Stanley Edgar Hyman

ON THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS

Freud: A Collection of Critical Essays

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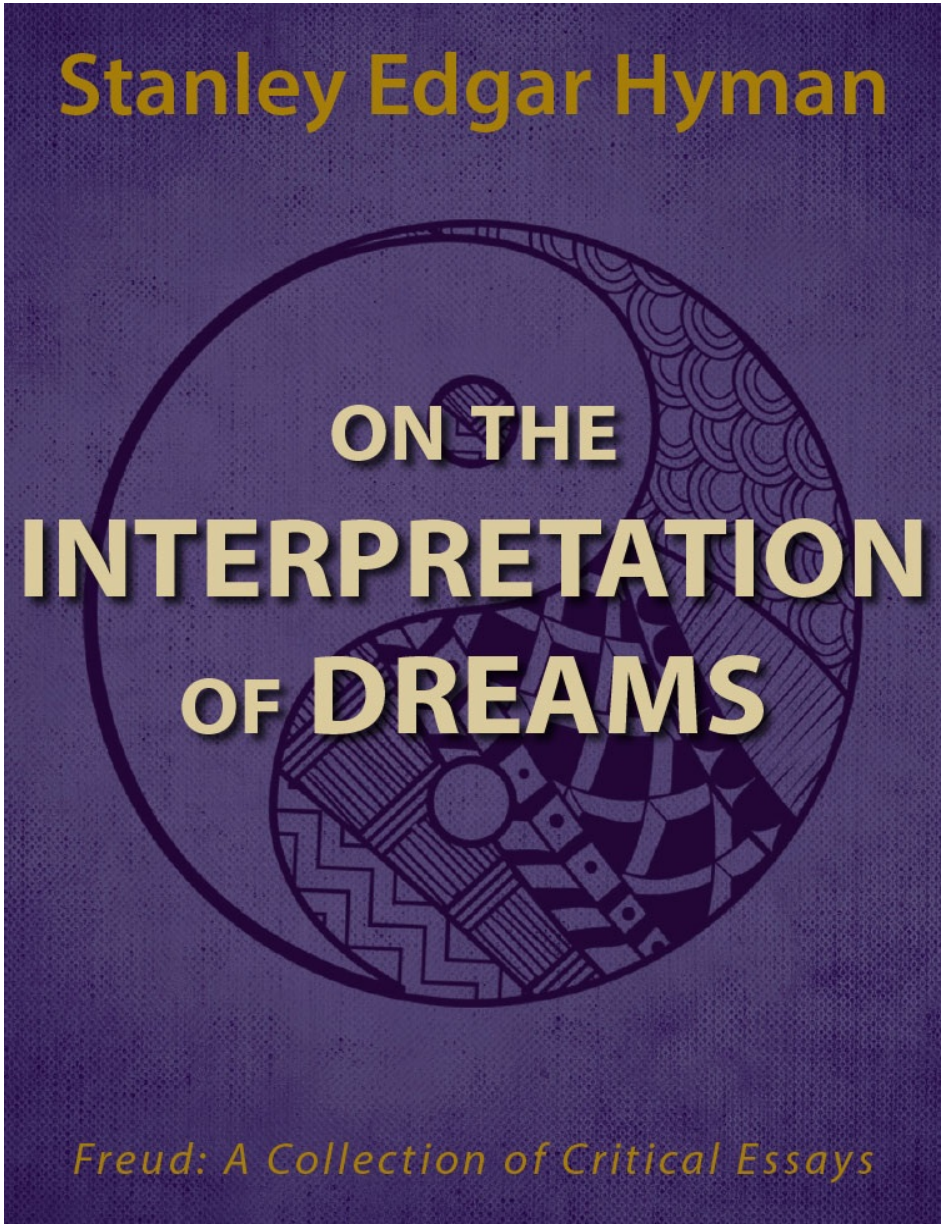

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Table of Contents

Notes on the Author and Editor

Stanley Edgar Hyman (1919-70), literary critic and historian, taught at Bennington. His books include *The Tangled Bank*, *The Armed Vision*, and studies of Flannery O'Connor and Nathanael West.

Perry Meisel, editor of this volume, teaches English at New York University, and is the author of *The Absent Father: Virginia Woolf and Walter Pater* and *Thomas Hardy: The Return of the Repressed*.

On The Interpretation of Dreams[1]

By Stanley Edgar Hyman

Freud's masterwork, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, was published late in 1899, postdated 1900. Freud had discovered the core of the theory, that dreams are wish-fulfilments, early in 1895, and in July, 1895, he first fully analyzed a dream of his own in the new terms, the dream he called "Irma's injection." Freud later recognized the book as his most important, and in his preface to the third English edition in 1931, he writes:

> It contains, even according to my present-day judgement, the most valuable of all the discoveries it has been my good fortune to make. Insight such as this falls to one's lot but once in a lifetime.

The book, then, at least on the surface, is an account of the origin, structure, and function of dreams, along with a method for their interpretation.

In Freud's view, the dream is a distortion of unsuitable thoughts to make them unrecognizable. The processes of distortion, elaborately described in the book's longest chapter, "The Dream-Work," are principally four. They are: "condensation," a combining of a number of thoughts into economical composites, so that each element of a dream will have several meanings and be what Freud called "overdetermined"; "displacement," a substitution of one identification for another; "considerations of representability," the replacement of abstractions by concrete images; and "secondary revision," a

further tendentious disguising. All this complicated labor results from a conflict between two psychical forces ("or," as Freud says, "we may describe them as currents or systems"), which he first calls the "unconscious" and the "preconscious," and later the "repressed" and the "ego" (a quarter of a century later, he called the "repressed" the "id."). The motive for the labor lies in two major factors Freud named "repression," the act of refusing infantile impulses and related material admission to consciousness, and "resistance," the visible effort that keeps them unconscious. In "The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement," published in 1914, Freud wrote: "The theory of repression is the pillar upon which psychoanalysis rests," and the observed fact of resistance is its principal evidence.

The other principal discovery in *The Interpretation of Dreams* is the "Oedipus complex," which Freud first noticed in his patients, confirmed in analyzing his own dreams in 1897, and promptly recognized as universal. He explains it fully in the book, without the term (which he did not use until 1910). The Oedipus complex, as it is described in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (the theory was later modified in the case of girls), is an infantile erotic attachment to the parent of the opposite sex and rivalry with the parent of the same sex. Freud discusses Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* (which he had translated for his secondary-school graduation examination), and says of its protagonist, for whom he named the complex:

> His destiny moves us only because it might have been ours —because the

> oracle laid the same curse upon us before our birth as upon him. It is the fate of all of us, perhaps, to direct our first sexual impulse towards our mother and our first hatred and our first murderous wish against our father. Our dreams convince us that that is so. King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, merely shows us the fulfilment of our own childhood wishes.

All dreams are thus wish-fulfilments, Freud says, and wish-fulfilment is the "key" to the understanding of dreams. The simplest wish dreams fulfill is the wish-to sleep, which by the distorting processes of the dream-work they guard from inner and outer disturbances that would awaken the sleeper. On a deeper level, dreams gratify the greedy wishful impulses of the unconscious in a symbolic form, and their function is to serve as a safety-valve discharging its excitation. In their deepest meaning, dreams fulfill the infantile Oedipal wish, repressed and unconscious. Freud writes: "Dreaming is a piece of infantile mental life that has been superseded."

