

THE ORIGINS OF  
PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

*Letters to Wilhelm Fliess,*

*Drafts and Notes:*

1887-1902

*by*

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it."—Well now, did nothing happen during the morning before you had the dream?—"Yes. I woke up and had intercourse."—But you took precautions?—"Yes. By withdrawing."—Then you were afraid you might have begotten a child; and the dream showed the fulfilment of your wish that nothing had gone wrong and that you had nipped the child in the bud. You then made use of the anxiety that arises after this kind of intercourse as material for your dream.<sup>1</sup>

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My dear Wilhelm,

. . . I could tell from your letter how refreshed you are. I hope you will now remain your old self for a good long time and allow me to go on taking advantage of your good nature as an indulgent audience, because without such a thing I cannot work. If it suits you, I shall do the same as last time, and send you my notes as I make them, with the request that you return them when I ask for them. No matter what I start with, I always find myself back again with the neuroses and the psychical apparatus. It is not because of indifference to personal or other matters that I never write about anything else. Inside me there is a seething ferment, and I am only waiting for the next surge forward. I cannot bring myself to do the provisional summing up of the present position which you want; I think that what is stopping me is an obscure feeling that very shortly something vital will have to be added. On the other hand I have felt impelled to start writing about dreams, with which I feel on firm ground, and which you feel I ought to write about in any case. I was interrupted straight away by having hurriedly to prepare for the press an abstract of all my publications.<sup>2</sup> The vote is going to take place any day.<sup>3</sup> Now I have finished and can

<sup>1</sup> Used in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, pp. 155-6.

<sup>2</sup> A bibliography of Freud's scientific works was published in 1897 (Freud 1897 b).

<sup>3</sup> The board of professors of the medical faculty voted by a majority on June 12, 1897, in favour of Freud's being awarded the title of professor. After this the delay in making the appointment was attributable solely to the (anti-Semitic) policy of the Ministry of Education.

think about dreams again. I have been looking into the literature on the subject, and feel like the Celtic imp: "How glad I am that no man's eyes have pierced the veil of Puck's disguise". No one has the slightest suspicion that dreams are not nonsense but wish-fulfilment.

I do not know if I have already told you, but as a precaution, and to make quite sure, let me repeat that I have discovered the source of auditory hallucinations in paranoia. The origin of the phantasies, as in hysteria also, is things heard but only understood *subsequently*.

A few days after my return a proud ship of mine ran aground. My banker, who had got furthest in his analysis, made off at a critical point, just before he should have produced the final scenes. This has no doubt damaged me materially also, and it has shown me that I do not yet know all the factors that are at work. But, refreshed as I was, I took it in my stride, and told myself that obviously I must wait still longer for a complete cure. It must be possible, and it shall be done. . . .

I wanted to send the children to Aussee on the 18th; Martha would have stayed here until Whitsun. The terrible weather has made us postpone it indefinitely. Martin has had another not-dangerous attack of *poetitis*. . . . He wrote a poem called "Holiday in the Woods", and another on "The Hunt", which is still incomplete. You will conclude that his operation has been done from the following couplet from his "Wise Animals' Conversations":

"Hare", said the roe,

"Does your throat still hurt when you swallow?"

Oli's indignation at the spelling mistakes with which his brother's poetical effusions abound was exceedingly amusing. . . . Mathilde now has a passion for mythology, and recently wept bitter tears because the Greeks, who used to be such heroes, suffered such heavy blows at the hands of the Turks. They are an amusing crew. . . .

I now have several new listeners and a real pupil from Berlin, a Dr. Gattl who came here to learn from me. I have promised to instruct him, in the old classical fashion (peripatetically) rather

than in the laboratory and the ward, and I am curious to see how he will turn out. Incidentally he is half-American. . . .

I had all sorts of other good ideas for you during the last few days, but they have all disappeared again. I must wait for the next drive forward, which will bring them back. In the meantime I should like to hear good and full news of you, Ida and Robert. . . .

My heartiest greetings and good luck in your work,

Your

Sigm.

63

25. 5. 97.

My dear Wilhelm,

I send you herewith *il catalogo delle belle*, etc.<sup>1</sup> The board's decision is still hanging fire; there was fresh opposition and a consequent postponement at the last meeting. Fortunately, my interests lie elsewhere.

The enclosed comes of a surge of guesses, which rouse great hope in me. If anything comes of it I shall make my visit to Berlin. You can count on it that will not happen before next year. . . .

My rabble went off to Aussee yesterday with Minna, and apparently arrived in beautiful weather. Martha is staying here till Whitsun.

Your

Sigm.

**Draft M**

(25 May 1897)<sup>2</sup>

## NOTES (II)

### *Architecture of Hysteria*

Probably as follows. Some of the scenes are accessible directly, but others only by way of superimposed phantasies. The scenes are

<sup>1</sup> A playful reference [put in approximately the words of Mozart's Leporello] to the "catalogue" of Freud's works, i.e., the bibliography. See previous letter.

<sup>2</sup> Enclosed with Letter 63.

arranged according to increasing resistance. Those which are more slightly repressed come to light only incompletely to begin with, on account of their association with those which are severely repressed. The path followed by [analytic] work proceeds by a series of downward lines: first down to the scenes or to their neighbourhood, then a step further down from one of the symptoms, and then a step further still.<sup>1</sup> Since most of the scenes converge upon only a few symptoms, our path repeatedly follows a line through the background thoughts of the same symptoms.

Symptoms: our work consists of a series of such stages at deeper and deeper levels. [See Fig. II].

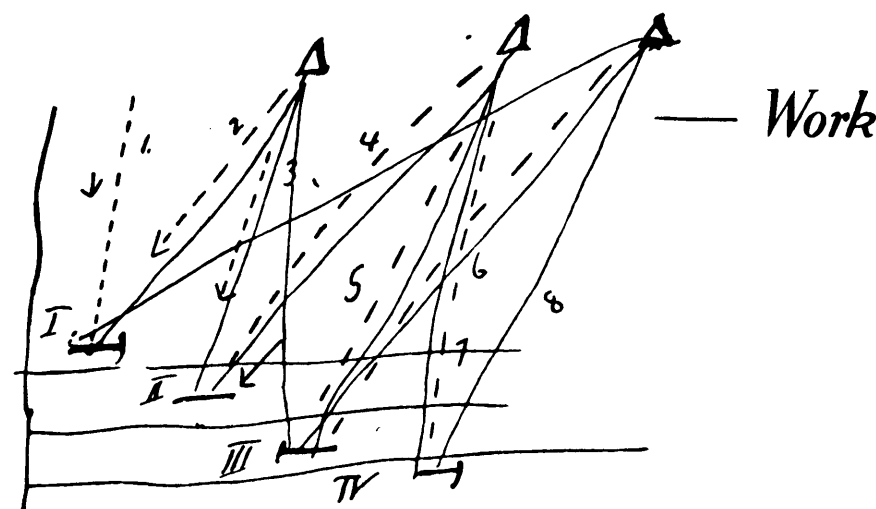


Fig. II

[All the dotted lines, arrows and figures are in red in the original, as well as the word "Work" and the line accompanying it.]

### *Repression*

It is to be suspected that the essential repressed element is always femininity. This is confirmed by the fact that women no less than

<sup>1</sup> The idea that "scenes are arranged according to increasing resistance" and that the work proceeds by a series of downward slants led subsequently to the views of the meaning of resistance stated in Freud's technical writings and thus to the establishment of the psycho-analytic technique.