

# Freud

## A Modern Reader

Edited by  
Rosine Jozef Perelberg



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# Freud

A Modern Reader

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# Series foreword

After the first hundred years of its history, psychoanalysis has matured into a serious, independent intellectual tradition, which has notably retained its capacity to challenge established truths in most areas of our culture. The biological psychiatrist of today is called to task by psychoanalysis, as much as was the specialist in nervous diseases of Freud's time, in turn-of-the-century Vienna. Today's cultural commentators, whether for or against psychoanalytic ideas, are forced to pay attention to considerations of unconscious motivation, defences, early childhood experience and the myriad other discoveries which psychoanalysts brought to 20th-century culture. Above all, psychoanalytic ideas have spawned an approach to the treatment of mental disorders, psychodynamic psychotherapy, which has become the dominant tradition in most countries, at least in the Western world.

Little wonder that psychoanalytic thinking continues to face detractors, individuals who dispute its epistemology and its conceptual and clinical claims. While disappointing in one way, this is a sign that psychoanalysis may be unique in its capacity to challenge and provoke. Why should this be? Psychoanalysis is unrivalled in the depth of its questioning of human motivation, and whether its answers are right or wrong, the epistemology of psychoanalysis allows it to confront the most difficult problems of human experience. Paradoxically, our new understanding concerning the physical basis of our existence - our genes, nervous systems and endocrine functioning - rather than finally displacing psychoanalysis, has created a pressing need for a complementary discipline which considers the memories, desires and meanings which are beginning to be recognized as influencing human adaptation even at the biological level. How else, other than through the study of subjective experience, will we understand the expression of the individual's biological destiny, within the social environment?

It is not surprising, then, that psychoanalysis continues to attract some of the liveliest intellects in our culture. These individuals are by no means all psychoanalytic clinicians or psychotherapists. They are distinguished scholars in an almost bewildering range of disciplines, from the study of

mental disorders with their biological determinants to the disciplines of literature, art, philosophy and history. There will always be a need to explicate the meaning of experience. Psychoanalysis, with its commitment to understanding subjectivity, is in a premier position to fulfil this intellectual and human task. We are not surprised at the upsurge of interest in psychoanalytic studies in universities in many countries. The books in this series are aimed at addressing the same intellectual curiosity that has made these educational projects so successful.

We are proud that the Whurr Series in Psychoanalysis has been able to attract some of the most interesting and creative minds in the field. Our commitment is to no specific orientation, to no particular professional group, but to the intellectual challenge to explore the questions of meaning and interpretation systematically, and in a scholarly way. Nevertheless, we would be glad if this series particularly spoke to the psychotherapeutic community, to those individuals who use their own minds and humanity to help others in distress.

Our focus in this series is to communicate the intellectual excitement which we feel about the past, present and future of psychoanalytic ideas. We hope that our work with the authors and editors in the series will help to make these ideas accessible to an ever-increasing and worldwide group of students, scholars and practitioners.

Peter Fonagy  
Mary Target  
University College London

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# Introduction

ROSINE JOZEF PERELBERG

Over many years of teaching Freud to university students and to candidates at the British Institute of Psycho-Analysis, I have felt the lack of a single book that would give an overview of the complexity and subtlety of Freud's thinking, and a vision of the dialogue between the different traditions, that have been so important in my own 'formation' as a psychoanalyst. The scholarship of Freud's work, the over-determination of meanings in his ideas, the questions that he raises, and the discussions he opens up, cannot be comprehended in a single country or language, but span the continents. The British tradition has made a special contribution with an emphasis on the internal world of the individual, a focus on the transference and counter-transference, and has offered a specific contribution to the development of a Freudian tradition centred on clinical practice. It is however in France that the metapsychology has survived in its complexity, but most of the French debates have not been translated into English. A great deal can be learnt from a dialogue between these two traditions, and this is the way I tend to teach my own students. Up to now there was no textbook to offer the student of Freud; I hope this book will fill that gap.

I have selected some of Freud's key papers that are taught at the British Institute of Psycho-Analysis and in the Psychoanalysis Unit at University College London, and for each of them have invited an analyst from England or abroad who I think has made an important contribution to the understanding of that specific topic to write about it. Each chapter of the book presents a text or theme that we discuss in our programmes. All the contributors to this book are clinicians, teachers and writers, and therefore provide a multifaceted perspective, as did Freud himself. Most chapters have a similar structure. First, they summarize the main ideas or themes of the paper in question. They then identify key concepts connected to those themes, and discuss the origins of the ideas and their further development in Freud's thinking. Each chapter finishes with an appreciation by the writer. Although

most of the chapters have followed this structure, some have taken on a life of their own, so that Freud's original paper, in those cases, provides the inspiration for the writer's own thinking.