The form of *The Interpretation of Dreams* is a controlled gradual revelation of Freud's theory, progressing from didactic oversimplification to full and rich complexity, like *The Origin of Species* or *Capital*. Freud will state a principle, then move on to "a first denial of this assertion," or write, "my earlier statement requires correction." He reminds us each time that things are still being kept too simple, with such remarks as "Later on I shall have to disclose a factor in dream-formation which I have not yet mentioned." We can see the development most neatly in the series of summary formulations, of progressive complication, of the book's main point. The second chapter concludes: "When the work of interpretation has been completed, we

perceive that a dream is the fulfilment of a wish." The fourth chapter concludes: "a dream is a (disguised) fulfilment of a (suppressed or repressed) wish." The fifth chapter adds: "a succession of meanings or wish-fulfilments may be superimposed on one another, the bottom one being the fulfilment of a wish dating from earliest childhood." By the last chapter, this becomes: "a wish which is represented in a dream must be an infantile one." Thus the simple formula, a dream is the disguised fulfilment of a repressed infantile wish, gradually unfolds over hundreds of pages. If we had any doubt that this form was the work of conscious craft, it would be dissipated by Freud's statement about Sophocles' play:

> The action of the play consists in nothing other than the process of revealing, with cunning delays and ever-mounting excitement —a process that can be likened to the work of a psychoanalysis —that Oedipus himself is the murderer of Laius, but further that he is the son of the murdered man and of Jocasta.

The Interpretation of Dreams is thoroughly dramatistic, sometimes in the form of debate, sometimes in other fashions. Freud writes a running dialogue with an imaginary critic: "I shall meet with the most categorical contradiction," "I shall be told," "an objection may be raised," "Is it not more probable," "I can give only limited assent to this argument," "I cannot accept this objection," and so on. Dreams themselves are dramatic, as Freud notes, in that they reproduce an idea as though we were experiencing it. Neurosis is even more dramatic, in that hysterics "act all the parts in a play single-handed"; and Freud in fact defines hysteria as the conflict of two incompatible

wishes, as Hegel defined tragedy as the conflict of two incompatible necessities. Freud quotes Havelock Ellis approvingly in an account of secondary revision that is a little playlet. Ellis writes:

> Sleeping consciousness we may even imagine as saying to itself in effect: "Here comes our master, Waking Consciousness, who attaches such mighty importance to reason and logic and so forth. Quick! gather things up, put them in order —any order will do —before he enters to take possession."

With the psyche full of agonists, Freud's psychology must be comparably dramatic, and as we might expect it is full of voices, struggles, soliloquies and colloquies, and stage movement.

As he follows the quicksilver associations of dreams, Freud's style is sometimes a kaleidoscope of verbal puns, what he calls "syllabic chemistry," perhaps reminding the reader of *Finnegans Wake*. In a footnote, Freud quotes the criticism of Fliess when he read the proofs, that "the dreamer seems to be too ingenious and amusing" (Freud does not quote his own reply, that "All dreamers are insufferably witty"). The dream-work is in fact very like the composition of poetry. One dream has "a particularly amusing and elegant form"; another, "remarkable among other things for its form," alternates idea and image as a poem does. Like the poem-work the dream-work "does not think, calculate or judge in any way at all; it restricts itself to giving things a new form." Freud was not pleased with his book's style. He writes to Fliess:

> The matter about dreams I believe to be unassailable; what I dislike about it is the style. I was quite unable to express myself with noble simplicity, but lapsed into a facetious, circumlocutory straining after the picturesque.

> 1 know that, but the part of me that knows it and appraises it is unfortunately not the part that is productive.

In answer to Fliess' reassurances, Freud replies ten days later:

> But I do not think that my self-criticism was wholly unjustified. Somewhere inside me there is a feeling for form, an appreciation of beauty as a kind of perfection; and the tortuous sentences of the dream-book, with its high-flown, indirect phraseology, its squinting at the point, has sorely offended one of my ideals.

A more interesting matter than the book's style (which is, by general agreement, much better than Freud thought) is its tone. There are in fact two tones. The first is the tone of Sherlock Holmes, the Great Detective: assured, intolerant, firm and strong. Of a difference of opinion between himself and a patient, Freud remarks: "Soon afterwards it turned out that I was right." When a dreamer protests over revealing a delicate circumstance behind the dream, Freud says with all of Holmes' forcefulness: "Nevertheless I shall have to hear it." His comment on an "innocent" dream he interprets as a masturbation fantasy is: "Altogether *far* from innocent." He announces vigorously, "Whatever interrupts the progress of analytic work is a resistance," recognizing no calamities or catastrophes, from a broken leg to a war, that are not the patient's devilment. We can see Conan Doyle's hand in the titles Freud gives the dreams, so like Holmes cases: The Dream of Irma's Injection, The Dream of the Botanical Monograph; and Doyle as well as Sophocles has had a clear influence on Freud's form of delayed revelation and suspense.[2] Freud writes typically: "We shall find later that the enigma of the

formation of dreams can be solved by the revelation of an unsuspected psychical source of stimulation." The book's contrasting tone is a modest, scientific humility, rather like Darwin's in the *Origin*. Freud writes: "I shall further endeavour to elucidate," "I have been driven to realize," "I did not expect to find my guess at an interpretation justified," and so on. It is as though behind the manifest book, like the manifest dream-content, there were a latent book, like the latent dream-content, making a very different sort of statement.

Of course there is. Only on the surface is this a book about the objective interpretation of dreams. Not only is there a subjective book beneath the surface, the account of Freud's own neurosis, self-analysis and cure, but Freud clearly calls our attention to it in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, with no more dissembling than an "as it were." Interpreting a dream about the dissection of his own pelvis, he writes:

> The dissection meant the self-analysis which I was carrying out, as it were, in the publication of this present book about dreams —a process which had been so distressing to me in reality that I had postponed the printing of the finished manuscript for more than a year.

In the preface to the second edition in 1908, Freud makes this even clearer. He writes:

> For this book has a further subjective significance for me personally —a significance which I only grasped after I had completed it. It was, I found, a portion of my own self-analysis, my reaction to my father's death —that is to say, to the most important event, the most poignant loss, of a man's life. Having discovered that this was so, I felt unable to obliterate the traces of the experience.

Despite these clear statements, to the best of my knowledge no one recognized the autobiographical extent of the book until the publication of Freud's letters to Fliess, in German in 1950 and in English as *The Origins of Psychoanalysis* in 1954.

Wilhelm Fliess was a Berlin nose-and-throat specialist and biological theorist,[3] with whom Freud had a close friendship in the years between 1895 and 1900. Freud destroyed his letters from Fliess, but Fliess kept his from Freud, and after his death in 1928 they were sold to a bookseller in Berlin and were eventually bought by Marie Bonaparte, who bravely defied Freud when he insisted they be destroyed, and published them after his death. The 284 documents, ranging in time from 1887 to 1902, are a uniquely fascinating one-sided correspondence to read, and a remarkable insight into the origins of psychoanalysis generally and the genesis of *The Interpretation of Dreams* specifically.

In his letters to Fliess we can see the agonized stages of Freud's self-analysis, which resulted in the emergence of what Jones in his biography calls "the serene and benign Freud" of the twentieth century. In June, 1897, Freud reports to Fliess: "I have never yet imagined anything like my present spell of intellectual paralysis. Every line I write is torture." He continues:

> Incidentally, I have been through some kind of a neurotic experience, with odd states of mind not intelligible to consciousness —cloudy thoughts and veiled doubts, with barely here and there a ray of light.

