FROM TRANSFERENCE TO METAPHOR

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"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" (Freud 1900, 588). It is with these words that Freud begins Section E of the seventh chapter of The Interpretation of Dreams, the part dealing with primary and secondary processes. What problem does he take on?

Elements in this complicated whole which are in fact simultaneous can only be represented successively in my description of them, while the ground on which it is based: difficulties such as these it is beyond my strength to master. (588)

Freud tells us something, not only about the problems of description, but also about the limits of describability in general. These limits, which are very strict, are tied to the problem of Schrift (writing). This term surfaces very early in Freud, as early as in the letters to Fliess (Freud 1887-1904). There is an "inner limitation on writing," Lacan says, which is decisive for the dream. Is there a connection here with what Freud, for his part, says about the dream as holy text? Strictly speaking, what is an issue here concerns an extremely precise indication of how to interpret. Not even the minutest detail expressed by the analysand is superfluous. For the moment, however, I would only like to underline the correlation of text and analysis. Wherever an interpretation is possible, a text comes into existence. The latter is unknown and unconscious and only emerges by way of interpretation.

What does this text deal with? This is a difficult question, one which we can only touch upon here rather than treat exhaustively. The text is that wherein the subject is inscribed and that which determines, unconsciously, the whole story of a subject's life, down to its last detail. The name (first and last) is often the only thing that a person knows of this text. It is easy to ascertain, within and beyond analysis, how some components of the text are "transferred" from one generation to the next. Often the subject becomes almost tragically enmeshed in the text. The more he attempts to liberate himself from it, the more he becomes ensnared in its web of entrapment. This is perhaps the simplest definition of tragedy.

The myth of Oedipus teaches us exactly the same thing. After the oracle has spoken its prophecy, his parents do everything possible to prevent it from coming
true. But precisely this occurs. It is very important to keep this point in mind in understanding the specific character of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is anti-tragic. It is a struggle against fate. Through interpretation, analysands learn to deal with the text and to liberate themselves from its power, which is often tyrannical.

Freud’s problem could be interpreted as follows: the crucial point of each and every analysis is the dialectic between the synchronism of a text and the diachronism of the (neurotic) story at hand. The latter consists of a series of anecdotes, or of what could be called a family myth. Similarly, Lacan spoke of “The Neurotic’s Individual Myth” in 1953. Some analysis never gets off the ground because they fail to go beyond facts or events. The breakthrough to something else, to what could be called the synchronism of the text, does not take place. In other words: it does not become clear to the analysands that the words they speak emanate and gain their meaning from somewhere else. Some analysands exercise such control over what they say that they even manage to avoid letting out the occasional Freudian slip.

Let us pursue this dialectic between diachronism and synchronism, between story and text, between contingency and necessity. The *Traumdeutung* is an attempt to re-trace the thread of time, despite many obstacles, despite opposition of the subject, despite distortions and falsifications brought by memory.

But to where should the thread of time be re-traced? This question is central to the practice of psychoanalysis. If this *progression rétrograde*, as Lacan calls it, is not held within limits, analysis becomes perpetual. This can be observed from time to time. Indeed it would seem that some analysis can come to an end only through the death of the analyst, or the analysand. Sometimes, however, an analysis cannot be brought to an end because it never really began. To begin analysis, one is often forced to reach for somewhat more emphatic scansion in order to put the whole process into motion. This is the function of the *preliminary sessions*. Only then does it become clear who is prepared to do analysis and who is not. These are the conditions faced by the analysand.

For the analyst, the problem is different. The analyst’s ability to follow an analysis, to begin it and to end it, is dependent on the theory being utilized. Theory is not something self-contained or definitive but has to be re-interpreted for each clinical situation, and the way we approach it says a lot about the way we work.

My working hypothesis is that analysis is defined by its relation to the written word (or to the text). This applies to the three stages in the progress of analysis:

1) its beginning, directly after the preliminary sessions;
2) its main part, transference; and
3) its end, which consists in being able to liquidate the transference.

Following on what we have said up to this point about the text, we can now add that access to the text can be found only within transference. Is this solely the actualization of an unconscious text which is already there or is it, above and beyond this, a completely new textual creation? What, all in all, are we to think of the concept of transference as writing?

I do not claim to have an answer to this question. But the best way of coming closer to an answer is to take a clinical example as our starting point that will serve as an introduction to Freud’s Dream of Irma’s Injection.

