



What is an Unconscious Phantasy?¹

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*Summary*²

The author examines the different meanings of 'phantasy' in Freud's writings. Abandoning the theory of seduction, it is argued, Freud still held the view that phantasy and bodily processes cannot be separated. The importance of both, the rootedness in bodily processes and the specific content of drives is stressed, as can be found in Freud's concept of unconscious phantasy. Furthermore, the speculative concepts of Eros and Thanatos are criticised and it is argued that here, Freud went beyond the psychoanalytic subject matter, i.e. he encountered the objective social impact on the individual. The author interprets psychoanalysis as a social science that deals with profiles of experiences. Criticising the theory of phylogenetic inheritance, the view is put forward that the unconscious is created by early interactions, beginning already on a purely organismic level in utero and thus is structured under the influence of society and culture. The concepts of symbolisation, de-symbolisation, sensual-symbolic interactionform and (speech-) symbolic interactionform are introduced in order to illuminate three meanings of phantasy: organismic

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² I found myself unable to translate several notions properly, e.g. 'Erlebnis' vs. 'Erfahrung' or even worse 'Bedarf' vs. 'Bedürfnis'. In these cases, the German notion is set in [square brackets] following the suggested translation. Furthermore, I tried to stick to the text as close as possible and there by causing some "Germanism's", especially concerning the grammatical structure of chains of main or sub-clauses. Some of the difficulties encountered may have to do with the fact that this text contains Lorenzer's theory of interactionforms in a nutshell, so to speak.

interactionforms, pictorial phantasies in (day-) dreams and verbal phantasies or concepts.

From its earliest days on, psychoanalysis has had an ambivalent attitude towards the problem of phantasy. Definitely, by the huge methodological shift of the new 'science of the soul' [*Seelenkunde*] (c. Lorenzer 1973b, chapter II and Lorenzer 1974, chapter IV), namely the focus on the associations of the patient, phantasy was all of a sudden given access to the honourable business of science. The patients were given permission to say everything that came into their mind and, even more, they were expected to do so: the approach was titled 'basic rule'. Nevertheless, permission and expectation originally were introduced under a premise that was explicitly aimed against 'phantasy'. The communications were carefully checked to what degree they were reliable witnesses to the factual state of affairs, to what degree they were correct recollections of the past. Accordingly, Freud writes in 1896:

"Doubts about the genuineness of the infantile sexual scenes can, however, be deprived of their force here and now by more than one argument. In the first place, the behaviour of patients while they are reproducing these infantile experiences is in every respect incompatible with the assumption that the scenes are anything else than a reality which is being felt with distress and reproduced with the greatest reluctance. Before they come for analysis the patients know nothing about these scenes. They are indignant to as a rule if we warn them that such scenes are going to emerge. Only the strongest compulsion of the treatment can induce them to embark on a reproduction of them. While they are recalling these infantile experiences to consciousness, they suffer under the most violent sensations, of which they are ashamed and which they try to conceal; and, even after they have gone through them once more in such a convincing manner, they still attempt to withhold belief from them, by emphasising the fact that, unlike what happens in the case of other forgotten material, they have no feeling of remembering the scenes.

This latter piece of behaviour seems to provide conclusive proof. Why should patients assure me so emphatically of their unbelief, if what they want to discredit is something which – from whatever motive – they themselves have invented?" (Freud 1896, 204)

Looking back in 1924, Freud himself evaluated his former statement as follows:

"(Footnote added 1924:) All this is true; but it must be remembered that at that time I wrote it I had not yet freed myself from my *overvaluation* of reality and my *low valuation* of phantasy." (204, original emphasis).