In July, he reports:

> I still do not know what has been happening to me. Something from the deepest depths of my own neurosis has ranged itself against my taking a further step in understanding of the neuroses, and you have somehow been involved.

... In October, things are going easier, and Freud reports:

> So far I have found nothing completely new, but all the complications to which by now I am used. It is no easy matter. Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise. Only one idea of general value has occurred to me. I have found love of the mother and jealousy of the father in my own case too, and now believe it to be a general phenomenon of early childhood.

... In November, Freud again hit trouble. He explains:

> My self-analysis is still interrupted. I have now seen why. I can only analyze myself with objectively-acquired knowledge (as if I were a stranger); self-analysis is really impossible, otherwise there would be no illness.

... By February of 1898 it was over, and Freud writes to Fliess: "Self-analysis has been dropped in favor of the dream book."

The Interpretation of Dreams constantly informs us of the author's reticence about revealing his dreams and their background. He writes:

> There is some natural hesitation about revealing so many intimate facts about one's mental life; nor can there be any guarantee against misinterpretation by strangers. But it must be possible to overcome such hesitation. ... And it is safe to assume that my readers too will very soon find their initial interest in the indiscretions which I am bound to make replaced by an absorbing immersion in the psychological problems upon which they throw light.

... At a sexually-suggestive detail in his dream of Irma's injection, Freud breaks

off with “Frankly, I had no desire to penetrate more deeply at this point.”[4] In a 1909 footnote to the interpretation of the dream, he adds:

> Though it will be understood that I have not reported everything that occurred to me during the process of interpretation.

In concluding the chapter, he challenges the reader:

> But considerations which arise in the case of every dream of my own restrain me from pursuing my interpretive work. If anyone should feel tempted to express a hasty condemnation of my reticence, I would advise him to make the experiment of being franker than I am.

... We learn from a number of surprising letters to his fiancée the very considerable extent of Freud’s own repression and prudishness. We must thus recognize Freud’s impressive heroism in making these revelations. He is in fact the bravest sort of hero, a hero of the ludicrous. Men can confess with relative ease to rapes and murders they have committed, but it takes much more courage for Freud to begin the interpretation of one of his dreams with the announcement that at the time of the dream “a boil the size of an apple had risen at the base of my scrotum.” At the same time that we recognize Freud’s honesty, we must recognize its limits. He admits that he is not telling us the whole truth about himself, and that he is falsifying some of what he does tell. Explaining that “the politeness which I practise every day is to a large extent dissimulation,” he adds, “and when I interpret my dreams for my readers I am obliged to adopt similar distortions.” Freud acknowledges this more fully in the preface. He writes:

> But if I were to report my own dreams, it inevitably followed that I should have to reveal to the public gaze more of the intimacies of my mental life than I liked, or than is normally necessary for any writer who is a man of science and not a poet. Such was the painful but unavoidable necessity; and I have submitted to it rather than totally abandon the possibility of giving the evidence for my psychological findings. Naturally, however, I have been unable to resist the temptation of taking the edge off some of my indiscretions by omissions and substitutions.

In August of 1899, Freud writes to Fliess:

> I am deep in the chapter on the "dream-work" and have replaced —I think to advantage —the complete dream that you deleted by a small collection of dream-fragments.

The next month he assures Fliess: "I have avoided sex, but 'dirt' is unavoidable." In short, Freud has consciously disguised the material of the book as the dream-work unconsciously disguises, by a censoring process very like secondary revision.

Anyone who reread *The Interpretation of Dreams* after reading the Fliess correspondence must have had an uncanny experience: where Fliess had been invisible in the book before, he was suddenly omnipresent. In his superb new variorum translation of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, published in 1954, James Strachey identifies many of these references. What had on first reading seemed to be a hundred friends all turn out to be Wilhelm Fliess. As the hidden subject of the dream of Irma's injection, Fliess is: "another friend who had for many years been familiar with all my writings during the period of my gestation, just as I had with his"; "a person whose agreement I recalled with satisfaction whenever I felt isolated in my opinions"; "this friend who

played so large a part in my life." As the disguised subject of the dream of the botanical monograph, Fliess is involved in a tender fantasy:

> If ever I got glaucoma, I had thought, I should travel to Berlin and get myself operated on, incognito, in my friend's house, by a surgeon recommended by him.

One of the events inspiring the dream was "a letter from my friend in Berlin the day before." When Freud returns to Irma's injection, two more Fliesses turn up: "a friend who was seriously ill" in Munich a year before, and "my friend in Berlin, who *did* understand me, who would take my side, and to whom I owed so much valuable information, dealing, amongst other things, with the chemistry of the sexual processes."

...The relationship with Fliess seems to have had, as Freud recognized, a strong homosexual component. (In one letter, he even addresses Fliess as "Dearest.") For the self-analysis, the attachment performed the vital function of an analytic transference, enabling Freud to project onto Fliess his infantile relations with his parents and other relatives. The success of the self-analysis not only cured Freud of his neurosis, but of the transference, and the friendship inevitably came to an end. During the composition of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud writes to Fliess:

> So you see what happens. I live gloomily and in darkness until you come, and then I pour out all my grumbles to you, kindle my flickering light at your steady flame and feel well again; and after your departure I have eyes to see again, and what I look upon is good.

In 1900 Freud writes: "But there can be no substitute for the close contact

with a friend which a particular —almost a feminine —side of me calls for." When their friendship turned into bickering in 1901, Freud writes to Fliess, "I was sorry to lose my 'only audience.'" Nine years later, Freud showed in a letter to Sandor Ferenczi that he understood the Fliess relationship. He writes, somewhat over-optimistically:

> You not only noticed, but also understood, that I *no longer* have any need to uncover my personality completely, and you correctly traced this back to the traumatic reason for it. Since Fliess's case, with the overcoming of which you recently saw me occupied, that need has been extinguished. A part of homosexual cathexis has been withdrawn and made use of to enlarge my own ego. I have succeeded where the paranoic fails.

...According to *Glory Reflected*, a memoir by Freud's son Martin, Fliess' photograph continued to occupy a place of honor in his father's study after the break.

Beneath the attachment to Fliess in *The Interpretation of Dreams* is of course the Oedipus complex....When Alfred Adler and Wilhelm Stekel broke with Freud, Jones says, Ferenczi suggested that Freud was "living ov'er again the unpleasant experience of Fliess's desertion of him ten years ago, and Freud confirmed this." "I had quite got over the Fliess affair," Freud writes to Ferenczi. "Adler is a little Fliess come to life again. And his appendage Stekel is at least called Wilhelm." In 1912, when C. G. Jung signalled his approaching break by remissness in answering Freud's letters, Freud was reminded, Jones says, "of the same course of events with Fliess where the first sign of Fliess's cooling towards him was his delay in answering Freud's letters" (although in

the case of Fliess, Freud had cooled first).

Before Fliess there had been a number of such ambivalent or soon-souring attachments. One of them was with Freud's brother-in-law and old friend, Eli Bernays. Another was with Freud's teacher, Theodor Meynert, of whom Freud tells a very dramatic story in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He writes:

> I had carried on an embittered controversy with him in writing, on the subject of male hysteria, the existence of which he denied. When I visited him during his fatal illness and asked after his condition, he spoke at some length about his state and ended with these words: "You know, I was always one of the clearest cases of male hysteria." He was thus admitting, to my satisfaction and astonishment, what he had for so long obstinately contested.

