquainted with the facts of life. The expression on my mother's features in the dream was copied from the view I had had of my grandfather a few days before his death as he lay snoring in a coma. The interpretation carried out in the dream by the 'secondary revision' [p. 490] must therefore have been that my mother was dying; the funerary relief fitted in with this. I awoke in anxiety, which did not cease till I had woken my

[1] [Some of the comments in what follows would require revision in the light of Freud's later views on anxiety. See also pp. 160 ff., 236 and 337.]

[2] [*Die israelitische Bibel*, an edition of the Old Testament in Hebrew and German, Leipzig, 1839–54 (Second ed. 1858). A footnote to the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy shows a number of woodcuts of Egyptian gods, several with birds' heads.]

[3] [The German slang term referred to is '*vögeln*', from '*Vogel*' the ordinary word for 'bird'.]

parents up. I remember that I suddenly grew calm when I saw my mother's face, as though I had needed to be reassured that she was not dead. But this 'secondary' interpretation of the dream had already been made under the influence of the anxiety which had developed. I was not anxious because I had dreamt that my mother was dying; but I interpreted the dream in that sense in my preconscious revision of it because I was already under the influence of the anxiety. The anxiety can be traced back, when repression is taken into account, to an obscure and evidently sexual craving that had found appropriate expression in the visual content of the dream.

A twenty-seven-year-old man, who had been seriously ill for a year, reported that when he was between eleven and thirteen he had repeatedly dreamt (to the accompaniment of severe anxiety) that *a man with a hatchet was pursuing him; he tried to run away, but seemed to be paralysed and could not move from the spot.* This is a good example of a very common sort of anxiety-dream, which would never be suspected of being sexual. In analysis, the dreamer first came upon a story (dating from a time later than the dream) told him by his uncle, of how he had been attacked in the street one night by a suspicious-looking individual; the dreamer himself concluded from this association that he may have heard of some similar episode at the time of the dream. In connection with the hatchet, he remembered that at about that time he had once injured his hand with a hatchet while he was chopping up wood. He then passed immediately to his relations with his younger brother. He used to ill-treat this brother and knock him down; and he particularly remembered an occasion when he had kicked him on the head with his boot and had drawn blood, and how his mother had said: 'I'm afraid he'll be the death of him one day.' While he still seemed to be occupied with the subject of violence, a recollection from his ninth year suddenly occurred to him. His parents had come home late and had gone to bed while he pretended to be asleep; soon he had heard sounds of panting and other noises which had seemed to him uncanny, and he had also been able to make out their position in the bed. Further thoughts showed that he had drawn an analogy between this relation between his parents and his own relation to his younger brother. He had subsumed what happened between his parents under the concept of violence and struggling; and he had found

evidence in favour of this view in the fact that he had often noticed blood in his mother's bed.

It is, I may say, a matter of daily experience that sexual intercourse between adults strikes any children who may observe it as something uncanny and that it arouses anxiety in them. I have explained this anxiety by arguing that what we are dealing with is a sexual excitation with which their understanding is unable to cope and which they also, no doubt, repudiate because their parents are involved in it, and which is therefore transformed into anxiety. At a still earlier period of life sexual excitations directed towards a parent of the opposite sex have not yet met with repression and, as we have seen, are freely expressed. (See p. 256 ff.)

I should have no hesitation in giving the same explanation of the attacks of night terrors accompanied by hallucinations (*pavor nocturnus*) which are so frequent in children. In this case too it can only be a question of sexual impulses which have not been understood and which have been repudiated. Investigation would probably show a periodicity in the occurrence of the attacks, since an increase in sexual libido can be brought about not only by accidental exciting impressions but also by successive waves of spontaneous developmental processes.

I lack a sufficiency of material based upon observation to enable me to confirm this explanation.[1]

Paediatricians, on the other hand, seem to lack the only line of approach which can make this whole class of phenomena intelligible, whether from the somatic or from the psychical aspect. I cannot resist quoting an amusing instance of the way in which the blinkers of medical mythology can cause an observer to miss an understanding of such cases by a narrow margin. My instance is taken from a thesis on *pavor nocturnus* by Debacker (1881, 66):

A thirteen-year-old boy in delicate health began to be apprehensive and dreamy. His sleep became disturbed and was interrupted almost once a week by severe attacks of anxiety accompanied by hallucinations. He always retained a very clear recollection of these dreams. He said that the Devil had shouted at him: 'Now we've got you, now we've got you!' There was then a smell of pitch and brimstone and his skin was burnt by

[1] [*Footnote added* 1919:] Since I wrote this a great quantity of such material has been brought forward in psycho-analytic literature.

flames. He woke up from the dream in terror, and at first could not cry out. When he had found his voice he was clearly heard to say: 'No, no, not me; I've not done anything!' or 'Please not! I won't do it again!' or sometimes: 'Albert never did that!' Later, he refused to undress 'because the flames only caught him when he was undressed'. While he was still having these devil-dreams, which were a threat to his health, he was sent into the country. There he recovered in the course of eighteen months, and once, when he was fifteen, he confessed: 'Je n'osais pas l'avouer, mais j'éprouvais continuellement des picotements et des surexcitations aux *parties*[1]; à la fin, cela m'énervait tant que plusieurs fois j'ai pensé me jeter par la fenêtre du dortoir.'[2]

There is really very little difficulty in inferring: (1) that the boy had masturbated when he was younger, that he had probably denied it, and that he had been threatened with severe punishment for his bad habit (cf. his admission: 'Je ne le ferais plus', and his denial: 'Albert n'a jamais fait ça'); (2) that with the onset of puberty the temptation to masturbate had revived with the tickling in his genitals; but (3) that a struggle for repression had broken out in him, which had suppressed his libido and transformed it into anxiety, and that the anxiety had taken over the punishments with which he had been threatened earlier.

And now let us see the inferences drawn by our author (ibid., 69): 'The following conclusions can be drawn from this observation:

'(1) The influence of puberty upon a boy in delicate health can lead to a condition of great weakness and can result in a considerable degree of *cerebral anaemia*.[3]

'(2) This cerebral anaemia produces character changes, demonomanic hallucinations and very violent nocturnal (and perhaps also diurnal) anxiety-states.

'(3) The boy's demonomania and self-reproaches go back to the influences of his religious education, which affected him as a child.

'(4) All the symptoms disappeared in the course of a some-

[1] I have italicized this word, but it is impossible to misunderstand it.

[2] ['I didn't dare admit it; but I was continually having prickly feelings and overexcitement in my parts; in the end it got on my nerves so much that I often thought of jumping out of the dormitory window.']

[3] The italics are mine.

what protracted visit to the country, as the result of physical exercise and the regaining of strength with the passage of puberty.

'(5) A predisposing influence upon the origin of the child's brain condition may perhaps be attributed to heredity and to a past syphilitic infection in his father.'

And here is the final conclusion: 'Nous avons fait entrer cette observation dans le cadre des délires apyrétiques d'inanition, car c'est à l'ischémie cérébrale que nous rattachons cet état particulier.'[1]

[1] ['We have classified this case among the apyretic deliria of inanition, for we attribute this particular state to cerebral ischaemia.']

(E)

THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY PROCESSES—REPRESSION

In venturing on an attempt to penetrate more deeply into the psychology of dream-processes, I have set myself a hard task, and one to which my powers of exposition are scarcely equal. Elements in this complicated whole which are in fact simultaneous can only be represented successively in my description of them, while, in putting forward each point, I must avoid appearing to anticipate the grounds on which it is based: difficulties such as these it is beyond my strength to master. In all this I am paying the penalty for the fact that in my account of dream-psychology I have been unable to follow the historical development of my own views. Though my own line of approach to the subject of dreams was determined by my previous work on the psychology of the neuroses, I had not intended to make use of the latter as a basis of reference in the present work. Nevertheless I am constantly being driven to do so, instead of proceeding, as I should have wished, in the contrary direction and using dreams as a means of approach to the psychology of the neuroses. I am conscious of all the trouble in which my readers are thus involved, but I can see no means of avoiding it. [See p. 104 *n.*]

In my dissatisfaction at this state of things, I am glad to pause for a little over another consideration which seems to put a higher value on my efforts. I found myself faced by a topic on which, as has been shown in my first chapter, the opinions of the authorities were characterized by the sharpest contradictions. My treatment of the problems of dreams has found room for the majority of these contradictory views. I have only found it necessary to give a categorical denial of two of them—the view that dreaming is a meaningless process [p. 55 ff.] and the view that it is a somatic one [p. 77 f.]. Apart from this, I have been able to find a justification for all these mutually contradictory opinions at one point or other of my complicated thesis and to show that they had lighted upon some portion of the truth.

The view that dreams carry on the occupations and interests of waking life [p. 7 f.] has been entirely confirmed by the discovery of the concealed *dream-thoughts*. These are only concerned with what seems important to us and interests us greatly. Dreams are never occupied with minor details. But we have also found reason for accepting the contrary view, that dreams pick up indifferent refuse left over from the previous day [p. 18 ff.] and that they cannot get control of any major daytime interest until it has been to some extent withdrawn from waking activity [p. 18]. We have found that this holds good of the dream's *content*, which gives expression to the dream-thoughts in a form modified by distortion. For reasons connected with the mechanism of association, as we have seen, the dream-process finds it easier to get control of recent or indifferent ideational material which has not yet been requisitioned by waking thought-activity; and for reasons of censorship it transfers psychical intensity from what is important but objectionable on to what is indifferent.

The fact that dreams are hypermnesic [p. 11 ff.] and have access to material from childhood [p. 15 ff.] has become one of the corner-stones of our teaching. Our theory of dreams regards wishes originating in infancy as the indispensable motive force for the formation of dreams.