This book combines a deep analysis of Freud's original work with some of the most modern understanding of it, and demonstrates the revolutionary contribution made by Freud. It is common in the psychoanalytical literature for an author to present Freud's thinking in order to indicate how it has been superseded by more modern writers. This is not necessarily the case for all the authors in this book. At times, one can see how Freud was indeed more revolutionary than many of his followers, for instance in relation to the *primacy of sexuality*, and especially *infantile sexuality* (see Chapters 1, 2, 3, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16), in the complexity of his various *notions of time* (Chapters 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16) and the *relationship between memory and phantasy* (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15), his acknowledgement of a force in psychic life that leads us in a peremptory way – *the drive*; *the structuring importance of the negative in psychic life* (especially Chapters 15 and 16); and finally his understanding of the structuring role of the *Oedipus complex* (in all the clinical cases), in both its negative and positive configuration, in the shaping of the mind.

I will now look at each of these themes in turn.

## Sexuality

### Hysteria

The concern with sexuality, specifically female sexuality, permeates Freud's work from his early days, with 'Studies on Hysteria' (Breuer and Freud, 1893–95) until the last papers, such as 'Analysis Terminable and Interminable' (Freud, 1937a). Aspects of his views on female sexuality changed according to changes in his theory. For example, the distinction between the descriptive unconscious and the dynamic unconscious, the elaboration of the concept of the superego, and the various formulations of the conflicts between the drives (e.g. the opposition between self-preservative and libidinal drives; libido and aggression; and the life and death instincts) led to changes in his formulations on female sexuality.

At the end of the nineteenth century, medical circles vigorously debated whether hysteria was an organic or a psychological illness. The majority of the patients presenting hysterical symptoms were women and the symptoms they presented were a challenge to the medical knowledge of the time, as there was no verifiable organic lesion that corresponded to them. From 1882 onwards Freud started working with Breuer, using suggestion and hypnosis. In 1885 Freud spent five months in Paris, working with the French physician Charcot, by whom he was greatly impressed. Freud's method, however, differed from Charcot's in many ways, including the way in which the

theatrical, public nature of Charcot's approach, was replaced by the silent setting of Freud's consulting room and the invisibility of the analyst (Pontalis, 1977). In 'Studies on Hysteria', Freud and Breuer discuss the work they undertook with five patients, and each writes a theoretical chapter. Between 1880 and 1895 they developed the cathartic method by which they helped the patient to remember the traumatic event which marked the appearance of the hysterical symptom. Both Breuer and Freud noted that the symptom would progressively disappear as the patient remembered and relived these events. Freud initially used suggestion in his treatment of these patients, but progressively realized that if the patients were allowed to speak freely about their memories, the same result was observed. This is how the method of free association emerged. With this method, many of the key aspects of psychoanalysis, such as repression, transference, resistance, free associations and the unconscious, were discovered.

'Studies on Hysteria' is viewed as belonging to the first phase of Freud's work, known as 'the affect trauma theory' (Sandler et al., 1997, p. 12). This phase can be viewed as starting with Freud's return to Vienna in 1886 after his visit to Charcot, and ending in 1897 with his discovery that the traumas produced by his hysterical patients had not necessarily occurred in reality, but may have been childhood daydreams. The incestuous incidents recalled by his patients, which he had previously taken literally, he now saw as representing wishes on the part of his patients gratified by fulfilment in phantasy.

The investigation of hysteria clearly revealed that patients' behaviour could not be explained, indeed could not be identified, without reference to certain ideas or thoughts of which the patient had no awareness. For both Breuer and Freud, the hypothesis that hysterical manifestations were ideogenic in character was treated as given by observation. Disagreement between them arose because Breuer explained the symptoms in terms of hypnoid states, whereas Freud favoured a mechanism of defence.