But first, a short etymological reflection. “To transfer” is a literal translation of the Greek *metaphorèin*. As a clinical phenomenon, transference generates metaphor. An analysand’s resistance to transference hinders access to metaphor. For its part, metaphor only emerges by transference.

In other words, transference is the prerequisite for interpretation. But what is interpreted? It is an unconscious desire, which is repressed and which has to be actualized by transference. In Freud’s words, this is the transference taken from the remotest to the most recent, from an infantile desire to a *Tagesschaft* (day’s residue).

Once again, we see to what extent time enters into constituting transference. The remotest can be related to what Freud called *der Kern unseres Wesens*, which is inexpressible and incomprehensible. The same can be said of desire. Since it cannot be expressed, it must be interpreted. The whole of dream interpretation is based on this concept which can be formulated even more radically.

What we have referred to here as the remotest is to be found beyond memory and therefore is accessible only by way of transference. Furthermore, it never belonged to any historical epoch of subjective life. The remotest can more readily be defined as transhistorical, that is, as something that never existed but which traverses and determines the story of the subject. We come then to the conclusion, which only seems to be a paradox, that the most decisive factor in determining subjective life never existed, was never actual, and therefore never palpable. Is it Nothingness?

It is easy to understand that transference takes various forms depending on the particular psychopathological structure at hand. More to the point, transference brings the latter to light, and in a way that is usually full of surprises. Difficulties of transference can be caused by the analysand’s impression that a boundary must be crossed, beyond which one is no longer sure of oneself, beyond which one can no longer know, foresee, or exercise control. Often, it seems as if one must cross a desert. In Hebrew, *hamidbar* (desert) means the place where words or language come to a person.

* Cf. The Interpretation of Dreams, original German edition *Gesammelte Werke*, Chapter VII, C and E, II/III, 568 and 603.
The analysand's difficulty in crossing the border which separates the knowable from the unknowable is what we call resistance. The same obstacle can affect the analyst. In order to fight the reduction of analysis to an interpretation of resistance, Lacan asserts the abrupt formulation that resistance is on the analyst's side. Interpretation as interpretation of desire is only possible when someone is prepared to go beyond what can be known. This holds true for the analyst as well as for the analysand.

Daring not to know is a fundamental prerequisite of analysis. Only then can the Grundregel (fundamental rule) be applied, which requires that the analysand say whatever comes to mind without being selective and without fear of uttering something silly. If we consider this in a strict sense, then analysis is a gradual and progressive learning of the Grundregel. Analysis would then be a progressive loss of knowledge and of certainty. Analysands gradually come to recognize that knowledge is based upon a radical non-knowledge. The closer analysands come to this, the more they succeed in liquidating transference, or, in other words, bringing analysis to an end.

Where is non-knowledge more decisive than in love? One who wants to know absolutely, in fact resists love with every available means. Some people, in adolescence, have had such unhappy experiences with love that they have sworn never to allow anything like that to happen to them again. People who are really in love no longer have their feet on the ground but simply float, somehow, somewhere. The same is true of transference.

After a long silence, a young woman in analysis says: "Until now, I felt safe here but that has changed since last time." What was she talking about? She asked herself: "How could this have been possible with that man?" To which I answered: "Perhaps because an impossibility exists." What is the context of this question? A few months before she was married, she had taken a lover. He was the first man with whom she had experienced sexual well-being. At the same time, she avoided all sexual contact with her fiancé.

In free association, a connection occurred to her between the first names of her lover, her analyst, and her mother. In the names of the last two people, there was a letter which occurred twice in her lover's name.

For a critic of psychoanalysis, it is easy to object that what we have here is pure mysticism. After all, it could be a case of pure accident. Cross-references of this sort can be produced anywhere and everywhere and are easily manipulated. Such a critic would find plenty of arguments to prove that analysis is unscientific, in the event that such arguments were needed. Here the radical break with traditional science is on the level of temporality. It is only nachträglich (retroactively or through deferred action) that analysands can ascertain that their first names and a recurring letter are of special significance. The most important point is, perhaps, which first names they unconsciously connect with each other. Nonetheless, it would be absolutely premature to draw any sort of conclusion thus far. Only the further course of the analysis can disclose more about the significance of these elements.

