"BEFORE THE PROBLEM OF THE CREATIVE ARTIST ANALYSIS MUST, ALAS, LAY DOWN ITS ARMS"

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With this famous dictum, Freud (1928 [1927], 177) began his paper on "Dostoevsky and Parricide." He never heeded his own caution. Not only did he write a number of important papers on art and artists, but his superb literary style won him the Goethe Prize and led to his nomination for the Nobel Prize in Literature.

What did this contradiction between his prohibition and practice signify? There is much to suggest that, in contrast to his unwavering belief in science,[2] and his admiration, gift, and aspiration for creative writing (Ticho 1986), Freud's feelings about art and artists were profoundly mixed. Placing "the problem of the creative artist" beyond the purview of psychoanalytic investigation was one means by which he distanced psychoanalysis from art. Art was the province of illusion, and however much great art might provide brilliant intuitive insights, psychoanalysis was developed as a science, a science devoted to discovering hidden psychological truths-and Freud's identity was clearly that of a man of science, a seeker of truth.

Given this climate of values, the direction was set for future generations of analysts to emphasize the scientific aspects of psychoanalysis, and downplay the artistic. The application of psychoanalysis to the arts did not keep pace with ongoing developments in the field: applied

analysis, when not reduced to a parlor game with "analysands" who cannot talk back (Lewin 1946), was long characterized by either recklessness or avoidance.

Since Freud's attitudes determined the later course of psychoanalytic history, and especially the relationship of psychoanalysis to art, it is appropriate to speculate on the personal meaning of his mixed feelings toward art and artists (in contrast to writers). Needless to say, this is in no way meant as yet another attempt to "analyze" him.

FREUD'S VIEWS ON ART AND ARTISTS

Telescoping their gradual development into capsule form, Freud's views were as follows: Like child's play, art starts out as a form of escape from reality. Thanks to the artist's special gifts, however, it is also a mode of return to childhood and even of triumph. It taps sources of pleasure in the unconscious that make it possible to enjoy and master the most painful experiences. In the process, it may satisfy the highest personal and cultural ideals and even lead to the discovery of new truths.

Among the drawbacks of Freudian aesthetic theory is that it tends to overdichotomize: reality/fantasy, science/art, reality/pleasure, intellect/emotion. And in spite of frequent disclaimers, it tends also to correlate art with neurosis.

In fairness it should be said that the closed system paradigm of the nineteenth century encouraged such categorizing. While Freud's views on art revolved largely around the issue of the relative roles of reality and fantasy, traditional writers on aesthetics at that time were accustomed to drawing a similar distinction-between intellect and feeling. Hanslick (1885, 11), for example, pointed out that "the older writers on aesthetics" kept making a "dilemma" of the contrast between feeling and and intellect in art, "quite oblivious of the fact that the main point at issue lies halfway between."

The contrast between art and science seems to fall easily into the same either/or categories: art as a flight, if often playful and pleasurable, into emotional subjectivity; science exemplifying arduous and altruistic work toward objective, intellectual truth. This dichotomy implicitly involves two others, reality/pleasure and intellect/emotion.

Although Freud well understood from the outset that the relationship between art and neurosis was more complex, he nevertheless tended to link nonverbal art with neurosis, just as he tended to link verbalization with logical, healthy thinking processes. His approach to nonverbal art was to attempt to "understand" it in order to "explain" its effect. If he could not understand and explain its effect, he could not enjoy it. His inability to "explain" the effect that music had upon him rendered him, he stated, "almost incapable of obtaining any pleasure" from it (Freud 1914, 211).

With painting, too, it was almost as if he assumed that painters painted scenes that could just as well be expressed in words. (Delacroix is said to have remarked that a painting that can be thus "explained" was not worth painting.) Perhaps his epochal discovery that the pictorial aspects making up the manifest dream could be "read" like a rebus to unlock the meaning of the latent content led him to assume this.

This overvaluation of verbalization at the *expense* of art contrasts with Nietzsche's remark, for example (in *The Birth of Tragedy),* that art must be seen as the necessary *complement* to rational discourse. Furthermore, depending on language as the key to nonverbal experience is likely to succeed only in breaking the key off in the lock, destroying both.