It has naturally not occurred to us to throw any doubt on the significance, which has been experimentally demonstrated, of external sensory stimuli during sleep [p. 23 ff.]; but we have shown that such material stands in the same relation to the dream-wish as do the residues of thought left over from daytime activity. Nor have we seen any reason to dispute the view that dreams interpret objective sensory stimuli just as illusions do [p. 28 f.]; but we have found the motive which provides the reason for that interpretation, a reason which has been left unspecified by other writers. Interpretation is carried out in such a way that the object perceived shall not interrupt sleep and shall be usable for purposes of wish-fulfilment. As regards subjective states of excitation in the sense organs during sleep, the occurrence of which seems to have been proved by Trumbull Ladd [1892; see above, p. 32 f.], it is true that we have not accepted them as a particular source of dreams; but we have been able to explain them as resulting from the regressive revival of memories that are in operation behind the dream.

Internal organic sensations, which have commonly been taken as a cardinal point in explanations of dreaming [p. 33 ff.], have retained a place, though a humbler one, in our theory. Such sensations—sensations of falling, for instance, or floating, or being inhibited—provide a material which is accessible at any time and of which the dream-work makes use, whenever it has need of it, for expressing the dream-thoughts.

The view that the dream-process is a rapid or instantaneous one [p. 64] is in our opinion correct as regards the perception by consciousness of the preconstructed dream-content; it seems probable that the preceding portions of the dream-process run a slow and fluctuating course. We have been able to contribute towards the solution of the riddle of dreams which contain a great amount of material compressed into the briefest moment of time; we have suggested that it is a question in such cases of getting hold of ready-made structures already present in the mind.

The fact that dreams are distorted and mutilated by memory [p. 46 f.] is accepted by us but in our opinion constitutes no obstacle; for it is no more than the last and manifest portion of a distorting activity which has been in operation from the very start of the dream's formation.

As regards the embittered and apparently irreconcilable dispute as to whether the mind sleeps at night [p. 54 f.] or is as much in command of all its faculties as it is by day [p. 60 f.], we have found that both parties are right but that neither is wholly right. We have found evidence in the dream-thoughts of a highly complex intellectual function, operating with almost the whole resources of the mental apparatus. Nevertheless it cannot be disputed that these dream-thoughts originated during the day, and it is imperative to assume that there is such a thing as a sleeping state of the mind. Thus even the theory of partial sleep [p. 77] has shown its value, though we have found that what characterizes the state of sleep is not the disintegration of mental bonds but the concentration of the psychical system which is in command during the day upon the wish to sleep. The factor of withdrawal from the external world [p. 7 f.] retains its significance in our scheme; it helps, though not as the sole determinant, to make possible the regressive character of representation in dreams. The renunciation of voluntary direction of the flow of ideas [p. 49 f.] cannot be disputed; but this

does not deprive mental life of all purpose, for we have seen how, after voluntary purposive ideas have been abandoned, involuntary ones assume command. We have not merely accepted the fact of the looseness of associative connections in dreams [p. 58], but we have shown that it extends far further than had been suspected; we have found, however, that these loose connections are merely obligatory substitutes for others which are valid and significant. It is quite true that we have described dreams as absurd; but examples have taught us how sensible a dream can be even when it appears to be absurd.

We have no difference of opinion over the functions that are to be assigned to dreams. The view that dreams act as a safety-valve to the mind [p. 79] and that, in the words of Robert [1886, 10 f.], all kinds of harmful things are made harmless by being presented in a dream—not only does this view coincide exactly with our theory of the double wish-fulfilment brought about by dreams, but the way in which it is phrased is more intelligible to us than to Robert himself. The view that the mind has free play in its functioning in dreams [p. 82] is represented in our theory by the fact of the preconscious activity allowing dreams to take their course. Such phrases as 'the return of the mind in dreams to an embryonic point of view' or the words used by Havelock Ellis [1899, 721] to describe dreams—'an archaic world of vast emotions and imperfect thoughts' [p. 60]—strike us as happy anticipations of our own assertions that primitive modes of activity which are suppressed during the day are concerned in the construction of dreams. We have been able to accept entirely as our own what Sully [1893, 362] has written: 'Our dreams are a means of conserving these [earlier] successive personalities. When asleep we go back to the old ways of looking at things and of feeling about them, to impulses and activities which long ago dominated us' [p. 60].[1] For us no less than for Delage [1891] what has been 'suppressed' [p. 82] has become 'the motive force of dreams'.

We have fully appreciated the importance of the part ascribed by Scherner [1861] to 'dream-imagination', as well as Scherner's own interpretations [p. 83 ff.], but we have been obliged to transport them, as it were, to a different position in the problem. The point is not that dreams create the imagination,

[1] [This sentence was added in 1914.]

but rather that the unconscious activity of the imagination has a large share in the construction of the dream-thoughts. We remain in Scherner's debt for having indicated the source of the dream-thoughts; but nearly everything that he ascribes to the dream-work is really attributable to the activity of the unconscious during daytime, which is the instigating agent of dreams no less than of neurotic symptoms. We have been obliged to distinguish the 'dream-work' as something quite different and with a much narrower connotation.

Finally, we have by no means abandoned the relation between dreams and mental disorders [p. 89 ff.], but have established it more firmly on fresh ground.

We have thus been able to find a place in our structure for the most various and contradictory findings of earlier writers, thanks to the novelty of our theory of dreams, which combines them, as it were, into a higher unity. Some of those findings we have put to other uses, but we have wholly rejected only a few. Nevertheless our edifice is still uncompleted. Apart from the many perplexing questions in which we have become involved in making our way into the obscurities of psychology, we seem to be troubled by a fresh contradiction. On the one hand we have supposed that the dream-thoughts arise through entirely normal mental activity; but on the other hand we have discovered a number of quite abnormal processes of thought among the dream-thoughts, which extend into the dream-content, and which we then repeat in the course of our dream-interpretation. Everything that we have described as the 'dream-work' seems to depart so widely from what we recognize as rational thought-processes that the most severe strictures passed by earlier writers on the low level of psychical functioning in dreams must appear fully justified.

It may be that we shall only find enlightenment and assistance in this difficulty by carrying our investigation still further. And I will begin by picking out for closer examination one of the conjunctures which may lead to the formation of a dream.

A dream, as we have discovered, takes the place of a number of thoughts which are derived from our daily life and which form a completely logical sequence. We cannot doubt, then, that these thoughts originate from our normal mental life. All the attributes which we value highly in our trains of thought,

and which characterize them as complex achievements of a high order, are to be found once more in dream-thoughts. There is no need to assume, however, that this activity of thought is performed during sleep—a possibility which would gravely confuse what has hitherto been our settled picture of the psychical state of sleep. On the contrary, these thoughts may very well have originated from the previous day, they may have proceeded unobserved by our consciousness from their start, and may already have been completed at the onset of sleep. The most that we can conclude from this is that it proves that *the most complicated achievements of thought are possible without the assistance of consciousness*—a fact which we could not fail to learn in any case from every psycho-analysis of a patient suffering from hysteria or from obsessional ideas. These dream-thoughts are certainly not in themselves inadmissible to consciousness; there may have been a number of reasons for their not having become conscious to us during the day. Becoming conscious is connected with the application of a particular psychical function [p. 541], that of attention—a function which, as it seems, is only available in a specific quantity, and this may have been diverted from the train of thought in question on to some other purpose.[1] There is another way, too, in which trains of thought of this kind may be withheld from consciousness. The course of our conscious reflections shows us that we follow a particular path in our application of attention. If, as we follow this path, we come upon an idea which will not bear criticism, we break off: we drop the cathexis of attention. Now it seems that the train of thought which has thus been initiated and dropped can continue to spin itself out without attention being turned to it again, unless at some point or other it reaches a specially high degree of intensity which forces attention to it. Thus, if a train of thought is initially rejected (consciously, perhaps) by a judgement that it is wrong or that it is useless for the immediate intellectual purposes in view, the result may be that this train of thought will proceed, unobserved by consciousness, until the onset of sleep.

To sum up—we describe a train of thought such as this as

[1] [The concept of 'attention' plays a very small part in Freud's later writings. It figures prominently, on the other hand, in his 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (Freud, 1950*a*), e.g. in the opening section of Part III. Cf. also pp. 575 and 615.]

'preconscious'; we regard it as completely rational and believe that it may either have been simply neglected or broken off and suppressed. Let us add a frank account of how we picture the occurrence of a train of ideas. We believe that, starting from a purposive idea, a given amount of excitation, which we term 'cathectic energy', is displaced along the associative paths selected by that purposive idea. A train of thought which is 'neglected' is one which has *not received* this cathexis; a train of thought which is 'suppressed' or 'repudiated' is one from which this cathexis has been *withdrawn*. In both cases they are left to their own excitations. Under certain conditions a train of thought with a purposive cathexis is capable of attracting the attention of consciousness to itself and in that event, through the agency of consciousness, receives a 'hypercathexis'. We shall be obliged presently to explain our view of the nature and function of consciousness. [See p. 615 ff.]

A train of thought that has been set going like this in the preconscious may either cease spontaneously or persist. We picture the first of these outcomes as implying that the energy attaching to the train of thought is diffused along all the associative paths that radiate from it; this energy sets the whole network of thoughts in a state of excitation which lasts for a certain time and then dies away as the excitation in search of discharge becomes transformed into a quiescent cathexis. If this first outcome supervenes, the process is of no further significance so far as dream-formation is concerned. Lurking in our preconscious, however, there are other purposive ideas, which are derived from sources in our unconscious and from wishes which are always on the alert. These may take control of the excitation attaching to the group of thoughts which has been left to its own devices, they may establish a connection between it and an unconscious wish, and they may 'transfer' to it the energy belonging to the unconscious wish. Thenceforward the neglected or suppressed train of thought is in a position to persist, though the reinforcement it has received gives it no right of entry into consciousness. We may express this by saying that what has hitherto been a preconscious train of thought has now been 'drawn into the unconscious'.