The pivotal point in this woman's analysis reveals a component of a text in which she is inscribed without knowing it. In practice, the most difficult aspect for the analyst is to recognize the emergence of such a turning point and to know how to proceed from there. These textual elements can make an early appearance during the preliminary sessions. Should this occur, the analyst must take note but avoid interpretation. In this case, there was a clear manifestation of transference. After the revelation of the contradiction "possible/impossible," it suddenly became clear to her that she was caught up in a situation about which she had known nothing up to this point. This was the beginning of her analysis. Subsequently, she made some anagrams mainly with the first name of her mother. Soon after that, a few days before her wedding, she broke off the affair with her lover.

Before I go on, I want to linger a bit over this clinical example in the hope of coming to a better understanding of what this emergence of the letter means. This woman's relationship with her lover, with whom, as she said, she had experienced sexual well-being for the first time, brought along with it a substantial development in her relationship with men. Up to this point, her relationships had been defined and dominated by a passion for her first male friend, whom she had met at the age of seventeen and with whom she had never had sexual relations. After a few months, she had tried to commit suicide by swallowing sedatives. Following a very short stay in the hospital, she decided to leave her friend. The passion, nevertheless, was not brought to an end by this act. The flames of passion again blazed within her whenever she met a man possessing any Zug (trait) of her first friend, whether this be a facial feature, a gesture, or a similarity of voice or behavior. This is perhaps the reason that she later became engaged to a man for whom she could feel little passion. Such a man was less dangerous.

It was not without difficulty that she left her lover. Once again, she swallowed a few sedatives but not enough to do her any harm. Later, she recognized this as a concealed attempt at suicide. This new passage à l'acte, an act of ostensible desperation, only days before her wedding, would tend to indicate that none of her fundamental problems had been solved. For this analysand, passion opposed love and hindered a normal sexual life. In similar cases, a greater pleasure, jouissance, is drawn from a different source which, however, is viewed as dangerous by the subject. Here, it can be assumed that jouissance is tied to a trait which is attached to the object. A compulsive force emanates from this trait which the subject can hardly evade or resist.

Lacan's notion of jouissance can be understood, in Freudian terms, as drive gratification. Although striving for this makes up a good part of life, it becomes
destructive if the subject is unable to evade its compulsive force. Analysis seeks to achieve a way of dealing with jouissance, or with drive gratification, that is no longer destructive. How should this proceed? Here, we can only pose questions. What is changed when, during transference, a few names emerge and are brought into connection with each other? What role is played by the game with the letters of names? Is it even valid here to see a connection with transference?

Psychoanalysis is a part of oral tradition. It is as if the dialectic between oral and written tradition must be re-invented for each analysand. Both are equally primal; that is, they are there from the very beginning. This is perhaps a fundamental hypothesis, without which psychoanalysis would be impossible.

Lacan said: "The unconscious is structured like a language." He said this at a time when he was putting special emphasis on the Symbolic. There can be no doubt that analysis takes place at the level of language. But if it were purely linguistic, without relation to life or reality, psychoanalysis would have little efficacy. Above all, the end of analysis would be difficult to define, both in practice and in theory. As a result, it became necessary for Lacan to postulate the category of the Real as beyond the Symbolic. The Real is what cannot be said under any circumstances but can be written. This is at one and the same time another form and a further development of Freud's postulation of Unverdrängung (original repression). The Symbolic is defined by signifiers, the Real by letters.

The unconscious can be compared with a text which only reveals itself by way of transference. The appearance of a written element in transference determines the beginning of analysis. In my example, it is a letter of the alphabet which sets up a connection between several names. Here we find ourselves along the borderline between what can be said and what cannot be said or, as Lacan would put it, between the Symbolic and the Real. Before I continue, it is perhaps important to give this borderline more precise attention.

During the course of an analysis, traces of the past force themselves upon the subject. Freud calls these Erinnerungsspuren (memory traces). They remain well preserved in the Unconscious as long as they are not disturbed. In "The Rat Man," Freud makes use of the following archaeological metaphor: as long as Pompeii was left buried under lava it remained protected. It became endangered after the excavations of its remains began.

It is in accord with psychoanalytical experience that the analysand should resist the uncovering of traces of the past even though, and often because, they are a source of suffering. This point is of great significance for understanding the constitution of the symptom. The pleasure which is connected to a trace is often the reason for resistance in analysis. Somehow, without actually knowing it, a subject knows that the uncovering of traces effaces them. Often, the analysand resists this uncovering with every means available. These traces, which are buried in the unconscious, determine what knowledge the subject has about himself, and about which he mostly does not want to know anything.