In line with the high premium he placed on verbalization, Freud greatly admired creative writers and had little use for nonrepresentational art-naturalism, symbolism, impressionism-or for music in any form. In a letter to Pfister (July 21, 1920), he referred to the German expressionists with "aversion" as "cranks" and agreed that "these people lack the right to claim

the name of artist" (E. Freud 1960, 330-31). After an evening in an artist's company, he wrote to Jones: "Meaning is little to these men; all they care for is line, shape, agreement of contours. They are given up to the *lustprinzip"* (Jones 1957, 412).

As for music, his indifference to it to the point of aversion was perhaps as heretical in a city like Vienna as was his calling attention to infantile sexuality. He told James J. Putnam that he had no ear for music, and in the Count Thun dream he confessed his inability to carry a tune (Freud 1900, 208). With a few exceptions, music afforded him hardly any pleasure at all (Jones 1957). Most of his references to it are intellectual or literary-for example, attending to the words rather than the music of *The Magic Flute.* It is said that as a youngster he insisted that his sister's piano be removed because her practice interfered with his study. His son Martin relates that none of Freud's children ever studied a musical instrument.

Freud himself attributed his indifference to music and nonrepresentational art (as well as his opposition to certain cultural forms such as religion) to his commitment to science and rationality. Meaning was almost everything to Freud. He ignored nonmimetic, abstract art in the first place because he had no appreciation for its aesthetic qualities of form. Second, he needed a content-a hidden meaning-capable of interpretation by a hermeneutic approach along the lines of psychoanalysis (Spector 1972).

FREUD AND BRÜCKE AND HELMHOLTZ

Ernst Brücke and Hermann von Helmholtz were the important father-figures of Freud's years as a biology student at Brücke's Institute of Physiology. Brücke and the more famous Helmholtz both studied with Johannes Muller, the founder of "scientific" medicine in Germany. All represented the disciplined scientist that Freud hoped to become one day.

Himself a scientist, not a physician, Professor Brücke was also an instructor in anatomy at

the Berlin Art Academy. His father had been a successful portrait painter. Like his father, Brücke revered classical line as the mainstay of ideal art. Moreover, it would seem that Brücke believed that the aesthetic ideal could be described by scientific method. Shortly before his death, he published a book on the human figure (Brücke 1891) in which he identifies the objective details that do or do not constitute beauty, for example, in the neck. The book has been characterized as "one of the last significant instances in Europe of the attempt to root artistic expression materially in observed anatomy" (Fuller 1980, 51). Freud's artistic taste, too, it appears, never departed from this same standard, remaining attached primarily to the art of classical antiquity. Helmholtz saw physiology as an extension of physics. He and Brücke stressed that living organisms are phenomena of the physical world: systems of atoms moved by forces the sum of which remains constant in every isolated system, according to the principle of the conservation of energy.

The impact of this closed-system model on Freud was such that he longed to produce a parallel psychology. His "Project" (1895), written shortly after the deaths of Brücke (1892) and Helmholtz (1895), incorporated their principles in its suggestion that the psychic apparatus worked to reduce the level of its own excitation.

Loyalty to these first principles of scientific faith may have played a role in Freud's subsequent break from Jung. For whatever else may have been involved in their complex personal relationship, Jung stood at an opposite philosophical pole from Freud's mentor, Brücke. Aside from his interests in religion, mythology, mysticism, and the occult, (to which Freud also felt dangerously attracted), Jung believed in philosophical vitalism. This is the doctrine that life processes are not explicable by the laws of physics and chemistry alone, that life is not mechanistically determined, but, rather, in some par*x. self-determining.* Jung held that no psychological fact can ever be exhaustively explained in terms of causality, because, as a living phenomenon, it is continually evolving and creative. Whereas psychoanalysts today might find nothing disturbing about vitalism, it was incompatible with the Brücke-Helmholtzian model on

which Freud was constantly struggling to base his science.