There are other conjunctures which may lead to the formation of a dream. The preconscious train of thought may have been linked to the unconscious wish from the first and may

for that reason have been repudiated by the dominant purposive cathexis; or an unconscious wish may become active for other reasons (from somatic causes, perhaps) and may seek to effect a transference on to the psychical residues that are uncathected by the *Pcs.* without their coming halfway to meet it. But all three cases have the same final outcome: a train of thought comes into being in the preconscious which is without a preconscious cathexis but has received a cathexis from an unconscious wish.

From this point onwards the train of thought undergoes a series of transformations which we can no longer recognize as normal psychical processes and which lead to a result that bewilders us—a psychopathological structure. I will enumerate these processes and classify them.

(1) The intensities of the individual ideas become capable of discharge *en bloc* and pass over from one idea to another, so that certain ideas are formed which are endowed with great intensity. [Cf. p. 330.] And since this process is repeated several times, the intensity of a whole train of thought may eventually be concentrated in a single ideational element. Here we have the fact of 'compression' or 'condensation', which has become familiar in the dream-work. It is this that is mainly responsible for the bewildering impression made on us by dreams, for nothing at all analogous to it is known to us in mental life that is normal and accessible to consciousness. In normal mental life, too, we find ideas which, being the nodal points or end-results of whole chains of thought, possess a high degree of psychical significance; but their significance is not expressed by any feature that is obvious in a *sensory* manner to internal perception; their perceptual presentation is not in any respect more intense on account of their psychical significance. In the process of condensation, on the other hand, every psychical interconnection is transformed into an *intensification* of its ideational content. The case is the same as when, in preparing a book for the press, I have some word which is of special importance for understanding the text printed in spaced or heavy type; or in speech I should pronounce the same word loudly and slowly and with special emphasis. The first of these two analogies reminds us at once of an example provided by the dream-work itself: the word '*trimethylamin*' in the dream of Irma's injection [p. 116]. Art historians have drawn our attention to the fact that the

earliest historical sculptures obey a similar principle: they express the rank of the persons represented by their size. A king is represented twice or three times as large as his attendants or as his defeated enemies. A sculpture of Roman date would make use of subtler means for producing the same result. The figure of the Emperor would be placed in the middle, standing erect, and would be modelled with especial care, while his enemies would be prostrate at his feet; but he would no longer be a giant among dwarfs. The bows with which inferiors greet their superiors among ourselves to-day are an echo of the same ancient principle of representation.

The direction in which condensations in dreams proceed is determined on the one hand by the rational preconscious relations of the dream-thoughts, and on the other by the attraction exercised by visual memories in the unconscious. The outcome of the activity of condensation is the achievement of the intensities required for forcing a way through into the perceptual systems.

(2) Owing, once more, to the freedom with which the intensities can be transferred, 'intermediate ideas', resembling compromises, are constructed under the sway of condensation. (Cf. the numerous instances I have given of this [e.g. p. 293 ff.].) This is again something unheard-of in normal chains of ideas, where the main stress is laid on the selection and retention of the 'right' ideational element. On the other hand, composite structures and compromises occur with remarkable frequency when we try to express preconscious thoughts in speech. They are then regarded as species of 'slips of the tongue'.

(3) The ideas which transfer their intensities to each other stand in the loosest mutual relations. They are linked by associations of a kind that is scorned by our normal thinking and relegated to the use of jokes. In particular, we find associations based on homonyms and verbal similarities treated as equal in value to the rest.

(4) Thoughts which are mutually contradictory make no attempt to do away with each other, but persist side by side. They often combine to form condensations, just as though there were no contradiction between them, or arrive at compromises such as our conscious thoughts would never tolerate but such as are often admitted in our actions.

These are some of the most striking of the abnormal processes to which the dream-thoughts, previously constructed on rational lines, are subjected in the course of the dream-work. It will be seen that the chief characteristic of these processes is that the whole stress is laid upon making the cathecting energy mobile and capable of discharge; the content and the proper meaning of the psychical elements to which the cathexes are attached are treated as of little consequence. It might have been supposed that condensation and the formation of compromises is only carried out for the sake of facilitating regression, that is, when it is a question of transforming thoughts into images. But the analysis—and still more the synthesis—of dreams which include no such regression to images, e.g. the dream of 'Autodidasker' [p. 298 ff.], exhibits the same processes of displacement and condensation as the rest.

Thus we are driven to conclude that two fundamentally different kinds of psychical process are concerned in the formation of dreams. One of these produces perfectly rational dream-thoughts, of no less validity than normal thinking; while the other treats these thoughts in a manner which is in the highest degree bewildering and irrational. We have already in Chapter VI segregated this second psychical process as being the dream-work proper. What light have we now to throw upon its origin?

It would not be possible for us to answer this question if we had not made some headway in the study of the psychology of the neuroses, and particularly of hysteria. We have found from this that the same irrational psychical processes, and others that we have not specified, dominate the production of hysterical symptoms. In hysteria, too, we come across a series of perfectly rational thoughts, equal in validity to our conscious thoughts; but to begin with we know nothing of their existence in this form and we can only reconstruct them subsequently. If they force themselves upon our notice at any point, we discover by analysing the symptom which has been produced that these normal thoughts have been submitted to abnormal treatment: *they have been transformed into the symptom by means of condensation and the formation of compromises, by way of superficial associations and in disregard of contradictions, and also, it may be, along the path of regression.* In view of the complete identity between the characteristic features of the dream-work and those of the psychical activity which issues in psychoneurotic symptoms, we feel

justified in carrying over to dreams the conclusions we have been led to by hysteria.

We accordingly borrow the following thesis from the theory of hysteria: *a normal train of thought is only submitted to abnormal psychical treatment of the sort we have been describing if an unconscious wish, derived from infancy and in a state of repression, has been transferred on to it.* In accordance with this thesis we have constructed our theory of dreams on the assumption that the dream-wish which provides the motive power invariably originates from the unconscious—an assumption which, as I myself am ready to admit, cannot be proved to hold generally, though neither can it be disproved. But in order to explain what is meant by 'repression', a term with which we have already made play so many times, it is necessary to proceed a stage further with our psychological scaffolding.

We have already [p. 565 ff.] explored the fiction of a primitive psychical apparatus whose activities are regulated by an effort to avoid an accumulation of excitation and to maintain itself so far as possible without excitation. For that reason it is built upon the plan of a reflex apparatus. The power of movement, which is in the first instance a means of bringing about internal alterations in its body, is at its disposal as the path to discharge. We went on to discuss the psychical consequences of an 'experience of satisfaction'; and in that connection we were already able to add a second hypothesis, to the effect that the accumulation of excitation (brought about in various ways that need not concern us) is felt as unpleasure and that it sets the apparatus in action with a view to repeating the experience of satisfaction, which involved a diminution of excitation and was felt as pleasure. A current of this kind in the apparatus, starting from unpleasure and aiming at pleasure, we have termed a 'wish'; and we have asserted that only a wish is able to set the apparatus in motion and that the course of the excitation in it is automatically regulated by feelings of pleasure and unpleasure. The first wishing seems to have been a hallucinatory cathecting of the memory of satisfaction. Such hallucinations, however, if they were not to be maintained to the point of exhaustion, proved to be inadequate to bring about the cessation of the need or, accordingly, the pleasure attaching to satisfaction.

A second activity—or, as we put it, the activity of a second system—became necessary, which would not allow the mnemic cathexis to proceed as far as perception and from there to bind the psychical forces; instead, it diverted the excitation arising from the need along a roundabout path which ultimately, by means of voluntary movement, altered the external world in such a way that it became possible to arrive at a real perception of the object of satisfaction. We have already outlined our schematic picture of the psychical apparatus up to this point; the two systems are the germ of what, in the fully developed apparatus, we have described as the *Ucs.* and *Pcs.*

In order to be able to employ the power of movement to make alterations in the external world that shall be effective, it is necessary to accumulate a great number of experiences in the mnemic systems and a multiplicity of permanent records of the associations called up in this mnemic material by different purposive ideas. [Cf. p. 539.] We can now carry our hypotheses a step further. The activity of this second system, constantly feeling its way, and alternately sending out and withdrawing cathexes, needs on the one hand to have the whole of the material of memory freely at its command; but on the other hand it would be an unnecessary expenditure of energy if it sent out large quantities of cathexis along the various paths of thought and thus caused them to drain away to no useful purpose and diminish the quantity available for altering the external world. I therefore postulate that for the sake of efficiency the second system succeeds in retaining the major part of its cathexes of energy in a state of quiescence and in employing only a small part on displacement. The mechanics of these processes are quite unknown to me; anyone who wished to take these ideas seriously would have to look for physical analogies to them and find a means of picturing the movements that accompany excitation of neurones. All that I insist upon is the idea that the activity of the *first* ψ-system is directed towards securing the *free discharge* of the quantities of excitation, while the *second* system, by means of the cathexes emanating from it, succeeds in *inhibiting* this discharge and in transforming the cathexis into a quiescent one, no doubt with a simultaneous raising of its level. I presume, therefore, that under the dominion of the second system the discharge of excitation is governed by quite different mechanical conditions from those in force under the dominion of the first system. When once the

second system has concluded its exploratory thought-activity, it releases the inhibition and damming-up of the excitations and allows them to discharge themselves in movement.