In Chapter 1 of this book, 'Anna O: The First Case, Revisited and Revised', Ronald Britton puts us in contact with the very foundations of psychoanalysis, the heart of what led Freud to the discovery of key psychoanalytic ideas. The case of Anna O also raises central, modern issues about the mutual influences that may unwittingly be present in treatment, questions about the relationship between interpretation and suggestion. Britton's paper is rich, and contains many important ideas. First, there is the distinction between borderline and hysterical patients. Whereas in hysteria priority is given to the claim to possess the object in the realm of love, in the borderline syndrome the claim is to possess in the realm of knowledge. In hysteria there is an interplay between love and death, a reminder of Donnet's statement that in the hysteric, the declaration of love is simultaneously a declaration of war. Britton proposes a distinction between imagination, vision and hallucination, a point he has discussed more fully in previous

papers and in his book (Britton, 1998). He also points out the importance of the analytic stance in dealing with erotic transference and raises questions about its defensive use by the patient. Britton's main hypothesis in his paper is the suggestion that 'a central feature of hysteria is the use of projective identification by the subject to become in phantasy one or other or both members of the primal couple' (p. 34, this volume). He says: 'The hysteric, I suggest, gets in on the act; mounts the stage and takes one of the parental parts. By an omnipotent phantasy of projective identification they believe they are one of the primal couple performing whatever they imagine takes place in the phantasized primal scene' (p. 41, this volume).

Britton points out the relevance of the development of the transference for the progression of Anna O's symptoms. He also raises the question: What is the erotic transference a defence against? Britton presents one of his own cases, and shows that once the eroticized phantasy towards the analyst is addressed, it allows the maternal transference to come to the fore (p. 42, this volume). I will return to this point later.

It was in the discussion of the case of Katharina that Freud first related hysteria to the primal scene. He added later in a footnote the case of a young married woman who told him that her first attack of anxiety was when, as a little girl, she often saw her father get into bed with her mother and heard sounds that greatly excited her. Freud mentioned at least three further cases linking hysteria to the primal scene in a letter to Fliess, in his paper on anxiety neurosis (1895), and in his analysis of Dora, although, throughout his work, he oscillated between regarding this as a 'real event' and a 'phantasy'.

Freud attributed increasing importance to primal scene phantasies and later in his work he linked the origins of the function of phantasizing itself to these primal phantasies (see Chapter 13). According to him there is a specific, imaginary configuration to these scenes: from the child's imaginary perspective, they represent a scene of violence, where the father is inflicting anal pain on the mother. Although at the beginning of his work Freud thought that the child had actually witnessed these scenes, he increasingly believed that they were childhood phantasies about parental sexuality. Freud later suggested that hysterical attacks represented phantasies about the sexual encounter as a scene of rape (see also Perelberg, 1999).

Hysteria and bisexuality are essentially linked for Freud, who suggested that hysterical attacks express an experience of rape where the hysteric plays both parts. The hysteric represents a scene of war between the sexes, where the masculine wins over the feminine. Hysteria becomes, fundamentally, a mode of thinking about sexuality and the sexual object (Schaeffer, 1986).

Kohon has suggested that the hysterical stage, within the context of the oedipal drama, is 'a specific moment in which the subject - caught up between the need to change object from mother to father - is unable to make the necessary choice' (1999, p. 18). 'In fact, stuck in her divalent stage, the hysteric ... cannot define herself as a man or as a woman because she cannot

finally choose between her father and her mother' (1999, p. 19). Schaeffer (using an expression coined by Michel Cachoux) suggests that the hysteric, like the ruby, displays what she is in fact rejecting. The ruby is a stone that has a horror of red. It absorbs and retains all the other colours, but rejects and expels red. Thus the hysteric has a horror of red, of sexuality, while at the same time displaying it.

Hysteria works by imitation; the difference between identification and imitation is that between 'being like the object' and 'being the object'. Thus when Anna O looks at herself in the mirror she sees her father's skull. When she has a series of bodily symptoms she seems to be imitating the sexual act: her symptoms become like a theatre of the sexual act in an attempt both to deny and to represent the primal scene and deny mourning her incestuous sexual desires (Perelberg, 1999). Ronald Britton has rightly suggested that it is, however, the relinquishing of hysterical sexuality that makes it possible for the individual to discover their own sexuality.

## Dreams and sexuality

The theme of hysteria and its relationship to sexuality continues in the discussion of Dora, in Chapter 2. Dora's analysis expresses the interest that Freud had in the sexual origins of hysterical symptoms, as well as in the role of dreams as expressing unconscious conflicts. The hysterical symptom 'enacts a fantasy with a sexual content' (Cournut, p. 50, this volume), even if a single unconscious phantasy is generally not sufficient to engender a symptom.