Another such was Breuer, who gets into a Fliess dream in the book. Freud broke with Breuer in 1896, at the beginning of the period Jones calls "the more passionate phase of his relations with Fliess," and in letters to Fliess at the time Freud reviles Breuer bitterly. Jones writes:

> Breuer was failing in his role as father-protector by repudiating Freud's researches and rejecting his conclusions. Yet how could one with an easy conscience turn against a person who for fifteen years had done so much to help and support one? In early life Freud had found it impossible to hate his father, and had concealed his hostility by love. The same solution was the only feasible one now, but the outer reality forbade it except by the device of "decomposing" the father-person into two, one "good," the other "bad." So hatred was directed against Breuer. and love towards Fliess — both in an excessive degree out of proportion to the merits or demerits of the persons themselves. We know that with Freud intense love anti hate were specially apt to go hand in hand.

Without the intense hate, Freud was similarly swept off his feet by Charcot, of whom he writes his fiancée in 1885:

> Charcot, who is one of the greatest of physicians and a man whose common sense borders on genius, is simply wrecking all my aims and opinions. I sometimes come out of his lectures as from out of Notre Dame, with an entirely new idea about perfection. But he exhausts me; when I come away from him 1 no longer have any desire to work at my own silly things; it is three whole days since I have done any work, and I have no feelings of guilt. My brain is sated as after an evening in the theater. Whether the seed will ever bear any fruit I don't know; but what I do know is that no other human being has ever affected me in the same way.

Less intensely, Freud had been similarly involved with another teacher, Ernst Bruecke, and with Bruecke's assistant, Ernst Fleischl von Marxow. After Fliess there were many others among the more imaginative of Freud's psychoanalytic followers, particularly Jung, Stekel, Otto Rank, and Ferenczi. The passionate letters to Jung are as embarrassing to read as the earlier ones to Fliess. Freud writes to Jung in 1907 "of the calm assurance that finally took possession of me and bade me wait until a voice from the unknown answered mine. That voice was yours." The successive editions of *The Interpretation of Dreams* are like a stratification of developing friendships and favoritisms: Jung appears in the second edition in 1909; Stekel dominates the third in 1911; and Ferenczi and Rank take over from the fourth in 1914 on.

The ambivalent relationship toward Stekel in the book is particularly interesting. Freud began as a relativist in dream interpretation, insisting that images have a unique meaning for each dreamer in the context of his associations. Stekel was an absolutist, insisting that dreams use universal symbols that can be listed in a handbook, as he did so list them in *Die Sprache des Traumes* in 1911 and in later works. Over the years Freud became more

and more convinced by Stekel (who had first come to him as a patient), and *The Interpretation of Dreams* expanded to include more and more general dream symbolism. In the 1909 edition Freud lists all sorts of objections to the Stekel approach, admits "we shall feel tempted to draw up a new 'dream-book' on the decoding principle," and then writes: "Subject to these qualifications and reservations I will now proceed." He goes on to compile a moderate gypsy dream book: the emperor and empress "as a rule" are the father and mother, umbrellas "may" stand for the male organ, ovens usually represent the uterus, etc. In later editions this was enormously expanded, became a new section, and lost much of its tentative tone. In the 1925 collected edition, long after the break with Stekel, Freud wrote an acknowledgment of his influence, still deeply ambivalent: Stekel "has perhaps damaged psychoanalysis as much as he has benefited it," and the intuitive method by which he gets his readings "must be rejected as scientifically untrustworthy"; yet Stekel is ultimately right, and on the subject of absolute symbolism Freud concedes: "It was only by degrees and as my experience increased that I arrived at a full appreciation of its extent and significance, and I did so under the influence of the contributions of Wilhelm Stekel."

Years after the break with Fliess, International Psychoanalytic Congresses were held in four of the six towns where Freud and Fliess had held their "congresses," and a return to a fifth was scheduled but prevented by the first World War. At a meeting with Jung and a few other followers in

Munich in 1912, while lunching at a hotel, Freud suddenly fainted. Two weeks later he had an explanation. He writes to Jones:

> I cannot forget that six and four years ago I suffered from very similar though not such intense symptoms in the same room of the Park Hotel. I saw Munich first when I visited Fliess during his illness and this town seems to have acquired a strong connection with my relation to that man. There is some piece of unruly homosexual feeling at the root of the matter.

One earlier fainting in the dining room of the Park, Jones says in *Free Associations*, was during a painful scene with Rie, Freud's lifelong friend, family doctor, and tarock-crony. Freud had also fainted at Bremen in 1909, in the presence of Jung and Ferenczi.

Even deeper in Freud's psyche...was the figure concealed by displacement, the figure of his father. As Freud says in the 1908 preface, it was guilts connected with his father's death in 1896 that inspired the self-analysis and the book. Freud discusses typical dreams "containing the death of some loved relative," and says of at least one group of them, those with a painful affect, that their meaning is "a wish that the person in question may die." As examples of absurd dreams he gives "two or three dreams which deal (by chance, as it may seem at first sight) with the dreamer's dead father." Freud introduces the second of them: "Here is another, almost exactly similar, example from a dream of my own. (I lost my father in 1896.)" Another is introduced:

> For instance, a man who had nursed his father during his last illness and had been deeply grieved by his death, had the following senseless dream

some time afterwards.

The dream is a very brief one of the father being dead and not knowing it, and Freud goes on to interpret it. He writes:

> While he was nursing his father he had repeatedly wished his father were dead; that is to say, he had had what was actually a merciful thought that death might put an end to his sufferings. During his mourning, after his father's death, even this sympathetic wish became a subject of unconscious self-reproach, as though by means of it he had really helped to shorten the sick man's life. A stirring up of the dreamer's earliest infantile impulses against his father made it possible for this self-reproach to find expression as a dream; but the fact that the instigator of the dream and the daytime thoughts were such worlds apart was precisely what necessitated the dream's absurdity.

If this is not Freud's own dream, it is one he powerfully identified with, since he repeats it in a 1911 paper, and tells another like it in his *Introductory Lectures*. Freud readily admits to such identification in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He writes of a patient:

> I knew that the root of his illness had been hostile impulses against his father, dating from his childhood and involving a sexual situation. Insofar, therefore, as I was identifying myself with him, I was seeking to confess to something analogous.

Freud generalizes about absurd dreams and dead fathers, in a clearly autobiographical statement:

> Nor is it by any means a matter of chance that our first examples of absurdity in dreams related to a dead father. In such cases, the conditions for creating absurd dreams are found together in characteristic fashion. The authority wielded by a father provokes criticism from his children at an early age, and the severity of the demands he makes upon them leads them, for their own relief, to keep their eyes open to any weakness of their father's; but the filial piety called up in our minds by the figure of a father, particularly after his death, tightens the censorship which prohibits any such criticism from being consciously expressed.

He then begins "Here is another absurd dream about a dead father," and gives one more dream of his own. Freud's father seems to have been kind but somewhat strict. Jones writes:

> On the other hand, the father was after all a Jewish patriarch and so demanded corresponding respect. Moritz Rosenthal, the pianist, tells a story of how one day he was having an argument with his father in the street when they encountered Jakob Freud, who laughingly reproved him thus: "What, are you contradicting your father? My Sigmund's little toe is cleverer than my head, but he would never dare to contradict me!"

We know something of Freud's reaction to his father's death from a series of letters to Fliess. He writes the day after the funeral:

> The old man died on the night of the 23rd, and we buried him yesterday. He bore himself bravely up to the end, like the remarkable man he was.