Some interesting reflections follow if we consider the relations between this inhibition upon discharge exercised by the second system and the regulation effected by the unpleasure principle.[1] Let us examine the antithesis to the primary experience of satisfaction—namely, the experience of an external fright. Let us suppose that the primitive apparatus is impinged upon by a perceptual stimulus which is a source of painful excitation. Uncoordinated motor manifestations will follow until one of them withdraws the apparatus from the perception and at the same time from the pain. If the perception reappears, the movement will at once be repeated (a movement of flight, it may be) till the perception has disappeared once more. In this case, no inclination will remain to recathect the perception of the source of pain, either hallucinatorily or in any other way. On the contrary, there will be an inclination in the primitive apparatus to drop the distressing mnemic image immediately, if anything happens to revive it, for the very reason that if its excitation were to overflow into perception it would provoke unpleasure (or, more precisely, would *begin* to provoke it). The avoidance of the memory, which is no more than a repetition of the previous flight from the perception, is also facilitated by the fact that the memory, unlike the perception, does not possess enough quality to excite consciousness and thus to attract fresh cathexis to itself. This effortless and regular avoidance by the psychical process of the memory of anything that had once been distressing affords us the prototype and first example of *psychical repression.* It is a familiar fact that much of this avoidance of what is distressing—this ostrich policy—is still to be seen in the normal mental life of adults.

As a result of the unpleasure principle, then, the first ψ-system is totally incapable of bringing anything disagreeable into the context of its thoughts. It is unable to do anything but wish. If things remained at that point, the thought-activity of the second system would be obstructed, since it requires free access to *all* the memories laid down by experience. Two possibilities now present themselves. Either the activity of the second system might set itself entirely free from the unpleasure principle and

[1] [In his later works Freud speaks of it as the 'pleasure principle'.]

proceed without troubling about the unpleasure of memories; or it might find a method of cathecting unpleasurable memories which would enable it to avoid releasing the unpleasure. We may dismiss the first of these possibilities, for the unpleasure principle clearly regulates the course of excitation in the second system as much as in the first. We are consequently left with the remaining possibility that the second system cathects memories in such a way that there is an inhibition of their discharge, including, therefore, an inhibition of discharge (comparable to that of a motor innervation) in the direction of the development of unpleasure. We have therefore been led from two directions to the hypothesis that cathexis by the second system implies a simultaneous inhibition of the discharge of excitation: we have been led to it by regard for the unpleasure principle and also [as was shown in the last paragraph but one] by the principle of the least expenditure of innervation. Let us bear this firmly in mind, for it is the key to the whole theory of repression: *the second system can only cathect an idea if it is in a position to inhibit any development of unpleasure that may proceed from it.* Anything that could evade that inhibition would be inaccessible to the second system as well as to the first; for it would promptly be dropped in obedience to the unpleasure principle. The inhibition of unpleasure need not, however, be a complete one: a beginning of it must be allowed, since that is what informs the second system of the nature of the memory concerned and of its possible unsuitability for the purpose which the thought-process has in view.

I propose to describe the psychical process of which the first system alone admits as the 'primary process', and the process which results from the inhibition imposed by the second system as the 'secondary process'.[1]

[1] [The distinction between the primary and secondary systems, and the hypothesis that psychical functioning operates differently in them, are among the most fundamental of Freud's concepts. They are associated with the theory (indicated on p. 599 f. and at the opening of the next Section) that psychical energy occurs in two forms: 'free' or 'mobile' (as it occurs in the system *Ucs.*) and 'bound' or 'quiescent' (as it occurs in the system *Pcs.*). Where Freud discusses this subject in his later writings (e.g. in his paper on 'The Unconscious', 1915*e*, end of Section V, and in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, 1920*g*, Chapter IV) he attributes this latter distinction to some statement of Breuer's in their joint *Studies on Hysteria* (1895). There is some difficulty in identifying any such state-

There is yet another reason for which, as I can show, the second system is obliged to correct the primary process. The primary process endeavours to bring about a discharge of excitation in order that, with the help of the amount of excitation thus accumulated, it may establish a 'perceptual identity' [with the experience of satisfaction (see pp. 565–6)]. The secondary process, however, has abandoned this intention and taken on another in its place—the establishment of a '*thought* identity' [with that experience]. All thinking is no more than a circuitous path from the memory of a satisfaction (a memory which has been adopted as a purposive idea) to an identical cathexis of the same memory which it is hoped to attain once more through an intermediate stage of motor experiences. Thinking must concern itself with the connecting paths between ideas, without being led astray by the *intensities* of those ideas. But it is obvious that condensations of ideas, as well as intermediate and compromise structures, must obstruct the attainment of the identity aimed at. Since they substitute one idea for another, they cause a deviation from the path which would have led on from the first idea. Processes of this kind are therefore scrupulously avoided in secondary thinking. It is easy to see, too, that the unpleasure principle, which in other respects supplies the thought-process with its most important signposts, puts difficulties in its path towards establishing 'thought identity'. Accordingly, thinking must aim at freeing itself more and more from exclusive regulation by the unpleasure principle and at restricting the development of affect in thought-activity to the minimum required for acting as a signal.[1] The achievement of this greater delicacy in functioning is aimed at by means of a further

ment in Breuer's contribution to that work (Chapter III). The nearest approach to it is a footnote near the beginning of Section 2, in which Breuer distinguishes *three* forms of nervous energy: 'a potential energy which lies quiescent in the chemical substance of the cell', 'a kinetic energy which is discharged when the fibres are in a state of excitation' and 'yet another quiescent state of nervous excitation: tonic excitation or nervous tension'. On the other hand, the question of 'bound' energy is discussed at some length towards the end of the first section of Part III of Freud's 'Project' (1950*a*), written only a few months after the publication of the *Studies on Hysteria*.]

[1] [This idea of a small amount of unpleasure acting as a 'signal' to prevent the occurrence of a much larger amount was taken up by Freud many years later and applied to the problem of anxiety. See Freud, 1926*d*, Chapter XI, Section A(*b*).]

hypercathexis, brought about by consciousness. [See below, p. 615 ff.] As we well know, however, that aim is seldom attained completely, even in normal mental life, and our thinking always remains exposed to falsification by interference from the unpleasure principle.

This, however, is not the gap in the functional efficiency of our mental apparatus which makes it possible for thoughts, which represent themselves as products of the secondary thought-activity, to become subject to the primary psychical process—for such is the formula in which we can now describe the activity which leads to dreams and to hysterical symptoms. Inefficiency arises from the convergence of two factors derived from our developmental history. One of these factors devolves entirely upon the mental apparatus and has had a decisive influence on the relation between the two systems, while the other makes itself felt to a variable degree and introduces instinctual forces of organic origin into mental life. Both of them originate in childhood and are a precipitate of the modifications undergone by our mental and somatic organism since our infancy.

When I described one of the psychical processes occurring in the mental apparatus as the 'primary' one, what I had in mind was not merely considerations of relative importance and efficiency; I intended also to choose a name which would give an indication of its chronological priority. It is true that, so far as we know, no psychical apparatus exists which possesses a primary process only and that such an apparatus is to that extent a theoretical fiction. But this much is a fact: the primary processes are present in the mental apparatus from the first, while it is only during the course of life that the secondary processes unfold, and come to inhibit and overlay the primary ones; it may even be that their complete domination is not attained until the prime of life. In consequence of the belated appearance of the secondary processes, the core of our being, consisting of unconscious wishful impulses, remains inaccessible to the understanding and inhibition of the preconscious; the part played by the latter is restricted once and for all to directing along the most expedient paths the wishful impulses that arise from the unconscious. These unconscious wishes exercise a compelling force upon all later mental trends, a force which those

trends are obliged to fall in with or which they may perhaps endeavour to divert and direct to higher aims. A further result of the belated appearance of the secondary process is that a wide sphere of mnemic material is inaccessible to preconscious cathexis.

Among these wishful impulses derived from infancy, which can neither be destroyed nor inhibited, there are some whose fulfilment would be a contradiction of the purposive ideas of secondary thinking. The fulfilment of these wishes would no longer generate an affect of pleasure but of unpleasure; and *it is precisely this transformation of affect which constitutes the essence of what we term 'repression'*. The problem of repression lies in the question of how it is and owing to what motive forces that this transformation occurs; but it is a problem that we need only touch upon here.[1] It is enough for us to be clear that a transformation of this kind does occur in the course of development —we have only to recall the way in which disgust emerges in childhood after having been absent to begin with—and that it is related to the activity of the secondary system. The memories on the basis of which the unconscious wish brings about the release of affect were never accessible to the *Pcs.*, and consequently the release of the affect attaching to those memories cannot be inhibited either. It is for the very reason of this generation of affect that these ideas are now inaccessible even by way of the preconscious thoughts on to which they have transferred their wishful force. On the contrary, the unpleasure principle takes control and causes the *Pcs.* to turn away from the transference thoughts. They are left to themselves—'repressed'—and thus it is that the presence of a store of infantile memories, which has from the first been held back from the *Pcs.*, becomes a *sine qua non* of repression.