Peter Fuller (1980) suggests that it is this personal nexus of father-son conflicts that informs the circumstances and style of "The *Moses* of Michelangelo" (Freud 1914a). Written in a mere matter of days, it was published anonymously in 1914. After long hesitation, during which he referred to the paper as a "joke" and a "love-child," Freud "legitimatized this non-analytical child" by putting his own name to it ten years later (letter to Edouardo Weiss, April 12, 1933, as quoted in Jones 1955, 367). Like Moses, Freud appeared in danger of letting slip the tables of the law-the neurophysiological model-he had received from the hands of his revered father figures, Brücke and Helmholtz. At the same time, he was bitterly fighting to preserve the integrity of psychoanalysis against the revisionism of Adler and of Jung, his designated son.

According to Fuller, "The *Moses* of Michelangelo" represents Freud's attempt to deny that psychoanalysis was abetting the decline of the mechanistic physics of his father figures. The paper expressed Freud's wish to make psychoanalysis less speculative and more scientific, in the spirit of Brücke-that is, based on anatomy, observation, measurement. Thus, though it was written not much later (1913) than the *Leonardo* paper (published in 1910), in style it contrasted sharply with the latter, an imaginative elegant work probably written at the height of the German Expressionist movement in painting (a connection Freud would not have appreciated).

"The *Moses* of Michelangelo," on the other hand, could well pass as a "scientific" document. Full of "objective" data-citations of precedents, attention to measurement and anatomical details-it totally avoids psychological speculation about Michelangelo or his work. In method it resembles the writings of the physician Morelli, which Freud had encountered while studying with Brücke. In his book on bodily beauty, Brücke had pointed out that the ancients had contemplated the human figure daily and hourly. Freud's preparations for the *Moses* paper follwed Brücke's lead: "For three lonely September weeks in 1913 I stood every day in the church in front of the statue, studied it, *measured* it [my italics] sketched it, until I captured the

understanding for it. ..." (Jones 1955 367).[3]

Fuller suggests plausibly that the style of the *Moses* paper, as well as the ten-year delay in claiming its authorship, reflect Freud's conflicts with his psychoanalytic sons-especially the artistic, speculative, intuitionist inclinations ofjung-and his materialist, scientist father figures, Brücke and Helmholtz. It also seems likely that these aspects of the *Moses* paper reflect a conflict in Freud's mind between art and science, as well as his own mixed feelings about art-his love of literature, attraction to sculpture, indifference to music, and antipathy to nonrepresentational art.

What did the artist stand for in his mind? Could this *meaning* have contributed to Freud's declaration that analysis must lay down its arms before the problem of the artist? We will pursue these questions in the rest of this chapter.

FREUD AND DALI

Because Freud's primary identity was as a scientist, throughout his career he struggled to keep psychoanalytic science free of the contaminants of art, and himself from being seduced by its attractions. *Understanding* was an absolute prerequisite for *experiencing* pleasure from art. "Some rationalistic, or perhaps analytic, turn of mind in me rebels against being moved by a thing without knowing why I am thus affected and what it is that affects me" (Freud 1914a, 211).

This almost automatic recoiling and re-approaching in order to gain mastery through understanding is illustrated by an incident at the end of his life. In June 1938 a meeting took place between Sigmund Freud and Salvador Dali. For Dali, aged thirty-four, the meeting with Freud, then eighty-two, was the culmination of years of pursuit of his idol. Dali had worshipped his father, who, in turn, had treated him as a most precious child-especially so since an older gifted son had died before Dali's birth (Romm and Slap 1983).

How very differently the two men experienced the meeting may be judged by what each wrote about it later. Dali had reason to be bitterly disappointed. He wrote that Freud hardly acknowledged his presence. Freud spoke about him to Stefan Zweig (who had arranged the meeting) as if Dali were not there. When Dali tried to interest him in a paper he had written, "Freud exclaimed, addressing Stefan Zweig, 'I have never seen a more complete example of a Spaniard. What a fanatic!' " (Dali 1942, 24).

Yet the very next day Freud wrote to Zweig: "I really owe you thanks for bringing yesterday's visitor. For until now I have been inclined to regard the surrealists, who apparently have adopted me as their patron saint, as complete fools (let us say 95 percent, as with alcohol). That young Spaniard, with his candid fanatical eyes and his undeniable technical mastery, has changed my estimate. It would indeed be very interesting to investigate analytically how he came to create that picture" (Jones 1957, 235). (Freud was referring to the painting *Narcissus,* which Dali had presented to him).