In his letter 52 to Fliess—112 in the new edition (1887-1904, 208)—Freud has a brilliant intuition. He defines repression as a lack of trace Überdezung, a failure to translate the trace. Resistance is thus directed against interpretation, which, for example, can efface a trace to which the subject is very attached. This manifests itself as the necessity to renounce something significant like a name or a family story, whether extraordinary or humble.

Interpretation serves mostly to reduce the sense which is attached to the trace. Interpretation is actually the production of "non-sense." Jokes aim to achieve precisely the same thing. If I see "non-sense" in something which up to that point had too much sense, it becomes possible for me to break open the Wiederholungszwang (repetition compulsion) and to live my own story. If interpretation comes prematurely or too abruptly, the trace can become fixed rather than effaced. If the analysand is not prepared in any way for a loss, he may react to the interpretation by going into a delirium.

Analysis cannot begin and cannot end unless attention is paid to the time factor. When can we say that a particular analysis has begun? When is it time to put someone on the couch? When can we consider an analysis concluded?

Analysis begins with transference wherein things take place as if auf einer anderen Szene (at another scene). In other words, the analysand comes to the conclusion that when something is said, something else resonates at the same time, that much of what seemed clear previously is only tied to a certain linguistic usage and can be understood only in einem Übertragene Sinne (in a transferred sense). It is in this way that analysands learn the metaphorical structure of language.

The course of analysis is determined by the temporal structure of metaphor which can be divided into three parts:  

1) the first encounter with metaphor which can occur very early in analysis but cannot be interpreted;  
2) the time of interpretation which permits a Zeitung (ripening) of the metaphor; and  
3) by way of this temporal process there occurs a loss of the object—which falls like an overripe apple.

Metaphor is thus tied to an object loss. But what object are we talking about? Analysands would like to know this, and often take it very badly that no one will tell them. They are convinced that their analysts know what it is, but that they will not tell them—for whatever reasons. Lacan says that this is the prerequisite for analysis. The belief in this knowledge by the analysand determines
transference. According to this way of conducting analysis, the end of analysis does not consist in an identification with the analyst but rather in the disclosure of the structure of knowledge.

Because analysis is tied up to an object loss, it can be compared with a mourning process, which always requires a certain amount of time. There is, however, one essential difference, consisting in the fact that analysts do not know and cannot know what is being lost or what will be lost through interpretation. Through this process of loss, analyses gradually discover that all subjective knowledge is full of holes and even determined by a radical non-knowledge.

If we once again take up the already-mentioned definition of interpretation as effacement of memory traces, the question arises: does this process have an end? Here, we come upon Freud's hypothesis of the *Nabel des Traums* (the dream's navel) which teaches us that interpretation comes to a halt at a boundary where the dream sits upon the Unberkannten (the unknown).

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. (1900. 525)

A subject's desire arises at the place of the unknown. Formulated in another way: Desire and knowledge are mutually exclusive. Analysts first gain access to their unconscious desire by way of transference. As already stated, transference takes place from the remotest, the "indestructible desire of childhood," to the most recent, the preconscious Tagerente (day's residue). With reference to the latter, Freud sets up an interesting hypothesis in his "Introduction to Narcissism." Sleep is a narcissistic condition. If the day's residues are left over from the day before, these correspond to a failure of narcissism.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Chapter VII, Section E, Freud traces "the fate of a preconscious train of thought." In all the cases he examined, he says, a transference took place. He continues:

...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.... (595)

Clearly audible in this statement is that transference is in the service of condensation and therefore of metaphor. We first established this connection etymologically and now we also find it in Freud. What is its significance?

Without understanding all the far-flung ramifications of the context, we can put forth the hypothesis that the whole of *The Interpretation of Dreams* was written with the intention of being in the service of condensation. "In the process of condensation, on the other hand, every psychical interconnection is transformed into an intensification of its ideational content" (595). We can understand this process as follows: a single element becomes representative of a whole chain of thought. In Lacan's words, *le trait unaire* (the single trait) becomes representative of the chain of signifiers. In Lacan's terminology, these are compared with metonymy which is in the service of metaphor.