In the most favourable cases the generation of unpleasure ceases along with the withdrawal of cathexis from the transference thoughts in the *Pcs.*; and this outcome signifies that the intervention of the unpleasure principle has served a useful purpose. But it is another matter when the repressed unconscious wish receives an organic reinforcement, which it passes on to its transference thoughts; in that way it may place them in a

[1] [The subject was afterwards dealt with by Freud at much greater length in his paper on 'Repression' (1915*d*); his later views on the subject are given in Lecture XXXII of his *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*).]

position to make an attempt at forcing their way through with their excitation, even if they have lost their cathexis from the *Pcs.* There then follows a defensive struggle—for the *Pcs.* in turn reinforces its opposition to the repressed thoughts (i.e. produces an 'anticathexis')—and thereafter the transference thoughts, which are the vehicles of the unconscious wish, force their way through in some form of compromise which is reached by the production of a symptom. But from the moment at which the repressed thoughts are strongly cathected by the unconscious wishful impulse and, on the other hand, abandoned by the preconscious cathexis, they become subject to the primary psychical process and their one aim is motor discharge or, if the path is open, hallucinatory revival of the desired perceptual identity. We have already found empirically that the irrational processes we have described are only carried out with thoughts that are under repression. We can now see our way a little further into the whole position. The irrational processes which occur in the psychical apparatus are the *primary* ones. They appear wherever ideas are abandoned by the preconscious cathexis, are left to themselves and can become charged with the uninhibited energy from the unconscious which is striving to find an outlet. Some other observations lend support to the view that these processes which are described as irrational are not in fact falsifications of normal processes—intellectual errors —but are modes of activity of the psychical apparatus that have been freed from an inhibition. Thus we find that the transition from preconscious excitation to movement is governed by the same processes, and that the linking of preconscious ideas to words may easily exhibit the same displacements and confusions, which are then attributed to inattention. Evidence, finally, of the increase in activity which becomes necessary when these primary modes of functioning are inhibited is to be found in the fact that we produce a *comic* effect, that is, a surplus of energy which has to be discharged in *laughter, if we allow these modes of thinking to force their way through into consciousness.*[1]

The theory of the psychoneuroses asserts as an indisputable and invariable fact that only sexual wishful impulses from

[1] [This topic was dealt with by Freud at greater length in Chapter V of his book on jokes (1905*c*). The question of intellectual errors was discussed more fully in the closing pages of the 'Project' (1950*a*).]

infancy, which have undergone repression (i.e. a transformation of their affect) during the developmental period of childhood, are capable of being revived during *later* developmental periods (whether as a result of the subject's sexual constitution, which is derived from an initial bisexuality, or as a result of unfavourable influences acting upon the course of his sexual life) and are thus able to furnish the motive force for the formation of psychoneurotic symptoms of every kind.[1] It is only by reference to these sexual forces that we can close the gaps that are still patent in the theory of repression. I will leave it an open question whether these sexual and infantile factors are equally required in the theory of dreams: I will leave that theory incomplete at this point, since I have already gone a step beyond what can be demonstrated in assuming that dream-wishes are invariably derived from the unconscious.[2] Nor do I propose to enquire

[1] [The theme of this sentence was elaborated by Freud in his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905*d*).]

[2] Here and elsewhere I have intentionally left gaps in the treatment of my theme because to fill them would on the one hand require too great an effort and on the other would involve my basing myself on material that is alien to the subject of dreams. For instance, I have omitted to state whether I attribute different meanings to the words 'suppressed' and 'repressed'. It should have been clear, however, that the latter lays more stress than the former upon the fact of attachment to the unconscious. Nor have I entered into the obvious problem of why the dream-thoughts are subjected to distortion by the censorship even in cases where they have abandoned the progressive path towards consciousness and have chosen the regressive one. And there are many similar omissions. What I was above all anxious to do was to create an impression of the problems to which a further analysis of the dream-work must lead and to give a hint of the other topics with which that further analysis would come into contact. It has not always been easy for me to decide the point at which to break off my pursuit of this line of exposition.—There are special reasons, which may not be what my readers expect, why I have not given any exhaustive treatment to the part played in dreams by the world of sexual ideas and why I have avoided analysing dreams of obviously sexual content. Nothing could be further from my own views or from the theoretical opinions which I hold in neuropathology than to regard sexual life as something shameful, with which neither a physician nor a scientific research worker has any concern. Moreover, the moral indignation by which the translator of the *Oneirocritica* of Artemidorus of Daldis allowed himself to be led into withholding the chapter on sexual dreams from the knowledge of his readers strikes me as laughable. What governed my decision was simply my seeing that an explanation of sexual dreams would involve

further into the nature of the distinction between the play of psychical forces in the formation of dreams and in that of hysterical symptoms: we are still without a sufficiently accurate knowledge of one of the two objects of the comparison.

There is, however, another point to which I attach importance; and I must confess that it is solely on its account that I have embarked here upon all these discussions of the two psychical systems and their modes of activity and of repression. It is not now a question of whether I have formed an approximately correct opinion of the psychological factors with which we are concerned, or whether, which is quite possible in such difficult matters, my picture of them is distorted and incomplete. However many changes may be made in our reading of the psychical censorship and of the rational and abnormal revisions made of the dream-content, it remains true that processes of this sort are at work in the formation of dreams and that they show the closest analogy in their essentials to the processes observable in the formation of hysterical symptoms. A dream, however, is no pathological phenomenon; it presupposes no disturbance of psychical equilibrium; it leaves behind it no loss of efficiency. The suggestion may be made that no conclusions as to the dreams of normal people can be drawn from my dreams or those of my patients; but this, I think, is an objection which can be safely disregarded. If, then, we may argue back from the phenomena to their motive forces, we must recognize that the psychical mechanism employed by neuroses is not created by the impact of a pathological disturbance upon the mind but is present already in the normal structure of the mental apparatus. The two psychical systems, the censorship upon the passage from one of them to the other, the inhibition and overlaying of one activity by the other, the relations of both of them to consciousness—or whatever more correct interpretations of the observed facts may take their place—all of these form part of the normal structure of our mental instrument, and dreams show us one of the paths leading to an understand-

me deeply in the still unsolved problems of perversion and bisexuality; and I accordingly reserved this material for another occasion. [It should perhaps be added that the translator of *Oneirocritica*, F. S. Krauss, himself subsequently published the omitted chapter in his periodical *Anthropophyteia*, from which Freud has quoted above (p. 356 *n.*) and of which he speaks so highly elsewhere (1910*f* and 1913*k*).]

ing of its structure. If we restrict ourselves to the minimum of new knowledge which has been established with certainty, we can still say this of dreams: they have proved that *what is suppressed continues to exist in normal people as well as abnormal, and remains capable of psychical functioning*. Dreams themselves are among the manifestations of this suppressed material; this is so theoretically in every case, and it can be observed empirically in a great number of cases at least, and precisely in cases which exhibit most clearly the striking peculiarities of dream-life. In waking life the suppressed material in the mind is prevented from finding expression and is cut off from internal perception owing to the fact that the contradictions present in it are eliminated—one side being disposed of in favour of the other; but during the night, under the sway of an impetus towards the construction of compromises, this suppressed material finds methods and means of forcing its way into consciousness.

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.[1]

The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind.

By analysing dreams we can take a step forward in our understanding of the composition of that most marvellous and most mysterious of all instruments. Only a small step, no doubt; but a beginning. And this beginning will enable us to proceed further with its analysis, on the basis of other structures which must be termed pathological. For illnesses—those, at least, which are rightly named 'functional'—do not presuppose the disintegration of the apparatus or the production of fresh splits in its interior. They are to be explained on a *dynamic* basis—by the strengthening and weakening of the various components in the interplay of forces, so many of whose effects are hidden from view while functions are normal. I hope to be able to show elsewhere how the compounding of the apparatus out of two

[1] ['If I cannot bend the Higher Powers, I will move the Infernal Regions.' Freud remarks in a note in *Ges. Schr.*, **3** (1925), 169, that 'this line of Virgil [*Aeneid*, VII, 312] is intended to picture the efforts of the repressed instinctual impulses'. He has used the same line as the motto for the whole volume. In a letter to Fliess of December 4, 1896 (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 51) he proposed using it as a motto for a chapter on 'Symptom Formation' in some projected but unrealized work.—The next sentence was added in 1909. It was included in the same year in the third of his lectures at Clark University (Freud, 1910*a*).]

agencies makes it possible for the normal mind too to function with greater delicacy than would be possible with only one of them.[1]

[1] Dreams are not the only phenomena which allow us to find a basis for psychopathology in psychology. In a short series of papers (1898*b* and 1899*a*) which is not yet completed, I have attempted to interpret a number of phenomena of daily life as evidence in favour of the same conclusions. [*Added* 1909:] These, together with some further papers on forgetting, slips of the tongue, bungled actions, etc., have since been collected under the title of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (Freud, 1901*b*).

(F)

THE UNCONSCIOUS AND CONSCIOUSNESS—REALITY

It will be seen on closer consideration that what the psychological discussion in the preceding sections invites us to assume is not the existence of two *systems* near the motor end of the apparatus but the existence of two kinds of *processes of excitation* or *modes of its discharge*. It is all one to us, for we must always be prepared to drop our conceptual scaffolding if we feel that we are in a position to replace it by something that approximates more closely to the unknown reality. So let us try to correct some conceptions which might be misleading so long as we looked upon the two systems in the most literal and crudest sense as two localities in the mental apparatus—conceptions which have left their traces in the expressions 'to repress' and 'to force a way through'. Thus, we may speak of an unconscious thought seeking to convey itself into the preconscious so as to be able then to force its way through into consciousness. What we have in mind here is not the forming of a second thought situated in a new place, like a transcription which continues to exist alongside the original; and the notion of forcing a way through into consciousness must be kept carefully free from any idea of a change of locality. Again, we may speak of a preconscious thought being repressed or driven out and then taken over by the unconscious. These images, derived from a set of ideas relating to a struggle for a piece of ground, may tempt us to suppose that it is literally true that a mental grouping in one locality has been brought to an end and replaced by a fresh one in another locality. Let us replace these metaphors by something that seems to correspond better to the real state of affairs, and let us say instead that some particular mental grouping has had a cathexis of energy attached to it or withdrawn from it, so that the structure in question has come under the sway of a particular agency or been withdrawn from it. What we are doing here is once again to replace a topographical way of representing things by a dynamic one. What we

regard as mobile is not the psychical structure itself but its innervation.[1]

Nevertheless, I consider it expedient and justifiable to continue to make use of the figurative image of the two systems. We can avoid any possible abuse of this method of representation by recollecting that ideas, thoughts and psychical structures in general must never be regarded as localized in organic elements of the nervous system but rather, as one might say, *between* them, where resistances and facilitations [*Bahnungen*] provide the corresponding correlates. Everything that can be an object of our internal perception is *virtual*, like the image produced in a telescope by the passage of light-rays. But we are justified in assuming the existence of the systems (which are not in any way psychical entities themselves and can never be accessible to our psychical perception) like the lenses of the telescope, which cast the image. And, if we pursue this analogy, we may compare the censorship between two systems to the refraction which takes place when a ray of light passes into a new medium.