These totally different perceptions of the same meeting reflected not only personal differences but cultural and historical processes (Rose 1983). Although Dali had already been expelled from the surrealist movement and was turning back toward the High Renaissance of Raphael, he more than any other individual personified surrealism to the general public. It was he who had made surrealism a common term in all languages-as much by his genius for publicity, his moustache, and his quotable utterances as by his paintings. His fashionable flamboyance ultimately raised serious questions about the integrity of his work. But before he turned his way of life into a surrealist publicity stunt, he had sought to make his art a pictorial documentation of Freudian theories. His writing likewise. For example, the article on "paranoia" which he pressed on Freud had to do not with psychiatric paranoia but, rather, with what he referred to as "critical paranoia"-a method of inducing and harnessing multiple images of persecution or megalomania. He would start a painting with the first image that came to mind and go on from one association to the next, attempting to lift the restrictions of control and thus tap a flow of delirious

phenomena. He (romantically) assumed that these would lie close to or at the heart of creativity itself.

“L’exactitude n'est pas la verite.” Four self-portraits by Matisse. (Photo archives Matisse © SPADEM 1982.) Reprinted from H. B. Chipp, *Theories of Modem Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics* (University of California Press, 1968).

In a drawing, Matisse said, there is "an inherent truth which must be disengaged from the outward appearance of the object to be represented. This is the only truth that matters" (Chipp, 138). In these four self-portraits, the upper part of the face is the same, but the lower is completely different-massive, elongated, pointed, or bearing no resemblance to any of the above. Yet they all unmistakably represent the same man-attentive and reserved.

This assumption of the close correspondence between uncontrolled, passionate, Dionysian spontaneity, on the one hand, and creativity, on the other, was inherent in surrealism. Actually, Dali was borrowing from another surrealist, Max Ernst, and his method of *frottage.* Ernst was making a deliberate effort to exclude all conscious mental guidance, such as reason, taste, and morals, in order to become a spectator at the birth of his own work (Ernst 1948). By restraining his activity and accepting his passivity, he discovered a sudden intensification of visual faculties. What emerged was a succession of contradictory images superimposed on each other, as in a half-sleeping twilight state.

All the surrealists believed, with Freud, in the central importance of the unconscious for art and poetry. The Surrealist Manifesto of 1924 was written by Andre Breton, a serious student of psychoanalysis. The surrealists conceived of the canvas as a blank tablet on which the artist inscribed the visual associations issuing from the depth of the mind. The element of chance or randomness, of coincidence, like a slip of the tongue or pen, or automatic writing, as well as the dream and the irrational, were royal roads to the unconscious.

It seems apparent now that the surrealists were engaged in a serious study of the conditions of inspiration and creativity. Moreover, they had made two fundamental discoveries: (1) they succeeded in inducing some of the specific ways in which imagination functions, such as

by condensation, ambiguity, and the tendency to flash-like immediacy, and (2) they were attempting to harness these to the slow, methodical thinking mode of careful observation and detailed recording.

Two further things should be said about the surrealists: their politics and their origins. Emerging from four years of the bloodiest war in history, many of the post-World War I generation felt betrayed by the institutions, philosophies, and cultural heroes of the Establishment. Since it seemed that tradition and conventional reason had plunged them into World War I, they insisted that nongovernment was better than government, and the irrational superior to reason. Implicit in the surrealist program was the necessity for revolt against institutions. Thus, surrealism was a revolutionary movement of considerable ferocity, not only in literature and art but also in politics. In their revolutionary zeal, many surrealists embraced Communism and (it must have seemed fitting at the time) Freudianism.

Regarding origins. The dadaists had long explored some of the same phenomena as the surrealists. However, there was a growing disillusionment with dada because it, too, was becoming institutionalized. Therefore, the surrealists turned back to the late nineteenth century for their cultural prophets and to the French symbolist poets-especially Rimbaud, Baudelaire, Verlaine, and Mallarme.