The reason for the original reservations against phantasy is easy to detect: Freud, the scientist who unwillingly enough had to depart from the mode of natural-scientific research at his time dominating medicine as a discipline, was eager to apply (and could not apply anything else but) those scientific rules of how to derive at knowledge [*Erkenntnis*] to the encounter in the consulting room. Diagnosis was meant to be a search for the cause of a suffering, the aim was a science-based therapy. However, this clear bias of a natural-scientific qualified researcher prepared the road of triumph for phantasy. Due to the fact that Freud did not give up his search for a univalent 'factual link' [*Faktenzusammenhang*] between symptom and causal event, not giving in to the first resistances he faced in dealing with this somewhat 'unhandy' subject matter, his failure gave way to a new insight: a causal connection not under the reign of crude facticity, i.e. the determination of reality by phantasy. For the unforgiving rigour that characterised Freud's attempt to build up a psychology on physiological grounds included the respect towards the uniqueness of the subject matter. The researcher was willing to stand the pain-staking contradiction between the urge for knowledge on the one hand, described 1938 by an elderly Freud looking back:

"Whereas the psychology of consciousness never went beyond the broken sequences which were obviously dependent on something else, the other view, which held that the psychical is unconscious in itself, enabled psychology to take its place as a natural science like any other. The processes with which it is concerned are in themselves just as unknowable as those dealt with by other sciences, by chemistry or physics, for example; but it is possible to establish the laws which they obey (...) This cannot be effected without framing fresh hypotheses and creating new concepts (...). They can lay claim to the same value as approximations that belongs to the corresponding intellectual scaffoldings found in other natural sciences, (...) So too it will be entirely in accordance with our expectations if the basic concepts and principles of the new science (instincts, nervous energy, etc.) remain for a considerable time no less indeterminate than those of the older sciences (force, mass, attraction, etc.)."(Freud 1940, 158-159)

and the uniqueness of the subject matter on the other hand, of which Freud from early onwards said:

"I was not always a psychotherapist, but was trained in local and electrical diagnosis like other neuropathologists, and I still find it a very strange thing that the case histories read like short stories and lack, so to speak, the serious imprint of science. I must console myself with the thought that it is obviously the nature of the material itself that is responsible for this rather than my own choice. In the study of hysteria local diagnosis and electrical reactions do not come into picture, while an exhaustive account of mental processes, of the kind we are accustomed to having from imaginative writers, enables me, by the application of a few psychological formulas, to obtain a new kind of insight into the origin of hysteria." (Freud 1950, 14-15)³

This contradiction is the base line all the following developments in psychoanalysis set forth by Freud himself were aimed at. It is vivid even in the myth-like fundamental notions of Eros and Deathdrive (c. Lorenzer 1973, chapter II), it can be found in Freud's correct although wrong insights in 'Totem and Taboo' (c. Lorenzer 1979) and in the dreamlike hidden allegory in his 'Moses'. Last but not least, the tension between the suffered and the experienced, within the experienced, the tension between recollection and imagination; they are all fuelled by this contradiction. We should let Freud speak for himself in detail:

"If the infantile experiences brought to light by analysis were invariably real, we should feel that we are standing on firm ground; if they were regularly falsified and revealed as inventions, as phantasies of the patient, we should be obliged to abandon this shaky ground and look for salvation elsewhere. But neither of these things is the case: the position can be shown to be that the childhood experiences constructed or remembered in analysis are sometimes indisputably false and sometimes equally certainly correct, and in the most cases compounded of truth and falsehood. Sometimes, then, symptoms represent events which really took place and to which we may attribute an influence on the fixation of the libido, and sometimes they represent phantasies of the patient's which are not, of

³ [Original quote: "I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuropathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science. I must console myself with the reflection that it is obviously the nature of the subject is evidently responsible for this, rather than any preference of my own. The fact is that local diagnosis and electrical reactions do lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the works of imaginative writers, enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain a least some kind of insight into the course of that affection." (Freud, Breuer 1893-95, 160-161)]

course, suited to playing an etiological role. It is difficult to find one's way about in this. (...)