In this analysis, Freud is still interested in the reconstruction of the trauma that had led to the appearance of the symptom, through the analysis of dreams and free associations. This clinical emphasis would change in later years, when Freud started to see the analytic process more in terms of a process of construction. I will return to this later. In this case, Freud also discovers the crucial relevance of the *transference*. 'They are new editions or facsimiles of the impulses and phantasies which are aroused and made conscious during the progress of the analysis; but they have this peculiarity, which is characteristic for their species, that they replace some earlier person with the person of the physician' (1905a[1901], p. 116). At the time of the analysis itself, Freud emphasizes the paternal transference, and it is only retrospectively, after Dora breaks off the analysis, that Freud identifies the relevance of the maternal transference. Freud was later to elaborate further on the role of transference in his papers ('The Dynamics of Transference', 1912; 'Remembering, Repeating and Working Through', 1914b; 'Observations on Transference Love', 1915a[1914]; 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle', 1920b).

Freud was to write to Fliess about the role of bisexuality in Dora's symptoms, and in a several footnotes added to the text of the analysis of Dora he indicated his mistake in underestimating Dora's love for Frau K.: 'I failed to

discover in time and to inform the patient that her homosexual (gynaecophilic) love for Frau K. was the strongest unconscious current in her mental life' (Freud, 1905a[1901], p. 120).

Crucial psychoanalytic concepts were developed in his reflections on the analysis of Dora: the mechanisms of repression, regression, fixation and identifications. The mobility of identifications, both feminine and masculine, clearly demonstrated to him the primacy of bisexuality in every individual.

In Chapter 2, Cournut suggests that in the discussion of Dora, Freud appeared to envisage a precocious knowledge of the vagina, as a hollow organ, in a small girl who would be primarily a girl and not a 'small man' first, as she was subsequently featured for a long time in his theory (Cournut, p. 57, this volume). In her contemplation of the Sistine Chapel, and in her love for Frau K., whose importance Freud then recognized, Cournut identifies a maternal phantasy. Dora, who is still adolescent, 'also loves the woman she herself will be, in the person of the lovely Frau K., who is desirable, as her father has clearly indicated to her'.

The work on Dora also contains a description of the psychoanalytic method of free association:

I now let the patient himself choose the subject of the day's work, and in that way I start out from whatever surface his unconscious happens to be presenting to his notice at the moment. But on this plan everything that has to do with the clearing-up of a particular symptom emerges piecemeal, woven into various contexts, and distributed. (Freud, 1905a[1901], p. 12)

Freud's revolutionary idea that the concern with sexuality makes its appearance early in children and may be found at the origin of many childhood symptoms is confirmed in the analysis of Little Hans, the first case of child psychoanalysis. The case, discussed in Chapter 3 by Jane Temperley, illustrates the importance of infantile sexuality, not by inference from adult neurosis, but by direct observation of a child. It also provides a description of how, with the repression of infantile sexuality, a neurotic compromise, a symptom, is formed.

The analysis took place between January and May 1908, on the basis of notes that the father took and then discussed with Freud. These notes contain evidence of Little Hans's great interest in his penis, and in the difference between the sexes. Does his mother have a 'widdler'? And what about his sister? How are babies born? One can only admire Little Hans for persisting in his enquiries, in spite of the ambiguous responses given by both his mother and father that, for instance, women also have a 'widdler', or that children are brought by storks. As Temperley states:

In one of the most charming and convincing passages in the paper Hans teasingly reveals to his father that he knew the baby had been with them 'inside the stork box' during the summer before her birth. He is immensely impressed by the joys of parenthood and surrounds himself with his toy children. When his father

informs him that only women can give birth to babies he protests that this is not so, denying this sexual difference as fiercely as some little girls deny their 'castration'. (p. 63, this volume)

Little Hans expressed jealousy towards his father and a desire to give his mother babies, thus revealing himself as a 'little Oedipus'. At the same time, however, his homosexual attachment to his father is also recognized. The account of the case gives plenty of evidence of Hans's identification with his mother and the wish to give birth to babies, although this is not explored by Freud in the paper and will be discussed only in 1926 in 'Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety'. There Freud suggests that both Hans's and the Wolf Man's animal phobias are derived from tender, passive, homosexual desires towards the father which have been distorted by regression to the oral phase, as well as by repression.

I would suggest that the interplay of masculine and feminine identifications in relation to the primal scene is a thread which permeates Freud's case studies from Dora, to Little Hans, the Rat Man, Schreber, the Wolf Man, and 'Psychogenesis of a Case of Sexuality in a Woman' (all of which are discussed in this book).