So far we have been psychologizing on our own account. It is time now to consider the theoretical views which govern present-day psychology and to examine their relation to our hypotheses. The problem of the unconscious in psychology is, in the forcible words of Lipps (1897), less *a* psychological problem than *the* problem of psychology. So long as psychology dealt with this problem by a verbal explanation to the effect that 'psychical' *meant* 'conscious' and that to speak of 'unconscious psychical processes' was palpable nonsense, any psychological evaluation of the observations made by physicians upon abnormal mental states was out of the question. The physician and the philosopher can only come together if they both recognize that the term 'unconscious psychical processes' is 'the appropriate and justified expression of a solidly established

[1] [*Footnote added* 1925:] It became necessary to elaborate and modify this view after it was recognized that the essential feature of a preconscious idea was the fact of its being connected with the residues of verbal presentations. Cf. 'The Unconscious' (1915*e*, [Section VII]). [As is there pointed out, however, this was already indicated in the first edition of the present work. (See pp. 574 and 617.) It is also foreshadowed in the 'Project' (1950*a*), Part III, Sections 1 and 2.]

fact'. The physician can only shrug his shoulders when he is assured that 'consciousness is an indispensable characteristic of what is psychical', and perhaps, if he still feels enough respect for the utterances of philosophers, he may presume that they have not been dealing with the same thing or working at the same science. For even a single understanding observation of a neurotic's mental life or a single analysis of a dream must leave him with an unshakeable conviction that the most complicated and most rational thought-processes, which can surely not be denied the name of psychical processes, can occur without exciting the subject's consciousness.[1] It is true that the physician cannot learn of these unconscious processes until they have produced some effect upon consciousness which can be communicated or observed. But this conscious effect may exhibit a psychical character quite different from that of the unconscious process, so that internal perception cannot possibly regard the one as a substitute for the other. The physician must feel at liberty to proceed by *inference* from the conscious effect to the unconscious psychical process. He thus learns that the conscious effect is only a remote psychical result of the unconscious process and that the latter has not become conscious as such; and moreover that the latter was present and operative even without betraying its existence in any way to consciousness.

It is essential to abandon the overvaluation of the property of being conscious before it becomes possible to form any correct view of the origin of what is mental. In Lipps's words [1897, 146 f.], the unconscious must be assumed to be the general basis of psychical life. The unconscious is the larger sphere, which includes within it the smaller sphere of the conscious. Everything conscious has an unconscious preliminary stage; whereas

[1] [*Footnote added* 1914:] I am happy to be able to point to an author who has drawn from the study of dreams the same conclusions as I have on the relation between conscious and unconscious activity. Du Prel (1885, 47) writes: 'The problem of the nature of the mind evidently calls for a preliminary investigation as to whether consciousness and mind are identical. This preliminary question is answered in the negative by dreams, which show that the concept of the mind is a wider one than that of consciousness, in the same kind of way in which the gravitational force of a heavenly body extends beyond its range of luminosity.' And again (ibid., 306 [quoting Maudsley, 1868, 15]): 'It is a truth which cannot be too distinctly borne in mind that consciousness is not co-extensive with mind.'

what is unconscious may remain at that stage and nevertheless claim to be regarded as having the full value of a psychical process. The unconscious is the true psychical reality; *in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the communications of our sense organs.*

Now that the old antithesis between conscious life and dream-life has been reduced to its proper proportions by the establishment of unconscious psychical reality, a number of dream-problems with which earlier writers were deeply concerned have lost their significance. Thus some of the activities whose successful performance in dreams excited astonishment are now no longer to be attributed to dreams but to unconscious thinking, which is active during the day no less than at night. If, as Scherner [1861, 114 f.] has said, dreams appear to engage in making symbolic representations of the body [p. 85], we now know that those representations are the product of certain unconscious phantasies (deriving, probably, from sexual impulses) which find expression not only in dreams but also in hysterical phobias and other symptoms. If a dream carries on the activities of the day and completes them and even brings valuable fresh ideas to light, all we need do is to strip it of the dream disguise, which is the product of dream-work and the mark of assistance rendered by obscure forces from the depths of the mind (cf. the Devil in Tartini's sonata dream);[1] the intellectual achievement is due to the same mental forces which produce every similar result during the daytime. We are probably inclined greatly to over-estimate the conscious character of intellectual and artistic production as well. Accounts given us by some of the most highly productive men, such as Goethe and Helmholtz, show rather that what is essential and new in their creations came to them without premeditation and as an almost ready-made whole. There is nothing strange if in other cases, where a concentration of every intellectual faculty was needed, conscious activity also contributed its share. But it is the much-abused

[1] [Tartini, the composer and violinist (1692–1770), is said to have dreamt that he sold his soul to the devil, who thereupon seized a violin and played a sonata of exquisite beauty upon it with consummate skill. When the composer awoke he at once wrote down what he could recollect of it, and the result was his famous 'Trillo del Diavolo'.]

privilege of conscious activity, wherever it plays a part, to conceal every other activity from our eyes.

It would scarcely repay the trouble if we were to treat the historical significance of dreams as a separate topic. A dream may have impelled some chieftain to embark upon a bold enterprise the success of which has changed history. But this only raises a fresh problem so long as a dream is regarded as an alien power in contrast to the other more familiar forces of the mind; no such problem remains if a dream is recognized as a *form of expression* of impulses which are under the pressure of resistance during the day but which have been able to find reinforcement during the night from deep-lying sources of excitation.[1] The respect paid to dreams in antiquity is, however, based upon correct psychological insight and is the homage paid to the uncontrolled and indestructible forces in the human mind, to the 'daemonic' power which produces the dream-wish and which we find at work in our unconscious.

It is not without intention that I speak of 'our' unconscious. For what I thus describe is not the same as the unconscious of the philosophers or even the unconscious of Lipps. By them the term is used merely to indicate a contrast with the conscious: the thesis which they dispute with so much heat and defend with so much energy is the thesis that apart from conscious there are also unconscious psychical processes. Lipps carries things further with his assertion that the whole of what is psychical exists unconsciously and that a part of it also exists consciously. But it is not in order to establish *this* thesis that we have summoned up the phenomena of dreams and of the formation of hysterical symptoms; the observation of normal waking life would by itself suffice to prove it beyond any doubt. The new discovery that we have been taught by the analysis of psychopathological structures and of the first member of that class—the dream—lies in the fact that the unconscious (that is, the psychical) is found as a function of two separate systems and that this is the case in normal as well as in pathological life. Thus there are two kinds of unconscious, which have not yet been distinguished by psychologists. Both of them are unconscious in the sense used by psychology; but in our sense one of them,

[1] [*Footnote added* 1911:] Cf. in this connection Alexander the Great's dream during his siege of Tyre (σά-τυρος). [See p. 99 *n.*]

which we term the *Ucs.*, is also *inadmissible to consciousness*, while we term the other the *Pcs.* because its excitations—after observing certain rules, it is true, and perhaps only after passing a fresh censorship, though nonetheless without regard to the *Ucs.*—are able to reach consciousness. The fact that excitations in order to reach consciousness must pass through a fixed series or hierarchy of agencies (which is revealed to us by the modifications made in them by censorship) has enabled us to construct a spatial analogy. We have described the relations of the two systems to each other and to consciousness by saying that the system *Pcs.* stands like a screen between the system *Ucs.* and consciousness. The system *Pcs.* not merely bars access to consciousness, it also controls access to the power of voluntary movement and has at its disposal for distribution a mobile cathectic energy, a part of which is familiar to us in the form of attention.[1] [See p. 593.]

We must avoid, too, the distinction between 'supraconscious' and 'subconscious', which has become so popular in the more recent literature of the psychoneuroses, for such a distinction seems precisely calculated to stress the equivalence of what is psychical to what is conscious.

But what part is there left to be played in our scheme by consciousness, which was once so omnipotent and hid all else from view? *Only that of a sense-organ for the perception of psychical qualities.*[2] In accordance with the ideas underlying our attempt at a schematic picture, we can only regard conscious perception as the function proper to a particular system; and for this the abbreviation *Cs.* seems appropriate. In its mechanical properties we regard this system as resembling the perceptual systems *Pcpt.*: as being susceptible to excitation by qualities but incapable of retaining traces of alterations—that is to say, as having no memory. The psychical apparatus, which is turned towards

[1] [*Footnote added* 1914:] Cf. my remarks on the concept of the unconscious in psycho-analysis (Freud, 1912*g*), first published in English in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, **26** [312], in which I have distinguished the descriptive, dynamic and systematic meanings of the highly ambiguous word 'unconscious'. [The whole topic is discussed in the light of Freud's later views in Chapter I of *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*).]