After a little reflection we shall easily understand what it is about this state of things that perplexes us so much. It is the low valuation of reality, the neglect of the distinction between it and phantasy. We are tempted to feel offended at the patient's having taken up our time with invented stories. Reality seems to us something worlds apart from invention, and we set a very different value on it. Moreover the patient, too, looks at things in this light in his normal thinking. When he brings up the material that leads from behind his symptoms to the wishful situations modelled on his infantile experiences, we are in doubt to begin with whether we are dealing with reality or phantasies. ... It will be a long time before he can take in our proposal that we should equate phantasy and reality and not bother to begin with whether the childhood experiences under examination are the one or the other. Yet this is clearly the only correct attitude to adopt towards these mental productions. They too possess a reality of a sort. It remains a fact the patient has created these phantasies for himself, and this fact is of scarcely less importance for his neurosis than if he had really experienced what the phantasies contain. The phantasies possess *psychical* as contrasted with *material* reality, and we gradually learn to understand that *in the world of the neuroses it is psychical reality which is the decisive kind.*" (Freud 1917a, 367-368)

As we can see, Freud openly admitted to the ambiguity of his subject. On the one hand, experiences are imaginations, hallucinations, fictitious templates for reality. On the other hand, they are mimeographic copies of reality as well. After the abandonment of the theory of sexual trauma⁴, i.e. after the discovery that psychoanalysis focuses on the analysis of modes of experiences rather than on events, Freud still considered these modes to have a foundation in reality. "For a child, like an adult, can produce phantasies only from material which has been acquired from one source or other" (Freud 1918, 55). Experiencing is a 'writing-down', is a registration [*Niederschrift*] of the real "*scenes*" Freud mentioned in his early paper in 1896 quoted above. Experiences are registrations that reach back into the realm of family and, even further back, into the mother-child-dyad. This 'social-psychological' perspective on the psychoanalytic subject matter did certainly not interpret the infantile process of development in sociological naive terms of a taking over of roles but rather, from the beginning on, as

⁴ As it could be found in the quoted supplement from 1924, Freud understood the infantile sexual problematic nature of his patients' impairments to be caused in a concretely manner by sexual attacks from their parents or other adults.

an '*inscription*' into the body. The energetic-dynamic character of this amalgamation of an external stimulus and a bodily process was described by Freud as follows.

"For we long ago traced the causal chain back through the repressions to the instinctual dispositions, their relative intensities in the constitution and the deviations in the course of their development. Supposing, now, that it was possible, by some chemical means, perhaps, to interfere in this mechanism, to increase or to diminish the quantity of libido present at a given time or to strengthen one instinct at the cost of another – this then would be a causal therapy in the true sense of the word, for which our analysis would have carried out the indispensable preliminary work of reconnaissance." (Freud 1917b, 436)

The antagonism between reality and fiction is sharpened by this stress put on the body. The fictitious phantasy like is contrasted to the concatenation of reality-influence and bodily functioning. The knowledge of "mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the works of imaginative writers" (Freud, Breuer 1893-95, 160) contrasts to the 'natural science of the soul'. Nevertheless, at the same time, the unity of the subject matter is claimed for the analysis of nature and the interpretation of sense are not clearly separated as it is for instance according to the neo-kantian separation of natural science and cultural science⁵. Whether we see Freud's perseverance for unity as focussed on 'Instincts and their Vicissitudes' or on the meaning of the clamping together of the early infantile developmental achievements with the 'erogenous zones' - the point of unification is always the bodily inscription of sense. The bodily transmission is understood as a fabric of meaningful situational traces. Energy and contents, instinct and idea already form a unity making up for the kernel of the personality, the Unconscious:

"An instinct can never become an object of consciousness – only the idea that represents the instinct can. Even in the unconscious, moreover, an instinct cannot be represented otherwise than by an idea. If the instinct did not attach itself to an idea or manifest itself as an affective state, we could know nothing about it. When we nevertheless speak of an unconscious instinctual impulse or of a repressed instinctual impulse, the looseness of phraseology is a harmless one. We can only mean an instinctual impulse the ideational representative of which is unconscious, for nothing else comes into consideration." (Freud 1915b, 177)