At the time he wrote about Little Hans, Freud regarded the prevalence of irrational anxiety in neurotic patients as due to a transformation of repressed libido into anxiety. Once the libido was transformed by repression into anxiety, it could not be re-transformed. Freud suggests that Hans's original outbreak of anxiety was not organized around a phobia. The phobia is a secondary defence against the anxiety hysteria, achieved by organizing the anxiety around a phobic object. It restricted Hans's mobility and his psychic exploration of the world of sexuality represented by the horses and wagons in the street, but kept him in the house near his mother.

This paper is an account of the development of a phobia. It is also an account of its alleviation by means of psychoanalytic intervention. Once his wish to supplant his father and have sexual possession of his mother is interpreted to Hans, there is an alleviation of the symptoms.

## Narcissism

Narcissism marks a transition in Freud's thinking, originating a set of conflicts in Freud's theory that paved the way for the structural model of the mind.

As Perelberg indicates in Chapter 4, 'On Narcissism' radically changed the concept of the ego. From then on, the ego was no longer just a place for mastering the drives, but became an 'object', an image, a vestige of past identifications. The ego is no longer seen as independent of any relationship, but is rather the result of the internalization of relationships (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1985). This idea was to be more fully developed in 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917[1915]) where Freud gave a full account of an internal object relationship that involved projection and identification. In this paper,

it is the loss of the object which makes the subject aware of it. This opened the way for the theory more fully presented in 'The Ego and the Id' (Freud, 1923) of an ego built from and modified by 'abandoned object cathexes'.

In 'Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood' (1910) Freud gives his first theoretical statement on narcissism, as he tries to explain the mechanism of a libidinal cathexis that leads to narcissistic choice:

The boy represses his love for his mother: he puts himself in her place, identifies himself with her, and takes his own person as a model in whose likeness he chooses new objects of his love ... He finds the objects of his love along the path of narcissism. (1910, p. 100)

Narcissistic object choice is a theme that can be found in Freud's papers on Leonardo (1910), the Rat Man (1909b), Schreber (1911) and the Wolf Man (1918[1914]). In 'Totem and Taboo' (1913) Freud suggests that in the stage of narcissism 'the hitherto isolated sexual instincts have already come together into a single whole and have also found an object' (1913, p. 147).

In the paper 'On Narcissism', Freud discusses types of object choice, and goes on to put forward for the first time his idea of an ego ideal. Each individual has set up an ideal in himself by which he measures his actual ego (1914a, p. 93). This formation of an ideal is for Freud the conditioning factor of repression. This ideal ego is the target of the self-love which was enjoyed in childhood by the ego, 'the substitute for the lost narcissism of his childhood in which he was his own ideal' (*ibid.*, p. 94). The paper shows Freud's growing interest in an internal world.

The paper also exposes the inadequacy of Freud's early division of the drives into the sexual and the egotistic. He did not, however, want to supplant libido with a universal energy, as he charged Jung had done; nor did he wish to supplant libido with a universal aggressive force, which, he said, was Adler's mistake. The metapsychological papers will pave the way to the reformulation of Freud's theory of drives to the conflict between life and death drives (see footnote 3, page 89, this volume).

## Metapsychology

Freud's papers on metapsychology can be seen as having no connection with a theory of practice, but rather as an expression of an intellectual tradition, a path taken by Freud in his work that is crucial to the understanding of his formulations. In Britain and America, with rare exceptions, the metapsychological papers are regarded as a relic of the past. It is in France that these papers come alive and are part of an intellectual tradition that gives Freud's work enormous depth. As Jean-Claude Rolland emphasizes in Chapter 5, the metapsychological papers cannot be read in the same way as so many of the more clinical papers. They are pervaded by a sense of 'strangeness' (p.96, this volume) in which it is almost as if it is Freud's unconscious that speaks to



the reader's unconscious, opening doors which illuminate the enigma of the unconscious: 'metapsychology has no more decisive definition than to be, like instinct is for psychical activity, the call to work imposed on the theoretician by the concern to make clinical experience ever more coherent' (Rolland, p. 97, this volume). Rolland points out how these texts had to be in place before Freud could take the leap towards the even stranger text of 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' and the structural model of the mind. He adds:

The game, for child and man, is certainly something as grave and complex as metapsychology is for the theoretical analyst. And metapsychology should always be for the latter as enjoyable and liberating as playing is for the child: something between appropriation and discovery. (Rolland, p. 101, this volume)

We are told by Ernest Jones and Peter Gay that between 1914 and 1915 Freud wrote to Lou Andreas-Salomé and Abraham of his project to write a book of twelve essays on metapsychology called 'Preparatory Essays for Metapsychology'. The metapsychological papers appear to be the culmination of Freud's exploration of the topographical model of the mind, the distinctions between the systems Pcs-Cs and UCS, the first theory of drives with its distinction between pleasure/unpleasure, and between primary process and secondary process. These papers also lie at the crossroads that will lead to new ideas such as processes of identifications, the importance of the object, repetition compulsion, negative therapeutic reaction and the role of aggression.

In 1915 Freud used the term 'repression' to stand for a whole range of mental processes designed to exclude an instinctual wish from awareness. He regards 'the mind as a battleground'. There are all too many prospective pleasures that turn into pain because the human mind is not a monolith. The Oedipus complex in its various incarnations is the most telling instance of such domestic conflicts (Gay, 1988, p. 365). Freud illustrated his general points with clinical instances.

For example, Freud indicates how the work of repression needs to be repeated over and over again: 'Repression demands a persistent expenditure of force' (1915c, p. 151). What has been repressed has not been wiped out, but has only been stored in the unconscious where it continues to press for gratification.

'The Unconscious' is the third and the longest of the metapsychological papers. The concept of the unconscious was first introduced in connection with repression or defence, as a way of characterizing the fate of ideas that incur repression. Freud put it explicitly: 'We obtain our concept of the unconscious from the theory of repression' (Freud, 1923, p. 15). A cycle of the following kind was postulated: An idea, for some reason or other, is repressed. It remains in the mind, at once removed from consciousness and yet operative; and then, in certain favoured circumstances, it may reappear in

consciousness. Importantly, the unconscious was thus linked to the notion of discontinuities in our mental processes.

The paper on the unconscious is divided into seven chapters which cover a variety of subjects: a justification for the concept, the various meanings of the term and the topographical point of view, unconscious emotions, the topography and dynamics of repression, the special characteristics of the Ucs system, the communication between the two systems, i.e. the unconscious and the conscious, and, finally, the assessment of the unconscious. According to Luiz Eduardo Prado de Oliveira (Chapter 6), this text is of considerable importance:

It represents a great effort to answer a set of questions which appears often enough in Freud's works: may a single thing exist simultaneously at several different places and manifest itself obeying several different manners? (p. 115, this volume)

And furthermore: can two or more different things simultaneously occupy a single place and manifest themselves in similar modes? The answer to these questions is always positive. The concept of over-determination or of multiple determination underlies this answer and brings it all its richness and ramifications. Prado de Oliveira suggests that this concept, one of the most revolutionary in Freud's thought, remains largely unexplored, not only in psychoanalysis, but generally.

Rolland (Chapter 5) suggests that the metapsychological papers indicate an important distinction between clinical fact, theoretical concept and methodological tool:

we now have solid bases to differentiate more clearly a clinical fact, a theoretical concept and what for lack of a better word I shall call a metapsychological 'tool'. A *clinical fact* is obvious to each of us: a phenomenon that attentive observation presents as an opposition to our immediate understanding because it appears to disturb the normal course of life or upset the logic we spontaneously accord it. (pp. 101-102, this volume)

And again:

Based on multiple clinical facts, proceeding from places of observation that are diverse but, by analogy, remain centred on the powerfully regressive conduct that certain patients adopt in the cure, Freud postulated a theoretical concept, repetition compulsion, which he defined like this: 'The repetition compulsion thus brings back experiences from the past which contain no possibility of pleasure and that even in their day proved incapable of providing satisfaction, not even to the instinctual drives that were ultimately repressed.' The third moment of his work consisted in giving to this concept a metapsychological basis. (p. 105, this volume)

According to Rolland, Freud denied nothing of the work of sexuality in the repetition compulsion when he invoked the action that falls to the death

instinct: the latter merely explains what encumbers the course of the former, fixes it to 'traumatic' situations from the past, and conceals access to the objects of the present.

