

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

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THE UNCONSCIOUS

A Study of the Transformations
and Symbolisms of the Libido

A Contribution to the History of the Evolution of
Thought

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

THAT humanity is seeking a new message, a new light upon the meaning of life, and something tangible, as it were, with which it can work towards a larger understanding of itself and its relation to the universe, is a fact I think none will gainsay. Therefore, it has seemed to me particularly timely to introduce to the English-speaking world Dr. Jung's remarkable book, "Wandlungen und Symbole der Libido." In this work he has plunged boldly into the treacherous sea of mythology and folklore, the productions of the ancient mind and that of the common people, and turned upon this vast material the same scientific and painstaking method of psychologic analysis that is applied to the modern mind, in order to reveal the common bond of desire and longing which unites all humanity, and thus bridge the gaps presumed to exist between ancient and widely separated peoples and those of our modern time. The discovery of this undercurrent affecting and influencing ancient peoples as well as modern serves as a foundation or platform from which he proceeds to hold aloft a new ideal, a new goal of attainment possible of achievement and which can be intellectually satisfying, as well as emotionally

appealing:
the goal of moral autonomy.

This book, remarkable for its erudition and the tremendous labor expended upon it, as well as for the new

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light which it sheds upon human life, its motives, its needs and its possibilities, is not one for desultory reading or superficial examination. Such an approach will prevent the reader from gaining anything of its real value ; but for those who can bring a serious interest and willingness to give a careful study to it the work will prove to be a veritable mine capable of yielding the greatest riches.

The difficulties in translating a book such as this are almost insuperable, but I have tried faithfully to express

Dr. Jung's thought, keeping as close to the original text

as possible and, at the same time, rendering the difficult

material and complicated German phrasing as simply and clearly as the subject-matter would allow. In all this work I owe much to Miss Helen I. Brayton, without whose faithful assistance the work would never have been

completed. I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to Mr. Louis Untermeyer, whose help in rendering the poetic quotations into English verse has been invaluable, and to

express as well my gratitude to other friends who have assisted me in various ways from time to time.

B. M. H.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOANALYSIS
AND ANALYTIC PSYCHOLOGY

WHEN Professor Freud of Vienna made his early discoveries in the realm of the neuroses, and announced that the basis and origin of the various symptoms grouped under the terms hysteria and neuroses lay in unfulfilled desires and wishes, unexpressed and unknown to the patient for the most part, and concerned chiefly with the sexual instinct, it was not realized what far-reaching influence this unpopular and bitterly attacked theory would exert on the understanding of human life in general.

For this theory has so widened in its scope that its application has now extended beyond a particular group of pathologic states. It has in fact led to a new evaluation of the whole conduct of human life; a new comprehension has developed which explains those things which formerly were unexplained, and there is offered an understanding not only of the symptoms of a neurosis and the phenomena of conduct but the product of the mind as expressed in myths and religions.

This amazing growth has proceeded steadily in an ever-widening fashion despite opposition as violent as any of which we have knowledge in the past. The criticism originally directed towards the little understood and

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much disliked sexual conception now includes the further teachings of a psychology which by the application to it of such damning phrases as mystical, metaphysical and sacrilegious, is condemned as unscientific.

To add to the general confusion and misunderstanding surrounding this new school of thought there has arisen a division amongst the leaders themselves, so that there now exist two schools led respectively by Professor Sigmund Freud of Vienna and Dr. Carl Jung of Zurich, referred to in the literature as the Vienna School and the Zurich School.

It is very easy to understand that criticism and opposition should develop against a psychology so difficult of comprehension, and so disturbing to the ideas which have been held by humanity for ages; a psychology which furthermore requires a special technique as well as an observer trained to recognize and appreciate in psychological phenomena a verification of the statement that there is no such thing as chance, and that every act and every expression has its own meaning, determined by the inner feelings and wishes of the individual.

It is not a simple matter to come out boldly and state that every individual is to a large extent the determiner of his own destiny, for only by poets and philosophers has this idea been put forth not by science; and it is a brave act to make this statement with full consciousness of all its meaning, and to stand ready to prove it by scientific reasoning and procedure.