⁵ [Science and humanities]

In his paper on "Hysterical Phantasies and their relation to Bisexuality" (Freud 1908), Freud introduces the unity of meaning-texture and bodily dynamics in respect to 'unconscious phantasy' in the following way:

"Now an unconscious phantasy has a very important connection with the subject's sexual life; for it is identical with the phantasy which served to give him sexual satisfaction during a period of masturbation. At that time the masturbatory act (in the widest sense of the term) was compounded of two parts. One was the evocation of a phantasy and the other some active behaviour for obtaining self-gratification at the height of the phantasy. This compound, as we know, was itself merely soldered together. Originally the action was a purely autoerotic procedure for the purpose of obtaining pleasure from some particular part of the body, which could be described as erotogenic. Later, this action became merged with a wishful idea from the sphere of object-love and served as a partial realisation of the situation in which the phantasy culminated. [...] Hysterical symptoms are nothing other than unconscious phantasies brought into view through 'conversion';" (Freud 1908, 161-162)

Without effort, a compilation of quotes from Freud's writings could be formed, illuminating from different perspectives the interwoven identity of phantasy and bodily functions. It is noteworthy that this connection is never conducted on the cost of neither the one nor the other side or by means of a reduction of the problem, nowadays characteristic for the 'modern' psychoanalytic positivism. Phantasy is always:

- determined by contents
- scene-like unfolded into 'life-practical' dramatic figures
- part of a bodily process and
- referring to real practice in every-day life

Not only the clamping together of bodily functioning and the "psyche" according to the precise and yet vague definition of the instinct as the "concept on the frontier between the psychic and the somatic" (Freud 1915a, pp. 121-122) is put forward here. Psychoanalysis does not only present itself as natural science *and* hermeneutically interpreting 'science of the soul'. Instead, its subject matter is in a precise and strict sense a "social" configuration. The growing of "psychic reality" out of the practice of everyday-life, the regulative influence of phantasies, their "scenical" unfolding of experiences [*Erlebnisse*], in which "...someone else is invariably involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent;" (Freud 1921, 69)" – all these motives demonstrate that Freud's 'natural

science of the soul' is at the same time in its essence a social science. "Individual psychology, in this extended but entirely justifiable sense of the words, is at the same time social psychology as well." (Freud 1921, 69).

On the other hand, we should not lose sight of the basic tenet of all psychoanalytic knowledge [*Erkenntnis*] (of disturbed *and* healthy people): the *bodily 'inscription'*, the inscription of sense – of a social sense – into the body. The relatedness of the contents of experiences [*Erlebnisinhalte*] to the body [*Leib*] is *the* distinctive feature of the Freudian psychology: psychoanalysis as a science deals with the social imprint on nature and the natural imprint on the social.

Certainly for Freud, this unity of contents [*Erlebnisinhalt*] and life-activity [*Lebenstätigkeit*], of the scenical template for living and drive, of phantasising and handling is a result of a "*soldering*", a unification of originally separate entities. This is the inner rift present in Freud's endeavour; an unavoidable rift as it might appear on first sight, for both poles – "nature" and "culture", this pair of irreconcilable oppositions Freud never got tired to allude to from 1908 onwards – have to be seen in their interrelation without depreciating one in favour of the other or dissolving one into the other. By no means is our stress put on the instinctual *nature* and the *content* of experiences to neutralise the opposing poles, neither by interpreting instincts as content-free pure energy, nor, on the other hand, reducing the contents of experience [*Inhaltlichkeit des Erlebens*] to a superficial cultural-environmentalistic theory of family. Both positions have to be acknowledged in their fullest depth, a depth Freud could only beseech in mystical terms: the life-determining dialectic of nature, Eros and Thanatos (Freud 1930, 145) on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the "... the uncontrolled and indestructible forces in the human mind, ... the ‚demoniac’ power ..." (Freud 1900, 614) active in the foundation of our experiencing, the Unconscious, and the "primal phantasies" (Freud 1917a, 371), according to Freud "... a phylogenetic endowment" (c. l.) stemming from the early days of man kind and therefore of archaic dignity:

"In them, the individual reaches beyond his own experience into primeval experience at points where his own experience has been too rudimentary. It seems to me quite possible that all the things that are told to us to-day in analysis as phantasy – the seduction of children, the inflaming of sexual excitement by observing parental intercourse, the threat of castration (or rather castration itself) – were once real occurrences in the primeval times of the human family, and that children in their phantasies are simply

filling in the gaps in individual truth with prehistoric truth. I have repeatedly been led to suspect that psychology of the neuroses has stored up in it more of the antiquities of human development than any other source." (Freud 1917a, 371)

Both positions, the extension of drive-theory, i.e. the opposition of Eros and Thanatos, and the appraisal of archaic inheritance, have been criticised elsewhere from different perspectives. Facing these criticisms one must nevertheless admit that the false conclusion still contains a fruitful irritation, a fact that still distinguishes Freud from the majority of his critics. In the end, the problem is the following: as psychoanalysis focuses on the analysis of experiences [*Erlebnisanalyse ist*], in the course of analysing it cannot go beyond the realm of these. In analysing experiences, the Freudian method reconstructs profiles of experiences and not events (although the former does hint at the latter). This matter of affairs characterises the psychoanalytic dilemma of knowledge:

- in tracing back the impairments of human beings, psychoanalysis should be able to spot the impairing social processes,
- being an analysis of experiences, psychoanalysis on its own cannot reach out for the social processes. The analysis of subjective structures has to be accompanied – externally – by an analysis of the objective structure of the over-all social context.

In an attempt to overcome this problem seemingly so easy to solve by an alliance of psychoanalytic and sociological findings, e.g. in respect to family, again the motive of the 'bodily inscription of social sense' does not allow for a superficial harmonisation. The mediation of social sense and structure of personality must not be allocated to the level of Ego- and Super-Ego contents. It must be found somewhere beyond the capacity to experience in the depth of the unity of bodily functioning and fabric of sense:

- in the unity of biology and culture *in* the drive, or better: *as* the drive,
- in the foundation of experiencing, hence before experiencing and therefore pre-individually "beyond the Pleasure Principle".

This depth is mirrored in the Freudian archaism. In taking refuge to mystical formulations, Freud paid tribute to the problem and conserved it in full width for later investigations.

If one dissolves the ontology inherent in Freud's dialectic of nature, if one dissolves the metaphysic of his "beyond the pleasure-principle" and the myth of phylogenetic inheritance, the justification of the Freudian speculations (as he referred to them) strikingly appears: the mystic speculative formulation gives an appropriate account of the fact that here states of affairs are concerned that go beyond the psychoanalytic frame of reference. In its foundation, the psychoanalytic subject matter, the practical directives of action and patterns of interpretation, of the individual reach down to a 'deep' level underneath 'subjectivity'. They are anchored in the *pre-individual* of the individuals, in the melting together of the 'biological' and the 'social' reality forming the 'basis' of the individual. Certainly the ontological distortion of the Eros-Thanatos-dialectic of nature has to be dissolved while, at the same time, the insight must be kept that here the frontier to the 'cross-individual hereafter' [*überindividuellem Jenseits*] of subjectivity is trespassed towards the foundation of subjectivity in organic processes. Of course, the 'fundamental principles' underlying subjectivity, consciousness and experiencing are not metaphysical entities in the sense of an "eternal Eros" (Freud 1930, 145). Instead, they are basic structures of human practice, organised on a level beyond the individual and inscribed into the body in each single ontogenesis or, to be more precise, 'written down' *as* body. The primary forms of personality, categories in which "experiences" are organised (Freud 1926, 167), these schemata of life-practice [*Lebenspraxis*] are not handed over from generation to generation in a kind of hidden stream. They are not phylogenetic inheritance but are produced in each single ontogenesis as a precipitate of interactions (starting from the first prenatal organismic stimulus-reaction-patterns). Nevertheless, these primary formulas of experience are pre-subjective for they reach back beyond the first formations of consciousness and the capacity to experience subjectively [*Ansätze des Erlebens*]. Furthermore, they are a '*collective inheritance*' in so far as it is indeed the collective, which, via one of its members – the mother – pre-establishes the foundation of the capacity to experience and determines the bodily formulas of action and reaction. This must not be compared to a die. It rather forms one element of the practical-dialectic, the to and fro in the mother-child-dyad, the complementary element being the capacities of the inner nature of the infant. This collective inheritance consists of the formulas of social practice and which have to be seen as being in interplay with historically developed cultural patterns. Therefore, they can be described as '*cultural inheritance*'. This inheritance is passed on, one has