[2] [Freud's use of the terms 'quantity' and 'quality' is fully explained in Part I of his 'Project' (1950*a*).]

the external world with its sense-organ of the *Pcpt.* systems, is itself the external world in relation to the sense-organ of the *Cs.*, whose teleological justification resides in this circumstance. Here we once more meet the principle of the hierarchy of agencies, which seems to govern the structure of the apparatus. Excitatory material flows in to the *Cs.* sense-organ from two directions: from the *Pcpt.* system, whose excitation, determined by qualities, is probably submitted to a fresh revision before it becomes a conscious sensation, and from the interior of the apparatus itself, whose quantitative processes are felt qualitatively in the pleasure-unpleasure series when, subject to certain modifications, they make their way to consciousness.

Those philosophers who have become aware that rational and highly complex thought-structures are possible without consciousness playing any part in them have found difficulty in assigning any function to consciousness; it has seemed to them that it can be no more than a superfluous reflected picture of the completed psychical process. We, on the other hand, are rescued from this embarrassment by the analogy between our *Cs.* system and the perceptual systems. We know that perception by our sense-organs has the result of directing a cathexis of attention to the paths along which the in-coming sensory excitation is spreading: the qualitative excitation of the *Pcpt.* system acts as a regulator of the discharge of the mobile quantity in the psychical apparatus. We can attribute the same function to the overlying sense-organ of the *Cs.* system. By perceiving new qualities, it makes a new contribution to directing the mobile quantities of cathexis and distributing them in an expedient fashion. By the help of its perception of pleasure and unpleasure it influences the discharge of the cathexes within what is otherwise an unconscious apparatus operating by means of the displacement of quantities. It seems probable that in the first instance the unpleasure principle regulates the displacement of cathexes automatically. But it is quite possible that consciousness of these qualities may introduce in addition a second and more discriminating regulation, which is even able to oppose the former one, and which perfects the efficiency of the apparatus by enabling it, in contradiction to its original plan, to cathect and work over even what is associated with the release of unpleasure. We learn from the psychology of the neuroses that these processes of regulation carried out by the qualitative

excitation of the sense organs play a great part in the functional activity of the apparatus. The automatic domination of the primary unpleasure principle and the consequent restriction imposed upon efficiency are interrupted by the processes of sensory regulation, which are themselves in turn automatic in action. We find that repression (which, though it served a useful purpose to begin with, leads ultimately to a damaging loss of inhibition and mental control) affects memories so much more easily than perceptions because the former can receive no extra cathexis from the excitation of the psychical sense-organs. It is true on the one hand that a thought which has to be warded off cannot become conscious, because it has undergone repression; but on the other hand it sometimes happens that a thought of this kind is only repressed because for other reasons it has been withdrawn from conscious perception. Here are some hints of which we take advantage in our therapeutic procedure in order to undo repressions which have already been effected.

The value of the hypercathexis which is set up in the mobile quantities by the regulating influence of the sense organ of the *Cs.* cannot be better illustrated in its teleological aspect than by the fact of its creation of a new series of qualities and consequently of a new process of regulation which constitutes the superiority of men over animals. Thought-processes are in themselves without quality, except for the pleasurable and unpleasurable excitations which accompany them, and which, in view of their possible disturbing effect upon thinking, must be kept within bounds. In order that thought-processes may acquire quality, they are associated in human beings with verbal memories, whose residues of quality are sufficient to draw the attention of consciousness to them and to endow the process of thinking with a new mobile cathexis from consciousness. [Cf. pp. 574 and 611 *n.*]

The whole multiplicity of the problems of consciousness can only be grasped by an analysis of the thought-processes in hysteria. These give one the impression that the transition from a preconscious to a conscious cathexis is marked by a censorship similar to that between the *Ucs.* and the *Pcs.*[1] This censorship, too, only comes into force above a certain quantitative

[1] [The censorship between the *Pcs.* and the *Cs.* appears only rarely in Freud's later writings. It is, however, discussed at length in Section VI of his paper on 'The Unconscious' (1915*e*).]

limit, so that thought-structures of low intensity escape it. Examples of every possible variety of how a thought can be withheld from consciousness or can force its way into consciousness under certain limitations are to be found included within the framework of psychoneurotic phenomena; and they all point to the intimate and reciprocal relations between censorship and consciousness. I will bring these psychological reflections to an end with a report of two such examples.

I was called in to a consultation last year to examine an intelligent and unembarrassed-looking girl. She was most surprisingly dressed. For though as a rule a woman's clothes are carefully considered down to the last detail, she was wearing one of her stockings hanging down and two of the buttons on her blouse were undone. She complained of having pains in her leg and, without being asked, exposed her calf. But what she principally complained of was, to use her own words, that she had a feeling in her body as though there was something 'stuck into it' which was 'moving backwards and forwards' and was 'shaking' her through and through: sometimes it made her whole body feel 'stiff'. My medical colleague, who was present at the examination, looked at me; he found no difficulty in understanding the meaning of her complaint. But what struck both of us as extraordinary was the fact that it meant nothing to the patient's mother—though she must often have found herself in the situation which her child was describing. The girl herself had no notion of the bearing of her remarks; for if she had, she would never have given voice to them. In this case it had been possible to hoodwink the censorship into allowing a phantasy which would normally have been kept in the preconscious to emerge into consciousness under the innocent disguise of making a complaint.

Here is another example. A fourteen-year-old boy came to me for psycho-analytic treatment suffering from *tic convulsif*, hysterical vomiting, headaches, etc. I began the treatment by assuring him that if he shut his eyes he would see pictures or have ideas, which he was then to communicate to me. He replied in pictures. His last impression before coming to me was revived visually in his memory. He had been playing at draughts with his uncle and saw the board in front of him. He thought of various positions, favourable or unfavourable, and of moves that one must not make. He then saw a dagger lying on the

board—an object that belonged to his father but which his imagination placed on the board. Then there was a sickle lying on the board and next a scythe. And there now appeared a picture of an old peasant mowing the grass in front of the patient's distant home with a scythe. After a few days I discovered the meaning of this series of pictures. The boy had been upset by an unhappy family situation. He had a father who was a hard man, liable to fits of rage, who had been unhappily married to the patient's mother, and whose educational methods had consisted of threats. His father had been divorced from his mother, a tender and affectionate woman, had married again and had one day brought a young woman home with him who was to be the boy's new mother. It was during the first few days after this that the fourteen-year-old boy's illness had come on. His suppressed rage against his father was what had constructed this series of pictures with their understandable allusions. The material for them was provided by a recollection from mythology. The sickle was the one with which Zeus castrated his father; the scythe and the picture of the old peasant represented Kronos, the violent old man who devoured his children and on whom Zeus took such unfilial vengeance. [See p. 256.] His father's marriage gave the boy an opportunity of repaying the reproaches and threats which he had heard from his father long before because he had played with his genitals. (Cf. the playing at draughts; the forbidden moves; the dagger which could be used to kill.) In this case long-repressed memories and derivatives from them which had remained unconscious slipped into consciousness by a roundabout path in the form of apparently meaningless pictures.

Thus I would look for the *theoretical* value of the study of dreams in the contributions it makes to psychological knowledge and in the preliminary light it throws on the problems of the psychoneuroses. Who can guess the importance of the results which might be obtained from a thorough understanding of the structure and functions of the mental apparatus, since even the present state of our knowledge allows us to exert a favourable therapeutic influence on the curable forms of psychoneurosis? But what of the *practical* value of this study—I hear the question raised—as a means towards an understanding of the

mind, towards a revelation of the hidden characteristics of individual men? Have not the unconscious impulses brought out by dreams the importance of real forces in mental life? Is the ethical significance of suppressed wishes to be made light of—wishes which, just as they lead to dreams, may some day lead to other things?

I do not feel justified in answering these questions. I have not considered this side of the problem of dreams further. I think, however, that the Roman emperor was in the wrong when he had one of his subjects executed because he had dreamt of murdering the emperor. [See above, p. 67.] He should have begun by trying to find out what the dream meant; most probably its meaning was not what it appeared to be. And even if a dream with another content had had this act of *lèse majesté* as its meaning, would it not be right to bear in mind Plato's dictum that the virtuous man is content to *dream* what a wicked man really *does* [p. 67]? I think it is best, therefore, to acquit dreams. Whether we are to attribute *reality* to unconscious wishes, I cannot say. It must be denied, of course, to any transitional or intermediate thoughts. If we look at unconscious wishes reduced to their most fundamental and truest shape, we shall have to conclude, no doubt, that *psychical* reality is a particular form of existence not to be confused with *material* reality.[1] Thus there seems to be no justification for people's reluctance in accepting responsibility for the immorality of their dreams. When the mode of functioning of the mental apparatus is rightly appreciated and the relation between the conscious and the unconscious understood, the greater part of what is ethically objectionable in our dream and phantasy lives will be found to disappear. In the words of Hanns Sachs [1912, 569]: 'If we look in our consciousness at something that has been told us by a dream about a contemporary (real) situation, we ought not

[1] [This sentence does not appear in the first edition. In 1909 it appeared in the following form: 'If we look at unconscious wishes reduced to their most fundamental and truest shape, we shall have to remember, no doubt, that psychical reality too has more than one form of existence.' In 1914 the sentence first appeared as printed in the text, except that the last word but one was 'factual' and not 'material'. 'Material' was substituted in 1919.—The remainder of this paragraph was added in 1914.—Freud had already drawn a distinction between 'thought reality' and 'external reality' in the second section of Part III of his 'Project' (1950*a*).]

to be surprised to find that the monster which we saw under the magnifying glass of analysis turns out to be a tiny infusorian.'