In response to Fliess's letter of condolence, Freud writes:

> I find it so difficult to put pen to paper at the moment that I have even put off writing to you to thank you for the moving things you said in your letter. By one of the obscure routes behind the official consciousness the old man's death affected me deeply. I valued him highly and understood him very well indeed, and with his peculiar mixture of deep wisdom and imaginative lightheartedness he meant a great deal in my life. By the time he died his life had long been over, but at a death the whole past stirs within one.
>
> I feel now as if I had been torn up by the roots.

He goes on to tell Fliess about "a very pretty dream I had on the night after the funeral." In 1899, while at work on *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud writes to Fliess, in connection with some thoughts about death: "My father knew that he was dying, did not speak about it and retained his composure to the end." A few weeks after the book was published, he reports to Fliess:

> Two of my patients have almost simultaneously arrived at self-reproach over the nursing and death of their parents, and shown me that my dreams about this were typical. The guilt is in such cases connected with revenge feelings, malicious pleasure at the patient's sufferings, the patient's excretory difficulties (both urine and stools). Truly an unsuspected corner of mental life.

This is the heart of Freud's revelation about his ambivalence toward his father. In explaining a dream inspired by his father in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud gives us the traumatic childhood scene. He writes:

> When I was seven or eight years old there was another domestic scene, which I can remember very clearly. One evening before going to sleep I disregarded the rules which modesty lays down and obeyed the calls of nature in mv parents' bedroom while they were present. In the course of his reprimand, my father let fall the words: "The boy will come to nothing." This must have been a frightful blow to my ambition, for references to this scene are still constantly recurring in my dreams and are always linked with an enumeration of my achievements and successes, as though I wanted to say: 'You see, I have come to something."[5] This scene, then, provided the material for the final episode of the dream, in which —in revenge, of course —the roles were interchanged. The older man (clearly my father, since his blindness in one eve referred to his unilateral glaucoma) was now micturating in front of me, just as I had in front of him in my childhood. In the reference to his glaucoma I was reminding him of the cocaine, which had helped him in the operation, as though I had in that way kept my promise. Moreover I was making fun of him; I had to hand him the urinal because he was blind, and I revelled in allusions to mv discoveries in connection with the theory of hysteria, of which I felt so proud.

Freud mentions in a footnote

> the tragic requital that lay in my father's soiling his bed like a child during the last days of his life.

In a sense, the whole of psychoanalysis stems from that bedroom scene at seven or eight. Freud later gives a dream of his own, about washing away feces with urine, with the introductory statement that it "will fill every reader

with disgust." He interprets it as a boast about his scientific achievements, and sees himself in the role of the cleansing father: "I had discovered the infantile aetiology of the neuroses and had thus saved my own children from falling ill." The day before the dream he had "longed to be away from all this grubbing in human dirt," and the dream reassured him. Analyzing an absurd dream about his father, Freud writes:

> These elevated thoughts prepared the way for the appearance of something which was common in another sense. My father's *post mortem* rise of temperature corresponded to the words "after his death" in the dream. His most severe suffering had been caused by a complete paralysis (*obstruction*) of the intestines during his last weeks. Disrespectful thoughts of all kinds followed from this. One of my contemporaries who lost his father while he was still at his secondary school —on that occasion I myself had been deeply moved and had offered to be his friend — once told me scornfully of how one of his female relatives had had a painful experience. Her father had fallen dead in the street and had been brought home; when his body was undressed it was found that at the moment of death, or *post mortem*, he had passed a stool. His daughter had been so unhappy about this that she could not prevent this ugly detail from disturbing her memory of her father. Here we have reached the wish that was embodied in this dream. "To stand before one's children's eyes, after one's death, great and unsullied" —who would not desire this?

He continues:

> The little boy's right to appear in the context of this dream was derived from the fact that he had just had the same misadventure —easily forgivable both in a child and in a dying man —of soiling his bed-clothes.

Along with the major excretory theme, a few minor themes related to Freud's father run through *The Interpretation of Dreams*. One is gray hair. In reaction to the misdeeds of a brother, Freud believed, his father's hair "turned gray from grief in a few days." At the time of the self-analysis, Freud was

displeased to find his own beard graying. In a dream, he writes, "the beard further involved an allusion to my father and myself through the intermediate idea of growing gray." In interpreting the dream of dissecting his own pelvis, he explains:

> But I should also have been very glad to miss growing gray — "*Grauen*" in the other sense of the word. I was already growing quite gray, and the gray of my hair was another reminder that I must not delay any longer. And, as we have seen, the thought that I should have to leave it to my children to reach the goal of my difficult journey forced its way through to representation at the end of the dream.

Another father image is fur. Freud reports a story that his father told him when he was ten or twelve:

> "When I was a young man," he said, "I went for a walk one Saturday in the streets of your birthplace; I was well dressed, and had a new fur cap on my head. A Christian came up to me and with a single blow knocked off my cap into the mud and shouted "Jew! get off the pavement!"" "And what did you do?" I asked. "I went into the roadway and picked up my cap," was his quiet reply. This struck me as unheroic conduct on the part of the big, strong man who was holding the little boy by the hand.

A few pages later a *coat* trimmed with fur appears in a dream involving his mother, but Freud either does not recognize the image or does not comment on it. A third theme is his father's glaucoma, which comes up in the dream of the botanical monograph as well as in the revenge dream of handing his blind father the urinal, and in the fantasy of himself getting glaucoma and putting himself in the hands of Fliess.

The principal guilt dream involving Freud's father in the book is the dream of the burning child. It does not appear until the last chapter, although

it is foreshadowed earlier by a dream of a patient about sitting before a child's coffin surrounded by candles. The dream of the burning child opens the last chapter, and Freud goes to great pains to make it clear that it is *not* his own dream. He begins:

> Among the dreams which have been reported to me by other people, there is one which has special claims upon our attention at this point. It was told to me by a woman patient who had herself heard it in a lecture on dreams: its actual source is still unknown to me. Its content made an impression on the lady, however, and she proceeded to "re-dream" it, that is, to repeat some of its elements in a dream of her own, so that, by taking it over in this way, she might express her agreement with it on one particular point.
>
> The preliminaries to this model dream were as follows. A father had been watching beside his child's sick-bed for days and nights on end. After the child had died, he went into the next room to lie down, but left the door open so that he could see from his bedroom into the room in which his child's body was laid out, with tall candles standing round it. An old man had been engaged to keep watch over it, and sat beside the body murmuring prayers. After a few hours' sleep, the father had a dream that *his child was standing beside his bed, caught him by the arm and whispered to him reproachfully: "Father, don't you see I'm burning?*" He woke up, noticed a bright glare of light from the next room, hurried into it and found that the old watchman had dropped off to sleep and that the wrappings and one of the arms of his beloved child's dead body had been burned by a lighted candle that had fallen on them.

If this dream was not Freud's originally (and the explanation of insistent denials as confirmations that he published in the 1925 paper "Negation" suggests that it was), or if he did not re-dream it, he indentified with it so strongly that it becomes the key image of his guilt. Applied to Freud, it would be the dream of the burning father, with Jakob Freud whispering reproachfully: "Son, don't you see I'm burning?"[6] Freud keeps returning to it all through the chapter: "Its interpretation was not given fully in our sense"; "The unusually subordinate part played in this dream by wish-fulfilment is

remarkable"; "The dream of the burning child at the beginning of this chapter gives us a welcome opportunity of considering the difficulties with which the theory of wish-fulfilment is faced"; finally, "Other wishes, originating from the repressed, probably escape us, since we are unable to analyze the dream."