Rimbaud was steeped in Greek and Oriental mystical religious readings. He thought of the poet as one possessed of divine madness, like Prometheus, the thief of the sacred flame. Long before Freud (Rimbaud wrote in the early 1870s), he was explicitly concerned with the as yet undefined unconscious, as well as with the implications of dreams and automatisms. He believed that a rigidly disciplined madness and alienation would lead to the desired visionary state. Confusion and disorder of the senses were to be cultivated by the poet-not self-indulgently, hedonistically, but systematically and patiently, in order to explore an unknown territory of sensuous imagination, using words as magical, mysterious invocations. Thus, the Surrealist

Manifesto of 1924 only codified ideas that had been in the air for fifty years, adding a heavy dash of Freudianism as well as the Communist party-line.

French symbolism was not only the chief source of surrealism; more importantly, it was one of the main intellectual currents in Europe at the time of the birth and early years of psychoanalysis (Peyre 1974). Also, like psychoanalysis, symbolism searched the farther reaches of mental life for the many more or less hidden meanings condensed in a single sign. Despite failures and having almost fallen into oblivion, the symbolist movement in France gave rise to similar schools in England, Germany, and other countries and influenced almost all eminent twentieth-century poets, novelists (Joyce, Proust, Stein), dramatists (Maeterlinck), critics, and composers (Debussy).

The symbolist movement in France was at its height toward the end of the nineteenth century. Except for Baudelaire, who died in 1867, its most illustrious figures were flourishing at the time Freud worked at Jean Martin Charcot's clinic in Paris (October 1885 to February 1886) and for the following five years, when Freud was absorbed in the translation of Charcot and Bernheim. Yet, aside from the invisible but powerful influence of Zeitgeist, there is little evidence that symbolism influenced Freud. On the surface, the contrary would seem to be the case.

The meeting between Dali and Freud in June of 1938 was remarkable in several respects. What divergent courses these two men had traveled! The young Dali-still intoxicated with the pictorial representations of the Unconscious and the Id; revolting against Western rationalism and its cultural institutions; believing, in keeping with the symbolist tradition of Rimbaud, in the necessity of overwhelming the spectator (or reader, or patient) with explosive shocks to explore in depth the felt mystery beyond consciousness-, was, finally, a supersophisticated aesthete on his way to becoming one of the first proponents of Radical Chic.

By what route Freud had come we well know. Though he studied hypnosis in the

respectability of Charcot's clinic, it never lost its taint of black magic and Viennese mesmerism. Nor did Freud, at least in Vienna, every wholly overcome the taint of disreputability. Long rejected by the academic establishment, he was now the founder and patron saint of his own establishment. He had accomplished a revolution in world thought. Yet all the while, Freud remained a thoroughgoing traditionalist in matters of personal taste.

It is all the more remarkable, then, that this ailing eighty-two-year-old man should, on brief contact with Dali, acknowledge that he had to revise his estimate of modern art. One might imagine that that was because he was taken with Dali's enthusiasm for the unconscious, but this was not the case at all. Freud had by now traveled far from the early formulation of the id (which still entranced Dali) to an explication of the functions of the ego. Freud, the systematic explorer of the unconscious, said to Dali, its most flagrant exploiter, "What interests me in your art is not the unconscious but the conscious" (Arnason 1968, 361).

The next day, on further reflection, Freud wrote to Zweig that what changed his estimate was "that young Spaniard, with his candid fanatical eyes and his *undeniable technical mastery.*". . . It would indeed be very interesting to investigate analytically how he came to create that picture" (Jones 1957, 235; italics added).

What elements were operating overnight between the original opinion and its drastic revision the next day? We know what went into the irritated rejection: Dali was a surrealist ("lunatic"), compounded by being a young Spaniard ("fanatic"). Likewise, it is clear what it was that aroused Freud's analytical curiosity about Dali's creativity: Dali's apparent accessibility ("candid eyes"), and the obvious control he exercised over his craft, even in the face of his passionate ("fanatic") nature.

Since all of these factors were apparent at the same time, why did it take until the next day for Freud's analytical interest to manifest itself? My conjectures, in order of increasing

speculation, are: (1) The meeting stirred a conflict in Freud between derogatory and idealizing attitudes toward art and artists. (2) He was repelled then fascinated with Dali's combination of passion and control as it echoed similar duel elements in his own nature. It has only recently been elucidated (Vermorel 1986) to what a large extent Freud made use of, and transformed, German *romantic* conceptions ranging from dreams, the unconscious, repression, instincts, bisexuality, to jokes and aesthetics. Did the two sides of Dali-passion and control-remind Freud of a parallel dualism within himself: the depth of the *romanticism* existing alongside his espousal of objective, scientific enlightenment? (3) Since Freud candidly acknowledged unruly elements of bisexuality in other areas of his life, as in his relationship to Jung, did they come into play here too? If he fought his own tendencies to romanticism while highlighting the scientific aspects of his identity, was it because of the feminine connotations romanticism shares with art as contrasted to the masculine implications of science?