Actions and consciously expressed opinions are as a rule enough for practical purposes in judging men's characters. Actions deserve to be considered first and foremost; for many impulses which force their way through to consciousness are even then brought to nothing by the real forces of mental life before they can mature into deeds. In fact, such impulses often meet with no psychical obstacles to their progress, for the very reason that the unconscious is certain that they will be stopped at some other stage. It is in any case instructive to get to know the much trampled soil from which our virtues proudly spring. Very rarely does the complexity of a human character, driven hither and thither by dynamic forces, submit to a choice between simple alternatives, as our antiquated morality would have us believe.[1]

And the value of dreams for giving us knowledge of the future? There is of course no question of that.[2] [Cf. p. 5 *n.*] It would be truer to say instead that they give us knowledge of the past. For dreams are derived from the past in every sense. Nevertheless the ancient belief that dreams foretell the future is not wholly devoid of truth. By picturing our wishes as fulfilled, dreams are after all leading us into the future. But this future, which the dreamer pictures as the present, has been moulded by his indestructible wish into a perfect likeness of the past.

[1] [This subject is further discussed in Freud, 1925*i* (Section B).]

[2] [In the 1911 edition only, the following footnote appeared at this point: 'Professor Ernst Oppenheim of Vienna has shown me, from the evidence of folklore, that there is a class of dreams in which the prophetic meaning has been dropped even in popular belief and which are perfectly correctly traced back to wishes and needs emerging during sleep. He will shortly be giving a detailed account of these dreams, which are as a rule narrated in the form of comic stories.'—Cf. the paper on dreams in folklore written jointly by Freud and Oppenheim (1957*a* [1911]) in *Standard Ed.*, **12**, 177.]

APPENDIX A

A PREMONITORY DREAM FULFILLED[1]

FRAU B., an estimable woman who moreover possesses a critical sense, told me in another connection and without the slightest *arrière pensée* that once some years ago she dreamt she had met Dr. K., a friend and former family doctor of hers, in the Kärntnerstrasse[2] in front of Hiess's shop. The next morning, while she was walking along the same street, she in fact met the person in question at the very spot she had dreamt of. So much for my theme. I will only add that no subsequent event proved the importance of this miraculous coincidence, which cannot therefore be accounted for by what lay in the future.

Analysis of the dream was helped by questioning, which established the fact that there was no evidence of her having had any recollection at all of the dream on the morning after she dreamt it, until after her walk—evidence such as her having written the dream down or told it to someone before it was fulfilled. On the contrary, she was obliged to accept the following account of what happened, which seems to me more plausible, without raising any objection to it. She was walking along the Kärntnerstrasse one morning and met her old family doctor in front of Hiess's shop. On seeing him she felt convinced that she had dreamt the night before of having this very meeting at that precise spot. According to the rules that apply to the interpretation of neurotic symptoms, her conviction must have been justified; its content may, however, require to be re-interpreted.

[1] [The manuscript of this paper is dated November 10, 1899—six days after the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. In the same letter to Fliess in which Freud announced that event (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 123, of November 5, 1899) he remarked that he had just discovered the origin and meaning of premonitory dreams. The paper was first published posthumously in *Ges. Werke*, **17** (1941), 21. The present English translation (by James Strachey) first appeared in *Coll. Papers*, **5** (1950), 70.—The same incident was reported by Freud very much more briefly in his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*), Chapter XII, Section D.—The topic of premonitory dreams is touched upon in *The Interpretation of Dreams* on pp. 65 and 621.]

[2] [The principal shopping-street in the centre of Vienna.]

The following is an episode with which Dr. K. is connected from Frau B.'s earlier life. When she was young she was married, without her wholehearted consent, to an elderly but wealthy man. A few years later he lost his money, fell ill of tuberculosis and died. For many years the young woman supported herself and her sick husband by giving music lessons. Among her friends in misfortune was her family doctor, Dr. K., who devoted himself to looking after her husband and helped her in finding her first pupils. Another friend was a barrister, also a Dr. K., who put the chaotic affairs of the ruined merchant in order, while at the same time he made love to the young woman and—for the first and last time—set her passion aflame. This love affair brought her no real happiness, for the scruples created by her upbringing and her cast of mind interfered with her complete surrender while she was married and later when she was a widow. In the same connection in which she told me the dream, she also told me of a real occurrence dating from this unhappy period of her life, an occurrence which in her opinion was a remarkable coincidence. She was in her room, kneeling on the floor with her head buried in a chair and sobbing in passionate longing for her friend and helper the barrister, when at that very moment the door opened and in he came to visit her. We shall find nothing at all remarkable in this coincidence when we consider how often she thought of him and how often he probably visited her. Moreover, accidents which seem preconcerted like this are to be found in every love story. Nevertheless this coincidence was probably the true content of her dream and the sole basis of her conviction that it had come true.

Between the scene in which her wish had been fulfilled and the time of the dream more than twenty-five years elapsed. In the meantime Frau B. had become the widow of a second husband who left her with a child and a fortune. The old lady's affection was still centred on Dr. K., who was now her adviser and the administrator of her estate and whom she saw frequently. Let us suppose that during the few days before the dream she had been expecting a visit from him, but that this had not taken place—he was no longer so pressing as he used to be. She may then have quite well had a nostalgic dream one night which took her back to the old days. Her dream was probably of a *rendez-vous* at the time of her love affair, and the

chain of her dream-thoughts carried her back to the occasion when, without any pre-arrangement, he had come in at the very moment at which she had been longing for him. She probably had dreams of this kind quite often now; they were a part of the belated punishment with which a woman pays for her youthful cruelty. But such dreams—derivatives of a suppressed current of thought, filled with memories of *rendez-vous* of which, since her second marriage, she no longer liked to think—such dreams were put aside on waking. And that was what happened to our ostensibly prophetic dream. She then went out, and in the Kärntnerstrasse, at a spot which was in itself indifferent, she met her old family doctor, Dr. K. It was a very long time since she had seen him. He was intimately associated with the excitements of that happy-unhappy time. He too had been a helper, and we may suppose that he had been used in her thoughts, and perhaps in her dreams as well, as a screen figure behind which she concealed the better-loved figure of the other Dr. K. This meeting now revived her recollection of the dream. She must have thought: 'Yes, I had a dream last night of my *rendez-vous* with Dr. K.' But this recollection had to undergo the distortion which the dream escaped only because it had been completely forgotten. She inserted the indifferent K. (who had reminded her of the dream) in place of the beloved K. The content of the dream—the *rendez-vous*—was transferred to a belief that she had dreamt of that particular spot, for a *rendez-vous* consists in two people coming to the same spot at the same time. And if she then had an impression that a dream had been fulfilled, she was only giving effect in that way to her memory of the scene in which she had longed in her misery for him to come and her longing had at once been fulfilled.

Thus the creation of a dream after the event, which alone makes prophetic dreams possible, is nothing other than a form of censoring, thanks to which the dream is able to make its way through into consciousness.

10 *Nov.* 99

APPENDIX B

LIST OF WRITINGS BY FREUD DEALING PREDOMINANTLY OR LARGELY WITH DREAMS

[*It would scarcely be an exaggeration to say that dreams are alluded to in the majority of Freud's writings. The following list of works (of greatly varying importance) may however be of some practical use. The date at the beginning of each entry is that of the year during which the work in question was written. The date at the end is that of publication; and under that date fuller particulars of the work will be found in the General Bibliography. The items in square brackets were published posthumously.*]

[1895 'Project for a Scientific Psychology' (Sections 19, 20 and 21 of Part I). (1950*a*.)]

1899 *The Interpretation of Dreams*. (1900*a*.)

[1899 'A Premonitory Dream Fulfilled.' (1941*c*.)]

1901 *On Dreams*. (1901*a*.)

1901 'Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria.' [Original title: 'Dreams and Hysteria.'] (1905*e*.)

1905 *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (Chapter VI). (1905*c*.)

1907 *Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's 'Gradiva'*. (1907*a*.)

1910 'A Typical Example of a Disguised Oedipus Dream.' (1910*l*.)

1911 'Additions to the Interpretation of Dreams.' (1911*a*.)

1911 'The Handling of Dream-Interpretation in Psycho-Analysis.' (1911*e*.)

1911 'Dreams in Folklore' (with Ernst Oppenheim). (1957*a*.)

1913 'An Evidential Dream.' (1913*a*.)

1913 'The Occurrence in Dreams of Material from Fairy Tales.' (1913*d*.)

1913 'Observations and Examples from Analytic Practice.' (1913*h*.)

1914 'The Representation in a Dream of a "Great Achievement".' (1914*e*.)

1914 'From the History of an Infantile Neurosis' (Section IV). (1918*b*.)

1916 *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (Part II). (1916–1917.)

1917 'A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams.' (1917*d*.)

1920 'Supplements to the Theory of Dreams.' (1920*f*.)

1922 'Dreams and Telepathy.' (1922*a*.)

1923 'Remarks upon the Theory and Practice of Dream-Interpretation.' (1923*c*.)

1923 'Josef Popper-Lynkeus and the Theory of Dreams.' (1923*f*.)

1925 'Some Additional Notes on Dream-Interpretation as a Whole.' (1925*i*.)

1929 'A Letter to Maxime Leroy on a Dream of Descartes.' (1929*b*.)

1932 'My Contact with Josef Popper-Lynkeus.' (1932*c*.)

1932 *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (Lectures XXIX and XXX). (1933*a*.)

[1938 *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (Chapter V). (1940*a*.)]

N.B.—An unauthorized concoction of portions of *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *On Dreams* has appeared in two editions in America under the title of *Dream Psychology: Psychoanalysis for Beginners* (with an introduction by André Tridon). New York: McCann, 1920 and 1921. Pp. xi + 237.