to stress once more, by means of concrete actual forms of practice and concrete real interactions. Already from the first physical stage of development onwards, the fundamental structures of personality are a precipitate of real interaction, registrations of scenes, inscriptions of social sense [*sozialer Sinn*] into the body. They are directives to the functional patterns of the developing human being.

From this follows that these functional patterns are not only subjective but also pre-material in a sense that can be illuminated by means of a summary of our reformulation: never does the embryonic organism materialise itself purely biologically and set apart from history or society. It does not unfold itself in a monadic autonomy. From the beginning on, rather, its 'capacities' are step by step (to be) realised in a constant interplay. Consequently, one has to state: form follows function. The 'material Gestalt' of the developing human being results from concrete (already intrauterine) interplay with the maternal organism (i.e. the maternal practice). Society and its impact on the body do not approach it 'externally'. The body itself, this 'transmission' is a product of social practice via the interplay taking place in the mother-child-unit.

Once the Freudian myths of Eros and Thanatos and the myth of phylogenetic inheritance are dissolved in that way, the theory of a "soldering" of content and energy into the basic elements of personality, the unconscious phantasies as a soldering of "representation of instinctual wish and motor action", becomes superfluous. Indeed, first of all, the concept of "instinctual cathexis" becomes superfluous. This concept was to warrant the content-bound characteristic of instinctual processes and, vice versa, the roots of primary phantasies in the body without watering down the natural features of drives or disentangling social practice and the capacity to experience. The archaism was meant to express the pre-subjective determinism of the capacity to experience, which goes beyond the individual – we decipher it as the 'here after' [*Jenseits*] placed in the objective pre-history. We therefore should decisively state: the nucleus of the Unconscious does not lie before history, as Freud assumed.

"The content of the *Ucs.* may be compared with an aboriginal population in the mind. If inherited mental formations exist in the human being – something analogous to instinct [*german Instinkt vs. Trieb*] in animals – these constitute the nucleus of the *Ucs.*" (Freud 1915b, 195)

Instead, it has its place in the actual historical situation. Primary phantasies are not a phylogenetic inheritance. They are a sediment of the first steps of development [*Bildungsschritte*] in the course of the ontogenetic formation of the human organism, way before the first

rudimentary precursors of the capacity to experience or of an individuality rooted in this capacity to experience are found.

This applies to the evolving capacity to experience material objects [*Gegenstandserfahrung*] developing from the organismic interaction as well as it applies to the drive. "Drives" are the bodily processes that serve to satisfy those bodily needs in order to survive [*Lebensbedarf*] and that cannot be satisfied purely intra-organically. In human beings, the meeting of these requirements is inevitably linked to specific forms of interaction being 'agreed on' by both organisms, namely the maternal and the infantile organism. The result of this 'agreement' is of an imperative character: the bodily requirement [*Körperbedarf*] has to be satisfied in exactly this particular socialised way; the organism is in its systemic balance tuned in to historic-cultural-social forms. In this way, bodily requirements [*Körperbedarf*] are shaped into bodily needs [*Körperbedürfnisse*] that are unique expectations of future satisfaction of drives. Bodily needs [*Körperbedürfnisse*] and the profile of drives [*Triebprofile*] come into being in mutual correspondence. In terms of self-experience this means: the bodily urge is experienced in specific models of experience, in specific "unconscious phantasies". Both, the urge for nutrition and the urge for socialising, the hunger for love, are made up from socialised and internalised 'forms of interaction'. Formed in the depths underlying consciousness, these bodily templates of experience make up for the infinite roots of "phantasy" [*den unauslotbaren Grund*].