... The part of Freud's Oedipus complex more repressed than the hostility to the father in *The Interpretation of Dreams* is the erotic attachment to the mother. Freud describes it openly (except for the comic Latin) in a letter to Fliess written during the self-analysis. He writes:

> At certain points I have the impression of having come to the end, and so far I have always known where the next night of dreams would continue. To describe it in writing is more difficult than anything else, and besides it is far too extensive. I can only say that in my case my father played no active role, though I certainly projected on to him an analogy from myself; that my "primary originator" was an ugly, elderly but clever woman who told me a great deal about God and hell, and gave me a high opinion of my own capacities; that later (between the ages of two and two-and-a-half) libido towards *matrem* was aroused; the occasion must have been the journey with her from Leipzig to Vienna, during which we spent a night together and 1 must have had the opportunity of seeing her *nudam* (you have long since drawn the conclusions from this for your own son, as a remark of yours revealed); and that I welcomed my one-year-younger brother (who died within a few months) with ill wishes and real infantile jealousy, and that his death left the germ of guilt in me.

We see a number of these themes in the book. The nurse's early role in giving Freud a high opinion of his own capacities clearly continued his mother's favoritism. Freud writes:

> What, then, could have been the origin of the ambitiousness which produced the dream in me? At that point I recalled an anecdote I had often heard repeated in my childhood. At the time of my birth an old peasant-woman had prophesied to my proud mother that with her first-born child she had brought a great man into the world. Prophecies of this kind must be very common: there are so many mothers filled with happy

> expectations and so many old peasant-women and others of the kind who make up for the loss of their power to control things in the present world by concentrating it on the future. Nor can the prophetess have lost anything by her words. Could this have been the source of my thirst for grandeur?

To a discussion of Oedipus dreams, "in which the dreamer has sexual intercourse with his own mother," Freud adds the footnote in 1911:

> I have found that people who know that they are preferred or favored by their mother give evidence in their lives of a peculiar self-reliance and an unshakable optimism which often seem like heroic attributes and bring actual success to their possessors.

Less favorably, Freud later refers to his mother-induced self-confidence as "an absurd megalomania which had long been suppressed in my waking life."

On the actual Oedipal desire, he is more reticent in the book. "Love and hunger," writes Freud, who was himself breast-fed, meet at a woman's breast." If the account of undisguised Oedipus dreams does not admit to Freud's having any, Freud does tell a disguised Oedipus dream, which he says was his last true anxiety-dream, at the age of seven or eight. He writes:

> It was a very vivid one, and in it I saw *my beloved mother, with a peculiarly peaceful, sleeping expression on her features, being carried into the room by two (or three) people with birds ' beaks and laid upon the bed.*

His brief and quite reticent analysis concludes:

> The anxiety can be traced back, when repression is taken into account, to an obscure and evidently sexual craving that had found appropriate expression in the visual content of the dream.

The other ingredient of the Oedipus complex, the child's fear that the forbidden indulgence with his mother will bring death or castration, comes in

oddly, in an anecdote of how his mother taught him to accept mortality at six. Beneath its apparent triviality, it makes an intimate association of death with the mother's flesh. Freud writes:

> When I was six years old and was given my first lessons by my mother, I was expected to believe that we were all made of earth and must therefore return to earth. This did not suit me and I expressed doubts of the doctrine. My mother thereupon rubbed the palms of her hands together — just as she did in making dumplings, except that there was no dough between them — and showed me the blackish scales of *epidermis* produced by the friction as a proof that we were made of earth. My astonishment at this ocular demonstration knew no bounds and I acquiesced in the belief.

The whole of Freud's Oedipus complex is indirectly revealed in two adjacent cases a page or so from the end of the book. One is of a girl whose hysteria transparently mimed copulation, although the girl's mother could not recognize it. The other is of a boy whose daydream of a sickle and scythe concealed a wish to castrate his father. Freud is clearly a composite of both children: driven by an infantile sexuality his mother failed to recognize, torn by an infantile murderous hostility his father never discovered.

With the recognition comes release; with confession, absolution. Early in the book, Freud quotes Plato's idea "that the best men are those who only *dream* what other men *do* in their waking life." His positive slogan in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (anticipating the later "Where id was, there shall ego be") is: "Psychotherapy can pursue no other course than to bring the Unconscious under the domination of the Preconscious." When these repressed infantile guilty wishes were brought to consciousness by the ego,

they could be dismissed: wishes are not omnipotent, they do not kill; my father did not die because I wished him dead as a child, or even as an adult. The last four paragraphs of the book finally get around to the ethical question and absolve Freud. Recalling Plato's formulation, Freud writes, "I think it is best, therefore, to acquit dreams." "Actions and consciously expressed opinions," he decides, "are as a rule enough for practical purposes in judging men's characters." Freud concludes: "It is in any case instructive to get to know the much trampled soil from which our virtues proudly spring."

The Interpretation of Dreams, we learn from a letter Freud wrote to Fliess in 1899, has a planned imaginative organization. He writes:

> The whole thing is planned on the model of an imaginary walk. First comes the dark wood of the authorities (who cannot see the trees), where there is no clear view and it is very easy to go astray. Then there is a cavernous defile through which I lead my readers —my specimen dream with its peculiarities, its details, its indiscretions, and its bad jokes —and then, all at once, the high ground and the prospect, and the question: "Which way do you want to go?"

Freud first makes the walk metaphor visible at the beginning of the third chapter, after the lengthy analysis in the second chapter of the dream of Irma's injection. He writes:

> When, after passing through a narrow defile, we suddenly emerge upon a piece of high ground, where the path divides and the finest prospects open up on every side, we may pause for a moment and consider in which direction we shall first turn our steps. Such is the case with us, now that we have surmounted the first interpretation of a dream. We find ourselves in the full day-light of a sudden discovery.

Beginning the fifth chapter, Freud writes:

> Having followed one path to its end, we may now retrace our steps and choose another starting-point for our rambles through the problems of dream-life.

The seventh chapter announces, near the beginning:

> But before starting off along this new path, it will be well to pause and look around, to see whether in the course of our journeys up to this point we have overlooked anything of importance. For it must be clearly understood that the easy and agreeable portion of our journey lies behind us. Hitherto, unless I am greatly mistaken, all the paths along which we have travelled have led us towards the light —towards elucidation and fuller understanding. But as soon as we endeavor to penetrate more deeply into the mental process involved in dreaming, every path will end in darkness.

Two things should be noticed. First, we are going circuitously only because dreams do, and we follow their movements. The "paths" leading to the unconscious cross "verbal bridges," and so forth. Freud writes:

> Superficial associations replace deep ones if the censorship makes the normal connecting paths impassable. We may picture, by way of analogy, a mountain region, where some general interruption of traffic (owing to floods, for instance) has blocked the main, major roads, but where communications are still maintained over inconvenient and steep footpaths normally used only by the hunter.

Second, all of these dark woods, narrow defiles, high grounds and deep penetrations are unconscious sexual imagery, and we are exploring a woman's body, that of Freud's mother. In the first chapter, Freud speaks of someone's failure to follow the path that would have led him to "the very heart" of an explanation, and we know that path that leads to the heart. If it seems unlikely that the discoverer of unconscious sexual imagery should have missed his own, we can only observe that such are the devious workings of the unconscious, remembering that Freud wrote innocently to Fliess, just

after his father's death: "I am busy thinking out something which would cement our work together and put my column on your base."