Although surrealism and surrealist artists represented something wild and uncontrolled-a bunch of lunatics around the fringe of psychoanalytic science-Freud could still be attracted into attempting to *understand* their art when his attention was drawn to evidence of Dali's technical competence. Perhaps this provided him with the reassurance of structure that enabled him to distance himself from whatever disturbing meanings artist *qua* artist held for him.

For further light on these personal meanings we would do well to turn to literature, which he loved, and his relations with creative writers. A paper entitled "Freud and his Literary Doubles" (Kanzer 1976), is worth summarizing here.

FREUD'S LITERARY DOUBLES

Freud appears to have established several "doubles" relationships with writers, among them Arthur Schnitzler, Romain Rolland, and Thomas Mann. These "doubles" evoked uncanny reactions in him, a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar feelings, that both drew him powerfully

toward those persons and also led him to avoid them. For example, to Schnitzler: “I will make a confession which for my sake I must ask you to keep to yourself. ... I think I have avoided you from a kind of reluctance to meet my double. . . . Whenever I get deeply absorbed in your beautiful creations I invariably seem to find beneath their poetic surface the very presuppositions, interests, and conclusions which I know to be my own. . . . All this moves me with an uncanny feeling of familiarity” (E. Freud 1960, 339). To Rolland: ”I may confess to you that I have rarely experienced that mysterious attraction of one human being for another as vividly as I have with you. It is somehow bound up, perhaps, with the awareness of our being so different” (p. 406).

Typically, Freud would point out in birthday messages to these writers that he was older, they younger; that they had an astonishing intuitive grasp of what he could only painstakingly and laboriously discover through research; that they created illusions which provided comfort and refreshment for readers while he destroyed illusions; that, consequently, “my words and ideas strike people as alien, whereas to you all hearts are open” (p. 256); and that "I finally came to the point of envying the author whom hitherto I had admired” (p. 251).

What personal significance did these literary artists have for Freud that they aroused in him what can only be described as intense ambivalence? By analytic detective work, based on Freud's correspondence with these writers and the papers he sometimes included or referred to, Kanzer (1976) adduced a prototypical relationship to a younger brother, Alexander, together with a characteristic fantasy.

It is relevant to recall that Freud had two half-brothers, twenty-four and twenty years older than himself. From the marriage of the elder of these came a nephew one or two years older than Freud, a niece about the same age, and another niece three years younger. Since they lived nearby, uncle, nephew, and nieces were like siblings together. Of Freud's mother’s children, he was the oldest, followed by a brother who died at eight months of age, when Freud was

nineteen months old; then by five sisters; and, when Freud was ten, by a brother named, following Freud's own suggestion (Jones 1953, 18), Alexander, after Alexander the Great. Thus, Freud was, in effect, the second of eleven siblings born in as many years.

A letter Freud wrote (E. Freud 1960, 432-34) at age eighty to

Thomas Mann, sixty-one, provides a glimpse into the meaning of their relationship. He suggested that Napoleon's older brother Joseph had first been a hated rival who later became excessively admired by the younger Bonaparte. Freud offered this as the theme for a story that Mann might write.

While Mann never followed this suggestion, it is interesting that four years later, only shortly after Freud's death, he did publish “The Transposed Heads” (Mann 1940). Based on an Indian myth, it tells the story of two youths, Nanda and Shridaman, who were sworn to a friendship so intense that their admiration for each other turned to a “yearning of mutual exchange and unity” (p. 5). After having secretly observed a beautiful girl, Sita, bathing nude in a sylvan pool, they sealed their friendship by chewing sweet betel. The younger said to the older: “You are so necessary to me, my elder brother; what I have not you have, and you are my friend, so that it is almost as though I had it myself” (p. 49).