We see here that Lacan reads Freud with the minutest exactitude. He often said that he had developed no theory of his own but was merely a reader of Freud. This is very important in understanding his statements and putting them in the right context. There are two types of people who misunderstand Lacan, his enemies (I deliberately do not say opponents) and his adherents. Both "believe" in his theory. Lacan can only be understood with reference to Freud and with reference to clinical experience.

A metaphor comes into being by means of one signifier (S1) taking the place of another (S2). The suppressed or repressed signifier is, however, also present, if not articulated, through its connection with the rest of the chain of signifiers. I am trying here to show the way "from Lacan to Freud" because this seems to me the only possible method of gaining a better understanding of the former. Freud's words sound somewhat more obvious:

*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.* (595)

In order to illustrate this procedure, he introduces "The Dream of Irma's Injection," in which the dreamer, Freud himself, sees the formula for trimethylene printed in bold letters.

It is certainly no accident that the example of a printed text came to Freud. A word printed in spaced or bold type becomes representative for the whole passage of a text. Expressed in a different way, a transference takes place from the text to a word printed in a special way. For this reason, I would like to pose the question here. To what extent does transference have something to do with writing? I would like to repeat my theoretical starting point: the subject is inscribed in
a text which is first revealed by transference.

We can now add another question. Does transference reveal only a text that is already at hand, or does it produce a text which was never yet in existence?

Probably both are true.

This line of thought leads to a better understanding of the duality of oral and written tradition, as well as of their necessity. Access to the written text is not yet its interpretation. For interpretation, the spoken word is also necessary. How often do we hear analysts complaining that they have known all that for ages, that they do not see any reason to say it? This comment belongs to a resistance against analysis which surfaces very often.

Let us take a somewhat more precise look at the inaugural dream in The Interpretation of Dreams. Most of the second chapter is dedicated to this dream. Here, Freud, flying in the face of the prevailing "scientific" opinion, seeks to demonstrate that dreams have meaning. In order to form an idea of what Freud is trying to tell us, we have to take a closer look at a few details of his associations.

In reading The Interpretation of Dreams, one gets the impression that almost everything that Freud has to say is said in this second chapter, but that the whole book is necessary to give the dream material the significance it merits. Lacan's reading does not necessarily take him beyond Freud. But the road Lacan took, especially in his last seminars, allows us to see the importance of several elements from a different angle. As it is well known, the late Lacan attaches great importance to writing and its components, the "letters," as the only possible opening to the Real.

As already indicated, a large part of analysis takes place along the borderline between the Symbolic and the Real. This point is not only of great theoretical importance but also, and above all, of great clinical significance. Why? Because an analysis which takes place only on the level of the Symbolic, that is the linguistic, cannot be brought to an end. It would amount to a word game pure and simple and have hardly any impact on the life of the analyst. That is why it is so important that, from the very beginning, we lend an ear to the elements of the Real which conceal themselves behind the Symbolic.

I would like to quote the report of the dream as Freud published it:

A large hall—numerous guests, whom we were receiving. Among them was Irma. I at once took her on to one side, as though to answer her letter and to reproach her for not having accepted my "solution" yet. I said to her: 'If you still get pains, it's really your fault.' She replied: 'If you only knew what pains I've got now in my throat and stomach and abdomen—it's choking me'—I was alarmed and looked at her. She looked pale and puffy. I thought to myself that

after all I must be missing some organic trouble. I took her to the window and looked down her throat, and she showed signs of recalcitrance, like women with artificial dentures. I thought to myself that there was really no need for her to do that. She then opened her mouth properly and on the right I found a big white patch; at another place I saw extensive whitish grey scabs upon some remarkable curly structures which were evidently modelled on the turbinal bones of the nose. At one called in Dr. M. and he repeated the examination and confirmed it. Dr. M. looked quite different from usual; he was very pale, he walked with a limp and his chin was clean-shaven. My friend Otto was now standing beside her as well, and my friend Leopold was percussing her through her bosom and saying: 'She has a dull area low down on the left.' He also indicated that a portion of the skin on the left shoulder was infiltrated. (I noticed this, just as he did, in spite of her dress.) Dr. M. said: 'There's no doubt it's an infection, but no matter; dysentery will supervene and the toxin will be eliminated.... We were directly aware, too, of the origin of the infection. Not long before, when she was feeling unwell, my friend Otto had given her an injection of a preparation of propyl. prop...propionic acid...trimethylamin (and I saw before me the formula for this printed in heavy type). Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly.... And probably the syringe had not been clean. (1900, 107)

It is necessary that I concentrate on a few elements that are important to my reading of this passage and I must, unfortunately, put the rest aside.