As the book's paths leave the light for the darkness in the last chapter, lit only by the fitful flames of that curious torch, Freud's father, the organizing metaphor switches from walking to digging or mining. Freud had earlier remarked in a footnote: "There is at least one spot in every dream at which it is unplumbable — a navel, as it were, that is its point of contact with the unknown." In the last chapter Freud picks up that image and expands it in a tangle of metaphor (perhaps what he meant by "straining after the picturesque" in the letter to Fliess). Freud writes:

> There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; this is because we become aware during the work of interpretation that at that point there is a tangle of dream-thoughts which cannot be unravelled and which moreover adds nothing to our knowledge of the content of the dream. This is the dream's navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown. The dream thought 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.

A few pages later he says:

> It is true that in carrying out the interpretation in the waking state we follow a path which leads back from the elements of the dream to the dream-thoughts and that the dream-work followed one in the contrary direction. But it is highly improbable that these paths are passable both ways. It appears, rather, that in the daytime we drive shafts which follow along fresh chains of thought and that these shafts make contact with the intermediate thoughts and the dream-thoughts now at one point and now at another.

What we do down there in the tunnel or mine, oddly, is build. “We have been obliged,” Freud writes movingly, “to build our way out into the dark,” and adds that the time may come “when we shall find ourselves more at home in it.” Freud talks of his psychological or conceptual “scaffolding,” and warns us not to mistake it for the finished building; “our edifice is still uncompleted.”

Freud qualifies his metaphors in a passage very reminiscent of Darwin’s in *The Origin of Species*. He writes:

> I see no necessity to apologize for the imperfections of this or any similar imagery. Analogies of this kind are only intended to assist us in our attempt to make the complications of mental functioning intelligible.

Later he remarks: “Let us replace these metaphors by something that seems to correspond better to the real state of affairs.” Since this turns out to be only a better metaphor, we realize once again that his metaphors are his vision of reality.

Besides the key one of the walk that climbs down and then goes up again, there are a number of other thematic metaphors in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Perhaps the most pervasive of them is of warfare. Freud says of the dream of the botanical monograph that it has “an indifferent ring about it,” and explains: “This reminds one of the peace that has descended upon a battlefield strewn with corpses; no trace is left of the struggle which raged over it.” Of another dream: “The state of things is what it was after some sweeping revolution in one of the republics of antiquity or the Renaissance.”

He speaks of where "our defensive weapons lie," of resistance as "guarding the frontier," and so forth. The warfare is seen primarily as the storming of a fortress: "The state of sleep guarantees the security of the citadel that must be guarded"; in psychosis "the watchman is overpowered"; a phobia "is like a frontier fortification"; the unconscious even has "a kind of sally-gate" so that it can take the offensive against the besiegers. Freud explains in summary that these images are "derived from a set of ideas relating to a struggle for a piece of ground." Again, in Freudian terms, we know what ground, what fortress.

Freud's theories were always deeply dualistic. Jones explains:

> One is naturally tempted to correlate this tendency with its manifestations in Freud's own personality. There was the fight between scientific discipline and philosophical speculation; his passionate love urge and his unusually great sexual repression; his vigorous masculinity, which shines through all his writings, and his feminine needs; his desire-to create everything himself and his longing to receive stimulation from another; his love of independence and his needs of dependence. But such thoughts assuredly bring the risk of falsification from the lure of simplistic solutions.

For a divided personality dealing with an ambivalent subject-matter, what better metaphor than warfare?

Another metaphor, visible in many of the quotations above, is light. The book (like Freud's self-analysis) can be seen as an act of bringing that which attempts to "throw light" on something or enlighten, and at a key point Freud typically remarks: "We can now see our way a little further." If the paths that

first led us toward the light end in darkness in the last chapter, it is a darkness that will eventually be lighted by knowledge, and the whole book (like Freud's self-analysis) can be seen as an act of bringing that which was buried in the dark up into the light. There is also a range of metaphors from natural science. Freud's hope was that his psychology would eventually be grounded in neurology, that "deeper research will one day trace the path further and discover an organic basis for the mental event," or "find a means of picturing the movements that accompany excitation of neurones." He produces a series of metaphors for the mind from mechanical instruments: "a compound microscope or a photographic apparatus, or something of that kind." The dream is "that most marvelous and most mysterious of all instruments," and seen in scientific imagery the censorship is no longer a watchman or guardian of a fortress, but is comparable to "the refraction which takes place when a ray of light passes into a new medium." Another metaphor is electricity, and dream formation makes new connections like "short-circuits," wishes are "currents in the apparatus," etc. Still another series of analogies is drawn from various sorts of picture language. Dream expression is "a pictographic script," "a picture-puzzle, a rebus," "hieroglyphic script," and so on. Dreams "present no greater diffaculties to their translators than do the ancient hieroglyphic scripts to those who seek to read them."

A variety of minor metaphors enliven the book. Dream-thoughts are jammed up, "almost like pack-ice"; a dream is like a scrambled "algebraic

equation"; analysis results in cure as though "the assertions made in the text are borne out by the accompanying illustrations"; day thoughts need unconscious wishes invested in them as entrepreneurs need capitalists; a repressed idea is like an American dentist in Austria, unable to practice without a local "front"; a dream "is like a firework, which takes hours to prepare but goes off in a moment."

Our best clue to the imaginative form of the book is the epigraph from *The Aeneid* on the title page, *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo* ("If I cannot bend the higher powers, I will stir up the infernal regions"). Freud borrowed it from a book by Ferdinand Lassalle, and first intended it, we learn from an 1896 letter to Fliess, to be the epigraph for a chapter on symptom-formation in a work of general psychology he intended to write. Freud explains in a note in his collected works: "This line of Virgil is intended to picture the efforts of the repressed instinctual impulses." When it is quoted near the end of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, that is its obvious reference, and Freud always denied that it had any other. Nevertheless, it clearly refers to Freud himself as well as to repressed wishes, and is his ultimate answer to his father's prophecy that he would never amount to anything. Freud is a mythic hero who has made the dangerous journey into the underworld and come back with the treasure, and in this aspect the book's form is that of a successful mythic quest.

Freud writes:

> The respect paid to dreams in antiquity is, however, based upon correct psychological insight and is the homage paid to the uncontrolled and indestructible forces in the human mind, to the "daemonic" power which produces the dream-wish and which we find at work in our unconscious.

The Interpretation of Dreams is full of these daemonic powers. Freud writes:

> These wishes in our unconscious, ever on the alert and, so to say, immortal, remind one of the legendary Titans, weighed down since primeval ages by the massive bulk of the mountains which were once hurled upon them by the victorious gods and which are still shaken from time to time by the convulsion of their limbs.

He adds in a footnote:

> If I may use a simile, they are only capable of annihilation in the same sense as the ghosts in the underworld of *The Odyssey* —ghosts which awoke to new life as soon as they tasted blood.

Freud continues: "Indeed it is a prominent feature of unconscious processes that they are indestructible. In the unconscious nothing can be brought to an end, nothing is past or forgotten." The last sentence of the book reminds us of "the indestructible wish."

Mircea Eliade, in *The Sacred and the Profane*, compares psychoanalysis to primitive initiation. He explains:

> The patient is asked to descend deeply into himself, to make his past live, to confront his traumatic experiences again; and, from the point of view of form, this dangerous operation resembles initiatory descents into hell, the realm of ghosts, and combats with monsters. Just as the initiate was expected to emerge from his ordeals victorious —in short, was to "die" and be "resuscitated" in order to gain access to a fully responsible existence, open to spiritual values —so the patient undergoing analysis today must confront his own "unconscious," haunted by ghosts and monsters, in order to find psychic health and integrity and hence the world of cultural values.