Nanda, the younger, woos Sita successfully on his friend’s behalf, and the marriage is consummated. But it turns out that Nanda is also in love with Sita and she with him. Apparently almost having what the other has is not quite the same as having it oneself. The friends decapitate themselves and Sita is about to do likewise when the World-Mother Goddess tells her to place the heads back upon the bodies to bring them back to life. Sita does this, but in her haste transposes the heads.

Shridaman and Nanda are thereupon restored to life, but now which one was the husband

of Sita and father of the child stirring within her womb? After a long and unsuccessful effort to resolve this problem a solution satisfactory to all is hit upon: Sita's son puts the torch to the funeral pyre of his mother lying between Nanda and Shridaman, and all three are united on death's fiery bed.

Proceeding now to further clues to the significance of Freud's literary alter egos, what were the papers that Freud alluded to in his correspondence with these younger writers? They were "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921) and "A Disturbance of Memory on the Acropolis" (1936). The former contains the idea that the younger son, being the mother's favorite, is destined for success in life; it was he who, after the murder of the primal father by the group as a whole, invented the self-serving myth that he had accomplished the deed single-handedly and probably replaced the father; by dint of this lie, the youngest son became "the first epic poet; and the advance was achieved in his imagination. This poet disguised the truth with lies in accordance with his longing. He invented the heroic myth. . . . The lie of the heroic myth culminates in the deification of the hero" (Freud 1921, 136-37).

The later paper was written as a birthday gift to Rolland and has to do with a trip Freud made to Greece with his brother, Alexander, who was, like Rolland, ten years his junior. The theme of jealousy, ambition, and guilt for surpassing all family rivals is again prominent.

In short, the aged Freud appears to set aside hatred and rivalry and relinquish to these younger literary "doubles" the role of mother's favorite son. Responding to the universal "trauma" of failing to win mother's exclusive love, he reluctantly lays down his arms before the problem of younger sibs who seemingly have magical access to mother's love. For himself, not the alluring seductiveness and deception of Art, but the way of the father or the unsung hero-a posture, rather, of lonely but *manly* pride in the arduous and thankless task of advancing the cause of Truth in the teeth of resistance and unpopularity.

If all this sounds like transparent oedipal family romance and literary romanticism, with elements of unconscious feminine identification to compensate for the loss of mother, it should come as no surprise that the world's first self-analysis left important issues unresolved or that some of these issues showed up in "symptomatic" behavior-as, for example, in the aged Freud's sudden swing of attitude from contempt to admiration for the brash, precociously successful young artist Dali.

Nor would it be fitting to decry that he who pioneered so much did not accomplish even more. The discovery of the unconscious left many matters still to be explored. Among these: the establishment of the earliest sense of reality, and the separation of self from (m)other-issues probably crucial to the psychology of art and the creative imagination.

In order to begin to consider how psychoanalytic and artistic experience may overlap in some ways, it has been necessary first of all to set forth Freud's attempt to project art beyond the reach of psychoanalysis. In this chapter we have tried to understand this "prohibition" by placing it within the framework of his primary identity as a scientist, his mixed feelings about art and artists, and the personal meanings of sibling rivalry and homoerotism that this may have had for him. This has brought us to the fact that Freud was powerfully drawn toward literary "doubles" and, at the same time, felt compelled to avoid them. How are we to view this?

The tendency to discover spiritual kinships, even to the point of sensing one's own double in the other person, might be characterized in several ways. Idealized self-objects, transitional object relatedness, body-ego deformations-all emphasize its rootedness in an early symbiotic stage of development and the intense needs for nurturance this implies. To this extent they all tend to pathologize the phenomenon as regressive.

On the other hand, terms such as "spiritual unity" and "soulmates" tend to romanticize it. Similarly, it is possible to "normalize" the sense of having a double and stress that healthy and ill,

gifted and ungifted individuals alike share the need for reassuring confirmation from the external world; some degree of objectification, acknowledgment, positive feedback is necessary to affirm one's sense of self and self-esteem.