Freud sees before him the formula for trimethylamin printed in boldface type. Lacan considers Irma's open mouth especially important. A "big white patch" and "some remarkable curly structures which were evidently modelled on the turbinal bones of the nose" can be seen. There is talk of an "infection." This is soon thereafter explained. "When she was feeling unwell, my friend Otto had given her an injection...." Here the dreamer hesitates and several words come to him. "Injections of that sort ought not to be made so thoughtlessly.... And probably the syringe had not been clean." The sexual theme, which is obvious, becomes even more clear later.

Lacan thus reproaches the patient for not yet accepting the "solution." The word "solution" is ambiguous in English, as well as in German, French, and Spanish. On the one hand, it means a chemical solution which, for example, can be injected, and, on the other hand, the resolution of a problem. This is the starting point for Freud's analysis. Up to this point he had been convinced, I quote,
that my task was fulfilled when I had informed a patient of the hidden meaning of his symptoms; I considered that I was not responsible for whether he accepted the solution or not—though this was what success depended on" (108).

This dream represents a turning point in Freud's practical approach. To put it briefly: from this moment on, his method consisted primarily of interpretation of the analysand's unconscious desire. Still another general remark can be added here. In psychoanalytic literature, there is a talk of Gegenübertragung (countertransference); Freud's dream could be regarded as a result of countertransference. In my opinion, however, it can be understood in a different way. Does it not show us that transference is a process that involves both analysand and analyst in a similar way?

The open mouth makes "dream's navel" occur to Freud, which he mentions in a footnote (111). The "turbinal bones with scabs on them" remind him of his own misuse of cocaine "to reduce some troublesome nasal swellings." Cocaine had hastened the death of a friend in 1895. Death re-appears in the next association. He connects the injection to a female patient who had died of complications resulting from a medicine prescribed by him, one that "was at that time regarded as a harmless remedy (sulphonial)." The patient had the same name as Freud's eldest daughter.

What was injected? A series of words occur to him during the dream: "A preparation of propyl...propiol...proionic acid...trimethylamin (the formula for which I saw before me, printed in heavy type)." It occurs to him here that, on the evening before the night of the dream, his wife had opened a bottle of liqueur which bore the label "Ananas" (Pineapple). "This liqueur gave off such a strong smell of fusel oil that I refused to touch it" (116). In a footnote he adds the following remark: "The sound of the word 'Ananas' bears a remarkable resemblance to that of my patient Irma's family name" (115). This name is therefore directly tied to the letters of the chemical formula. The printed letters stand for the whole context.

Trimethylamin reminds him of his conversations with his friend Fliess, the prominent nose specialist whose name is not mentioned, and of Fliess's ideas about sexual chemistry. His friend "had mentioned among other things that he believed that one of the products of sexual metabolism was trimethylamin" (116). The dream connects the open mouth with the turbinal bones and with death. There is another link from nose to odor and to sexuality. Freud refers to a very odd hypothesis of Fliess: "He had drawn some extremely curious connections between the turbinal bones and the female organs of sex (Cf. the three curvy structures in Irma's throat)" (117).

Freud makes a final association between the injection and his own wife's pregnancy. It may be assumed that the dream has something to say about Freud's relation to paternity and to the ineffable. Lacan's reading tends to follow a similar line. For Freud, an immense threat seems to emanate from the abyss-like mouth (which is connected with death) and from the chasm-like female sexual organs. Does this have something to do with his relation to paternity? Is this tied to a death-wish, a conclusion which could be drawn from the context in which the name of his eldest daughter appears?

THE INEFFABLE OF THE REAL

We come then to what Lacan has to say about this dream:

Hence there's an anxiety-provoking apparition of an image which summarizes what we can call the revelation of that which is least penetrable in the real, of the real lacking any possible mediation, of the ultimate real, of the essential object which isn't an object any longer, but this something faced with which all words cease and all categories fail, the object of anxiety par excellence.

(Lacan 1954-55, 164)

Words fail. We find ourselves at the outer limit of the Symbolic where a Réel dernier (ultimate Real) arises. In this place of schism in the Symbolic, where words fail, the process of metaphorization takes place. Perhaps the letters of the formula for trimethylamin am written in the margin of the open mouth and the female genitals? In reality, trimethylamin is a product of the decomposition of sperm.