Rolland regards 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle' as enormously influential in the development of the concept of the repetition compulsion. Moreover, he suggests that the text does not establish a discontinuity between the death instinct as a force distinct from the sexual instinct. His reading leads him to consider this textual discontinuity

as an echo of the fracture over which the two currents of Eros explode. The death instinct represents and designates, in sexual life, the originating tendency which forces the libido to remain attached to its incestuous objects, opposes their being renounced and, by the same token, opposes the liaison of this primordial instinct (which pushes toward objects because it cannot do without them) to objects of substitution. The pair sexual instinct, death instinct, incarnates in a 'paradigmatic' opposition the duality of libidinal movement oscillating between incestuous attraction commanded by unconscious fantasy and object-libido, submitted, by a lengthy travail of civilization, to repression. (p. 107, this volume)

Rolland's views of Freud's paper are in contrast to Gilbert Diatkine's, who in Chapter 8 regards the death instinct as a clinical concept. Diatkine indicates three main reasons for the postulation of the concept of the death instinct. Firstly, he believes that the theory of civilization which Freud had defended since the very birth of psychoanalysis was struck a terrible blow by the First World War, which made it impossible to believe in a theory of humanity governed by the pleasure principle. Secondly, 'Mourning and Melancholia' contained a striking description of sadism directed towards the internalized object. Thirdly, he suggests that the need for repetition is used to satisfy the need for suffering which had been described in the Wolf Man case study.

Diatkine traces the debates in France around the concept of the death instinct and gives a fine illustration of current work amongst French psychoanalysts who utilize the concept (including the work of André Green, Denys Rybas, the French School of Psychosomatics, Claude Balier and Patrick Decklerk, as well as opponents of the concept such as Paul Denis).

### **'Mourning and Melancholia'**

In 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917) Freud gives a full account of an internal object relationship that involved projection and identification. If in mourning the person knows they have lost someone, in melancholia it is a part of the self that has been lost. Freud describes the processes of loss of the object, ambivalence and regression of the libido into the ego (*ibid.*, p. 258).

The melancholic is back to a narcissistic identification with the object, which also implies idealization. The ego treats itself as an object, and falls apart into two pieces, one of which rages against the second. There is a monumental step taken in this work in terms of shifting attention to the ego:

let us dwell for a moment on the view which the melancholic disorder affords of the constitution of the human ego. We see how in him one part of the ego sets itself over against the other, judges it critically, and as it were, takes it as its object. Our suspicion that the critical agency which is here split off from the ego might also show its independence in other circumstances will be confirmed by every further observation. We shall really find grounds for distinguishing this agency from the rest of the ego. What we are here becoming acquainted with is the agency commonly called conscience. (ibid., p. 247)

This agency called 'conscience' will become the 'superego' in 'The Ego and the Id' (1923), and the concept of 'splitting' will find further elaboration in the papers 'Splitting of the Ego in the Process of Defence' (1940[1938]) and 'Fetishism' (1927). In melancholia there is a process of oral introjection of the object which is 'devoured', and identification with it. The melancholic blames the object with which the ego is identified – and it looks as if it is blaming itself. Freud's description of the process through which the ego unconsciously identifies with the introjected bad object (the rejecting loved object), thus becoming a victim of its own superego, was one of the most important discoveries in psychoanalysis. The idea is that when one is attacking oneself one is in fact unconsciously accusing somebody else whose victim one feels one is but whom, through a process of introjection and identification, one has become.

In discussing this paper in Chapter 7, Ingês Sodré indicates how Freud implicitly describes an internal situation that involves different introjections and identifications.

The ego and the internalized object(s) changing roles and geographical positions in the mind, but also in which two scenarios with very different emotional tones constantly interweave: the ego darkened by the shadow of the object, and the ego cannibalistically devouring the object; grief and guilt in constant oscillation with hatred and grievance. Depression can only be understood if one keeps in mind the dynamics of these mutually influencing and always, at some level, omnipresent states. (p. 140, this volume)

And also:

The loved object is hated for its cruel desertion. But the ego, perceiving itself as full of hatred for the object, is also felt to be unlovable. (p.127, this volume).