Such a conception of the primary *unity of drive and phantasy rooted in bodily processes* of course demands for a solution to the following riddle: how do these primary and purely organismic bodily experiences gradually gain the feature of mental experience and later on of consciousness? How does consciousness meet with these sensual unconscious complexes of experience, with these bodily templates of behaviour?

For a thorough discussion, it has to be referred to earlier publications (c. Lorenzer 1973). Here, in brief, only this can be said: consciousness evolves from a registration of word-representations, added to the registration of bodily experiences. In the process of learning language, being introduced into language, each interaction between mother and child (or a substitute of the mother and the child) is labelled with a 'name', conventionally with the name 'mum'. One and the same situation is registered twice, firstly as a bodily inscription of the interaction-form, which can also be called a "senso-motoric interaction-engram", and secondly as a sound-engram, registered in the system of aural perception and speaking. A sound-engram is formed and is linked to the interaction-

engram. The registration of the situation is accompanied by the registration of the word. Together, both make up for the "symbol"⁶ standing for the real situation. The bodily gestalt of an experience, called – in accordance with Freud – an "unconscious phantasy", becomes conscious. The formation of a symbolic interactionform allows for "experimental action" (Freud 1925, 238), a playful experimenting with behaviour taking place in body and mind.

Operating with these figures of speech (the speaking and hearing human being has under his command), "situational traces" are evoked independently from the factual matter of affairs. Complexes of completely different kind can be linked and in – now conscious – phantasy, scenes can be imitated [*nachgebildet*], pre-shaped [*vorgebildet*] or be formed completely originally [*neu zusammengesetzt*]. Nevertheless, the foundations of this new capacity are the "unconscious phantasies", from the beginnings of intrauterine life being bodily inscribed as traces of life [*eingeschriebene Lebensspuren*] and determining experience [*erfahrungsbildend*], body [*leibbildend*] and personality [*persönlichkeitsbildend*].

This model, which, in this context, can only be dealt with in its most basic terms (and without focussing on the specificities of symbol-formation in the case of neurosis), can be related to an old draft of Freud's, present in his (already quoted) paper on the Unconscious. In the course of his examination of psychosis, the following differentiation is established:

"What we have permissibly called the conscious presentation of the object can now be split up into the presentation of the *word* and the presentation of the *thing*; the latter consists in the cathexis, if not of the direct memory-images of the thing, at least of remoter memory-traces derived from these. We now seem to know all at once what the difference is between a conscious and an unconscious presentation. The two are not, as we supposed, different registrations of the same content in different psychical localities, nor different functional states of cathexis in the same locality; but the conscious presentation comprises the presentation of the thing plus the presentation of the word belonging to it, while the unconscious presentation is the presentation of the thing alone. The system *Ucs.* Contains the thing-cathexes; the system *Pcs.* comes about by this thing-presentation being hypercathexed through being linked with the word-presentations corresponding to it. It is these hypercathexes, we may

⁶ In this context, the first non-verbal formations of symbols - the linkage of two situational inscriptions forming 'pictorial symbols' - have to be left aside. Compare Lorenzer (1981), chapter V.

suppose, that bring about a higher psychical organisation and make it possible for the primary process to be succeeded by the secondary process which is dominant in the *Pcs.* " (Freud 1915b, 201-202)

In order to adopt the Freudian draft to the subject matter under discussion, some corrections have to be executed:

1. In respect to the already discussed problem of "cathexis", we do hold the opposing view that the drive is not external to the content of experience, that thing-presentations do not develop independently from instinctual impulses. Drive and object are a primary unit. Parallel to the shaping of bodily requirements into bodily needs, urging mankind in demanding a satisfaction in a distinct and specific way, another developmental differentiation takes place: out of the undifferentiated external the bodily requirement is addressed to, 'objects' are gradually evolving. The 'object' is already the concrete content of a drive and the drive is already the energetic potential of the wishful images, the unconscious phantasies.