What is important to me here is what relates to the text. As Lacan says: "You must start from the text, start by treating it, as Freud does and as he recommends, as Holy Writ. The author, the scribe, is only a pen-pusher, and he comes second" (153). Here we can emphasize this differentiation between text, author, and writer. In contrast with the revelation of the text, the author has a very secondary function.

"Similarly, when it comes to our patients, please give more attention to the text than to the psychology of the author—the entire orientation of my teaching is that" (153). The text of the unconscious comes to light in the form of letters which are probably not unrelated to the name. The repeated appearance of names in Freud's associations with the dream lends credibility to this conclusion.

We also find here a valuable insight into the problems of the end of analysis. By letting oneself be directed by the analysand's signifiers and retracing them in time, one comes upon a heterogeneous element which does not allow classification. Following Lacan's approach, without the emergence of the Real, an analysis cannot be ended. (Metaphor relates directly to this ultimate Real, to that
which is absolutely incapable of being said). The dream of Irma's injection is an inaugural dream. It not only opens The Interpretation of Dreams but also marks the beginning of a new practical method, psychoanalysis. From a practical point of view, it is important to note that, from the very beginning, all unconscious elements are present, including the massive real of Lacan and Freud's "dream's navel." But analysands learn their meaning only very gradually. Interpretation must take into consideration this temporal requirement.

THE FAILURE OF NARCISSISM

Everything that I have said up to this point has had to do with the relation between the Symbolic and the Real. What, however, is the function of the Imaginary? Here, Lacan also presents an essential point:

At the moment when something of the real, something at its most unfathomable, is attained, the second part of the dream of Irma's injection highlights these fundamental components of the perceptual world constituting the narcissistic relation. The object is always more or less structured as the image of the body of the subject. (167)

In the next paragraph, Lacan elucidates as follows: "Verliebtheit is fundamentally narcissistic. On the libidinal level, the object is only ever apprehended through the grid of the narcissistic relation" (167). Here we are dealing with a juncture between Imaginary and Real. The unconscious image of the body does not encompass a representation of the whole body. One part of the body is missing, namely the phallus. Paradoxically, the very fact that it can be negated ensures that it is the only possible guarantee for the unity of the body image. This could provide an approach to the problem of castration.

Clinical experience with psychosis can provide a contrario evidence for the above. Psychotics feel as if they are sucked in by mirrors. Why? It is as if the image of them in the mirror encounters no limits, as if they were in danger of actually falling into their image. Is it for this reason that psychotics cannot go past a mirror without stopping before it, fixated by an insignificant body detail, which "in their eyes" is not the way it should be? Can this conduct be understood as a last, desperate attempt to shift the mark of castration to another part of the body (far away from the "center")? It is not unknown for psychotics, in their desperation, to mutilate themselves.

Let us return now to the problem of transference. After what we have just said about the Imaginary, we can attempt to interpret Freud's concept of Tagesreste, day's residues. He describes this as a failure of narcissism. Day's residues, therefore, correspond to that which cannot be represented in the unconscious image of the body. But what cannot be represented? My hypothesis is that the letters of the name are written on the body but remain invisible. They become visible in a few psychopathological structures in various ways, namely in perversion and psychosis. But it would take us too far afield to develop this further. I shall limit myself to these short remarks:

1) the pervert attempts to inscribe an indelible trace on the body of the "other;"
2) the psychotic perceives the inscription of a mark on his own body as the greatest threat; and
3) in both cases, the letter is not recognized as being purely negative.

To recognize the letter as purely negative, an interpretation is necessary. This also holds true for the neurotic. Otherwise the letter, which is always inscribed on the margin of an erogenous zone, can produce a pathogenic effect. These considerations are the point of departure for attempting to understand something of the field known as psychosomatics.

We have observed that the first series of Freud's associations led him to the question of paternity. Here we recognize a conscious as well as unconscious link with a text which crosses the generations. Analysands discover that the following questions are the most fundamental, and the most frightening: What has been transmitted to me by my ancestors? What am I passing on to my children? In the context of these questions, we encounter transference and writing.

I would like to add only one final thought. We have asked ourselves: Does transference reveal only an already existent text or does it produce a new text? It seems that a force emanates from the text which the subject can escape only with great difficulty. In the midst of distress, the only thing left is interpretation.
WORKS CITED