As Freud's was the first analysis, so was he the proto-initiate, the primeval hero of the quest.

Some literary analogues immediately suggest themselves. Freud suggests the comparison with *Oedipus the King* of Sophocles, but since *The Interpretation of Dreams* ends in final triumphant affirmation, we would have to see it as somehow including both *Oedipus the King* and *Oedipus at Colonus*, or progressing from one to the other. Freud similarly brings up *Hamlet* (he quotes or refers to it at least six times in the book, even more often than Faust), but the same objection would make Shakespeare's progress from *Hamlet* to *The Tempest* a better analogy. Or, remembering the "dark wood" in which they both begin, we may compare *The Interpretation of Dreams* structurally with The Divine Comedy; at least *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and a page of the *Paradiso*. In another sense, recognizing the dream to be a kind of poem, the book is a poem about poetry, a highly imaginative sort of literary criticism. It is Freud's best book because it is his most intimate book, far more revealing than his *Autobiographical Study*. *The Interpretation of Dreams* was one of the two books (*Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex* was the other) that Freud regularly kept up to date. This was done almost entirely by additions, many in the form of footnotes, almost never by alteration of the text, even where the statement was absurdly outmoded. Freud explains in the preface to the fifth edition of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, in 1918:

> I have not been able to bring myself to embark upon any fundamental

> revision of this book, which might bring it up to the level of our present psychoanalytic views but would on the other hand destroy its historic character.

That "I have not been able to bring myself" is interesting. When we remember Freud's reluctance to publish the book, the year's delay, and all his resistances in it, we realize its enormous importance to him. *The Interpretation of Dreams* is a relentless and unsparing *Confessions*, and its powerful self-revelation underlies its greatness.

Notes

[1] "*The Interpretation of Dreams*, "by Stanley Edgar Hyman. Used by permission of Atheneum Publishers from *The Tangled Bank: Darwin, Marx, Frazer and Freud as Imaginative Writers* by Stanley Edgar Hyman (New York: Atheneum, 1962), pp. 310-38. Copyright © 1962 by Stanley Edgar Hyman

[2] When Theodor Reik suggested this comparison with Holmes (for Freud's technique, not his tone) in 1913, Freud said he would prefer a comparison with Giovanni Morelli, a nineteenth-century art scholar who specialized in detecting fakes.

[3] Fliess' weird cyclic theories apparently still have followers. *Biorhythm*, by Hans J. Wernli, was published in this country in 1960. It is a popular account of the Fliess system, with instructions to the reader for making his own Biorhythmic chart, and it includes sample rhythmograms of Tyrone Power, Louis Bromfield, George Gershwin, and Henry Ford.

[4] The dream of Irma's injection is brilliantly reanalyzed in terms of ego psychology by Erik H. Erikson in "The Dream Specimen of Psychoanalysis" in the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, January 1954. Erikson goes much more fully into the dream than Freud did in the book, making explicit a good deal of the sexuality that Freud left implicit. [A partial and much condensed version of Erikson's essay appears in *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (New York: Norton, 1968). Ed.]

[5] Martin Freud tells an anecdote that shows how thoroughly Freud later came to fill all of his father's roles. When Martin's son Walter, Freud's grandson, was four, he cranked up a truck parked on the street and got the motor started. Furiously angry, Freud said that "there was not the slightest sense in becoming attached to a boy who must sooner or later kill himself in dangerous escapades."

[6] Richard Blake suggests additional confirmation: Freud's father's post mortem rise of temperature, and the urethral associations of fire.

Chronology of Important Dates

1856	Freud born in Freiberg, Moravia (now Pribor, Czechoslovakia), on May 6.
1860	Freud family moves to Vienna.
1865	Enters Gymnasium.
1873	Enters University of Vienna as medical student.
1876-82	Works as assistant in Brucke's Institute of Physiology; meets Josef Breuer.
1877	First medical research articles published.
1880	Translates four essays by John Stuart Mill for a German edition of Mill's works.
1881	Takes medical degree.
1882	Engagement to Martha Bernays; begins work at Vienna General Hospital.
1885	Appointed *Privatdozent* (lecturer) in neuropathology at University of Vienna.
1885-86	Attends Charcot's lectures at the Salpetriere in Paris, October to February.

1886 Marries Martha Bernays; begins private medical practice as specialist in nervous diseases.

1887 Meets Berlin physician and medical theorist Wilhelm Fliess; begins use of hypnotism in private practice.

1889 Visits Bernheim in Nancy for further researches into hypnosis.

1893 "Preliminary Communication" (with Breuer).

1894 "The Neuro-Psychoses of Defense."

1895 *Studies on Hysteria* (with Breuer, although cases and discussions written and signed separately); writes *Project for a Scientific Psychology* and mails it to Fliess (first published in 1950).

1896 Death of Freud's father, Jakob Freud; first use of term "psychoanalysis."

1897 Abandons seduction theory; begins self-analysis.

1899 "Screen Memories."

1900 *The Interpretation of Dreams* (published in December 1899, but postdated for the new century).

1901 *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.

1902 Appointed Professor Extraordinarius (associate professor) at University of Vienna; Wednesday evening meetings begin at Freud's house of the group that will become the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society; end of friendship with Fliess.

1905 *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality; Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*; Case of Dora ("Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Flysteria").

1906 Jung makes contact with Freud.

1907 *Jensen's 'Gradiva*.'

1908 First international meeting of psychoanalysts at Salzburg;
"Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming"; "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness."

1909 Visits America with Jung and Sandor Ferenczi; receives honorary degree from Clark University and delivers *Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis*; A. A. Brill's first English translations begin to appear; Case of Little Hans ("Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy"); Case of the Rat Man ("Notes upon a Case of Obsessional Neurosis").

1910 *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of his Childhood*; "'The Antithetical Sense of Primal Words.' "

1911 The Case of Schreber ("Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia").

1911-15 Papers on psychoanalytic technique.

1913 *Totem and Taboo*; association with Jung terminated; Jung secedes from International

Psychoanalytic Association the following year.

1914 *The Moses of Michelangelo; On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement*; "On Narcissism."

1915 Writes twelve papers on metapsychology, of which only five survive ("Instincts and their Vicissitudes," "Repression," "The Unconscious," "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," "Mourning and Melancholia").

1915-17 Gives *Introductory Lectures* at University of Vienna.

1918 Case of the Wolf Man ("From the History of an Infantile Neurosis").

1919 "The 'Uncanny.'"

1920 *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

1921 *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

1923 *The Ego and the Id*; first of thirty-three operations for cancer of the jaw and palate.

1925 "A Note on the 'Mystic Writing-Pad'"; "Negation"; *An Autobiographical Study*.

1926 *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety; The Question of Lay Analysis*.

1927 *The Future of an Illusion*.

1928 "Dostoyevsky and Parricide."

1930 Goethe Prize; *Civilization and its Discontents*; death of Freud's mother.

1933 Hitler comes to power; burning of Freud's books in Berlin; *New Introductory Lectures.*

1936 Eightieth birthday; formal celebrations; elected Corresponding Member of the Royal Society.

1937 "Analysis Terminable and Interminable."

1938 Nazis enter Austria; Freud leaves for England; *An Outline of Psychoanalysis* (published posthumously)

1939 *Moses and Monotheism*; dies on September 23 in Hampstead, London.

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Works

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