2. The concept of "*thing*-presentation" is therefore subjected to a further criticism. It suggests a "thing-ness" [*Gegenständigkeit*] that is set apart from the ego and is opposed to it. Certainly, this is an adultomorphic distortion of the original state of affairs. Me and not-me, self and object only differentiate from each other in the course of development. In the beginning, the capacity to experience (and, as has been demonstrated already, even before this, the basic "experiences" of the embryo) only consists of the entity of "interaction" in the form of the stimulus-reaction-pattern [*Reiz-Reaktions-Bogen*]. This unity the concept of interaction-form aims at, is linked with the "word-presentation"; the presentation of the word as a name is not linked to a separate THING-representation but to a non-splitting situational experience, i.e. to "interaction-forms".

3. Furthermore, a third aspect implicit in the concept of thing-presentation and word-presentation has to be criticised. For the sake of the multiplicity of experiential qualities, the term "presentation" has to be replaced by more appropriate term "memory-trace", already introduced by Freud. His model then, exemplified in the latter quotation, can be formulated like this: unconscious phantasies are situational traces, which, in the course of learning language, are connected to word-traces, both making up for the elementary units of conscious experiencing. "Conscious experience" therefore is submitted to two 'sets of rules' – to the imperative and activity-determining system of language and to the preverbally inscribed social system of situational traces (namely interaction-forms). Both systems build up a multilayered fabric of patterns of activity and interpretation,

determining conscious experiencing from two sides. This double determination may lead to psychic conflict and conditions the consequences: in the course of "psychic conflict", this unity of the activity-compound can be dissolved again. The speech-symbolic, social and internalised pattern of behaviour, may lose its verbal part, the symbolic interactionform can be *de-symbolised* (Lorenzer 1972). Formulating it in varying Freud's model: a once verbalised situational trace may lose its linkage to the corresponding word-presentation, it becomes an unconscious phantasy again, a bodily inscription deprived of language.

How, then, is the desymbolised "unconscious phantasy" expressed? It finds expression in a 'symptom', in the 'acting-out' – and in dreams, daydreams. The latter are phantasies in the common sense of the term. In this case, the concept of 'phantasy' has a completely different meaning, compared to the one discussed above. Within psychoanalysis, speaking of "phantasising", this ambiguity is preserved.

The contents of this 'phantasising' is certainly related to these unconscious phantasies, but they are not identical with them. Unconscious phantasies, for instance seeking expression while asleep, have to undergo a certain 'course of perception' [Erkenntnisweg]. They have to be picked up by the ego, capable to reflect, and have to be processed, have to be prepared in order to be – in a first stage – transformed into pictorial symbols. These pictorial symbols evolving in dreaming mediate between the "unconscious phantasies", bodily situational traces on the one hand, and speech-symbolically developed experiences, "conscious phantasies" on the other hand. They share this intermediate position with those other direct-sensual symbols the objective representations of which we are used to speak of as pieces of art - including the poetic "phantasy".⁷

Each of these three aspects of phantasy – the unconscious phantasy, the pictorial phantasy (sensual-symbolic interactionforms) and the conscious phantasy and concepts (speech-symbolic interactionforms) – are rooted in bodily situational traces. Once a concept has lost its connection to this foundation in the depth of experience, it has been depleted to a deprived and empty sign.

⁷ Concerning the realm of arts, i.e. the sensual-symbolic interactionforms compare Lorenzer (1981), chapter V.

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