The link with the external object is lost, 'but the withdrawal into an apparently objectless state implies in fact an internal, powerfully possessive relationship with the object which now resides only in the inner world'. Sodré adds:

This is the beginning of the theory of internal object relations: the inner world conceptualized as a real three-dimensional space where self and object have multifaceted, variously changeable relationships with each other. What is 'so disagreeable' in the counter-transference, when experiencing the melancholic world of

the patient, is the tyrannical nature of the immobilization caused by the need to keep the object (the internal one, and also the analyst in the transference) forever imprisoned. (pp. 129–30, this volume)

Sodré illustrates some of her views on the text with a clinical example from one of the first pioneers of psychoanalysis, the Viennese psychoanalyst Helene Deutsch. The title of her paper is derived from an essay by the literary critic Edmund Wilson, 'The Wound and the Bow', in which he discusses Sophocles' play *Philoctetes*. Conflicts involving guilt, responsibility and grievance lie at the core of this play, and Sodré suggests it provides a good illustration of Freud's statement: 'The complex of melancholia behaves like an open wound, drawing to itself cathectic energies [...] from all directions, emptying the ego until it is totally impoverished' (1917, p. 253).

Sodré concludes that understanding a melancholic patient means unravelling the various identifications with different aspects of the internal objects,

as well as all the variations of tone from cannibalistic murderous rage to sadness and guilt and horror at the destruction caused by the self – and the consequent experience of the pain of being unloved, justly so, as it were, and therefore unlovable forever: 'the ego lets itself die'. (p.134, this volume)

## Identifications, superego and the structural model of the mind

The concept of narcissism, which described how the self can be cathected as an object, and the metapsychological papers, especially 'Mourning and Melancholia', expressed the tensions and contradictions in Freud's topographical model of the mind which led to the elaboration of the structural model of the mind. In Chapter 9 Margret Tonnesmann indicates some of these tensions, and traces the shift from a model of the mind conceived of areas, to a model of the mind composed of agencies, the id, the ego and superego. One such tension was the way in which Freud had attempted to distinguish between the dynamic unconscious and the descriptive unconscious. In the *descriptive* sense, Freud used the term to refer to a quality of mental state, indicating that a particular mental event or process existed outside conscious awareness. The system Ucs indicated, by contrast, a specific *topographical location* within the mental apparatus. In a dynamic sense it referred to mental contents which were not allowed to reach consciousness or motor expression. With the introduction of a second censorship (1915d), in the paper 'The Unconscious', between the Pre-Conscious and Conscious systems it became evident that many preconscious derivatives of the Ucs could be dynamically Ucs while not located in system Ucs (see Sandler et al. (1997) for a discussion of this point).

In her chapter, Tonnesmann focuses on how the concept of the ego ideal

was partially replaced by that of the superego. In 'On Narcissism' and 'Group Psychology', Freud discusses a special segment of the ego which critically watches over it. The clarification of the concept of the superego occupies Freud throughout 'The Ego and the Id'. It has been suggested that the book should have been called 'The Ego, the Id and the Super-ego' (Sandler et al., 1997).

In his 'New Introductory Lectures' (1933), written a decade later, Freud viewed the formation of the superego as dependent on the growth of identifications. Children first choose their parents as objects of their love and are then forced to relinquish these choices as unacceptable, and identify with them by taking their attitudes into themselves. Having begun by wanting to *have* their parents, they end up wanting to *be like* them. They construct their identifications on that the model of the parental superego.

Radical changes also took place in the ego of the structural model, in the idea that a part of the ego is unconscious. The unconscious ceases to be just what is repressed, but becomes a containing structure. Green considers that the most important change in the structural mode is the unconsciousness of the ego.

## Psychoanalysis as a method: the single case study

Freud studied the various psychopathologies of his time. He utilized the clinical model of investigation, based on a single qualitative case study, through which he constructed a theory of obsessional neurosis (based on his understanding of the Rat Man), of paranoia (based on the Schreber case) and of hysteria. One can identify the way in which his case studies are understood by means of the simultaneous study of structure and history. In the single case study, the aim is the understanding of the working of a functional structure. In each case, the structural approach is inseparable from the developmental approach. In this way, Freud constructed hypotheses about the successive stages that gave rise to the structure. This can be beautifully attested to through the detailed analysis of his case studies as presented in this volume. In the process of analysing several case studies, Freud constructed a 'family of cases' which led to models of psychopathologies (Perron, 1998). It is the clinical investigation that allowed Freud to construct theoretical models (see Perelberg, 2003).

We discussed earlier the way in which Little Hans can be viewed as a text about Freud's thinking on psychosexuality. The enigma of psychosexuality, with the primary phantasies of castration, primal scene and seduction, resides in the questions that are asked about the body of the other. It is in relation to his male cases (Little Hans and the Wolf Man) that Freud encounters the fantasy of castration.

In the 'Three Essays' (1905b), Freud suggested that it is voyeurism that provides the energy for the drive for knowledge. This drive for knowledge is