As we will discuss in detail later, the sensitivity of many creative individuals seems to express itself as a search for harmony between inner and outer worlds. Involving sensorimotor resonances and affinities, the search may be experienced as both intensely personal and solitary. Thus, supportive partnerships and working alliances along the way may be necessary to sustain creative productivity. What was once invoked as a prerequisite for creative fulfillment-namely, the blessing of the heavenly Muse-commonly has its more earthly equivalents: the need for the generous patron, supportive sponsor, or, at the very least, the encouragement of a colleague-even the constancy of a forgiving spouse. Perhaps the experience of the benevolent double should be seen in that context: it offers the comforting sense that one is not only *not* alone but even has a double.

Yet these supportive relationships often turn out to be double-edged-as fragile as they are necessary. Freud, for example, was drawn to his literary "doubles" and compelled to avoid them at the same time. Earlier, he had also idealized Fliess and then Jung and, for a time, had formed intense working alliances with each of them in turn. These relationships did a great deal to stimulate his creativity. But disillusionment followed and led to falling out.

In the case of the Freud-Jung relationship, there were, of course, many objective and psychological factors to account for the disenchantment and alienation that took place, including the ubiquitous oedipal dynamics of admiration, homoerotism, envy, and hostility. In addition, however, the sheer intensity of the original need and the strength of the attraction might themselves dictate the necessity for distancing sooner or later in order to preserve the sense of one's own separate identity. For example, asj. Gedo(1983) has pointed out, the Freud-Jung letters are full of evidence of Freud's need ofjung: prompt replies had become important, he

asked not to be forgotten during vacation, his personality had become “impoverished” through the reduction in correspondence during the holidays. Freud even temporarily entertained an irrational set of beliefs (as he had earlier with Fliess's numerology) in the form ofjung’s parapsychological theory of precognition. As we will see later, Freud’s fantasy that collaboration with Jung would eliminate any distinction between their respective achievements precisely mirrored the collaboration that actually did take place between Picasso and Braque.

It would seem that the overendowment of creative sensitivity requires affirmation; the capacity to make immediate and intuitive empathic connections is able to provide such affirmation. However, the resulting intensity of the near-merger relationship, together with its homosexual implications, may be such that periodic withdrawals or ruptures become necessary to redelineate self-boundaries and shore up the sense of separate self or identity. In other words, the creatively gifted individual might search for self-delineation in a cyclical fashion: turning in the direction of the outer world for intense, nuturant, close relations that provide confirming reflections; then needing to consolidate and re-establish separateness.

Obviously, any continuing differentiation requires a balance of breathing space as well as support, separateness, and distance in addition to intimacy. The creatively gifted are no different in this regard-only more so. Yet they present us with a paradox: their heightened sensitivity, their wide-ranging search for inner-outer correspondences, together with the ability to discern them and hone in quickly appears to carry with it a susceptibility to problems of permeable, diffuse boundaries and shifting, ambiguous self-image and sexual identity. This same susceptibility is found in individuals whose sense of self is overextended for *opposite* reasons-poor differentiation stemming either from lack of development or neurotic regression.

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Notes

2 While insisting that psychoanalysis was a science, Freud held that, like astronomy's, its validity stood independent of a fundamental tenet of scientific method—the need tor

experimental verification. To an experimental psychologist he offered: "Still, it can do no harm" (quoted from a 1934 letter; Rosenzweig I9H6, .38).

3 It is interesting to contrast this scientistic approach to art with the attitude of two painters. Picasso (1935, quoted in Chipp 1968, 27 1): "Art is not the application of a canon of beauty but what the instinct and the brain can conceive beyond any canon. When we love a woman we don't start measuring her limbs. " And Matisse (p. 137): "The characteristics of a drawing ... do not depend on the exact copying of natural forms, nor on the patient assembling of exact details, but on the profound feeling of the artist before the objects which he has chosen . . . and the spirit of which he has penetrated." He discusses four self-portraits, crayon-line drawings, with completely different outlines, yet all expressing unmistakably the same man: "The . . . organic inexactitude in these drawings has not harmed the expression of the intimate character and inherent truth of the personality, but on the contrary has helped to clarify it. . . In each one. . . the truth of the character is expressed, the same light bathes them all . . .—all impossible to put into words, but easy to do by dividing a piece of paper into spaces by a simple line. . . . L exactitude n est pas la verite" (pp. 1.38 —.39).