Developed entirely through empirical investigation and through an analysis of individual cases, Freudian psy-

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chology seems particularly to belong to that conception of Max Miiller's that "An empirical acquaintance with facts rises to a scientific knowledge of facts as soon as the mind discovers beneath the multiplicity of single productions the unity of an organic system." *

Psychoanalysis is the name given to the method developed for reaching down into the hidden depths of the individual to bring to light the underlying motives and determinants of his symptoms and attitudes, and to reveal the unconscious tendencies which lie behind actions and reactions and which influence development and determine the relations of life itself. The result of digging

down
into the hidden psyche has been to produce a mass of material from below the threshold of consciousness, so astonishing and disturbing and out of relation with the previously held values, as to arouse in any one unfamiliar with the process the strongest antagonism and criticism.

Although originally studied only as a therapeutic method for the sick it was soon realized through an analysis of normal people how slight were the differences in the content of the unconscious of the sick and of the normal. The differences observed were seen to be rather in the reactions to life and to the conflicts produced by contending forces in the individual.

These conflicts, usually not fully perceived by the individual, and having to do with objectionable desires and wishes that are not in keeping with the conscious idea of self, produce marked effects which are expressed either in certain opinions, prejudices, attitudes of conduct,

* " Science of Language," first series, p. 25.

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faulty actions, or in some definite pathologic symptom. As Dr. Jung says, he who remains healthy has to struggle with the same complexes that cause the neurotic to fall ill.

In a valuable book called " The Neighbor," written by the late Professor N. Shaler of Harvard University, there occurs this very far-reaching statement: "It is hardly too much to say that all the important errors of conduct, all the burdens of men or of societies are caused by the inadequacies in the association of the primal animal emotions with those mental powers which have been so

rapidly developed in mankind."

This statement, reached by a process of reasoning and a method of thought and study entirely different from psychoanalysis, nevertheless so completely expresses in brief form the very basis of the postulates developed through psychoanalysis that I quote it here. Such a statement made in the course of a general examination of human relations does not arouse opposition nor seem to be so difficult of acceptance. It appears to be the individual application of these conceptions that has roused such bitter antagonism and violent denunciations.

Rightly understood and used, psychoanalysis may be compared to surgery, for psychoanalysis stands in the same relation to the personality as surgery does to the body, and they aim at parallel results.

It is well recognized that in the last analysis nature is the real physician, the healer of wounds ; but prior to the development of our modern asepsis and surgical technique the healing produced by nature was most often of a very

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faulty and imperfect type hideous scars, distorted and crippled limbs, with functions impaired or incapacitated, resulted from the wounds, or else nature was unable to cope with the hurt and the injured one succumbed.

Science has been steadily working for centuries with the aim of understanding nature and finding means to aid and co-operate with her so that healing could take place with the least possible loss of function or permanent injury to the individual. Marvelous results have rewarded these persistent efforts, as the brilliant achievements of surgery plainly indicate.

Meantime, however, little thought was given to the possibility of any scientific method being available to help man overcome the wounds and conflicts taking place in his soul, hurts which retarded his development and progress as a personality, and which frequently in the struggle resulted in physical pains and symptoms of the most varied character. That was left solely to religion and metaphysics. Now, however, this same assistance that surgery has given to the physical body, psychoanalysis attempts to give to the personality. That it cannot always succeed is as much to be expected, and more, than that surgery does not always succeed, for the analytic work requires much of the individual. No real result can be attained if he has not already developed a certain quality of character and intelligence which makes it possible for him to submit himself to a facing of his naked soul, and to the pain and suffering which this often entails. Here, as in no other relation in life, an absolute truth and an absolute honesty

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are the only basis of action, since deception of any kind deceives no one but the individual himself and acts as a boomerang, defeating his own aims.

Such deep searching and penetrating into the soul is not something to be undertaken lightly nor to be considered a trivial or simple matter, and the fact is that where a strong compulsion is lacking, such as sickness or a situation too difficult to meet, much courage is required to undertake it.

In order to understand this psychology which is pervading all realms of thought and seems destined to be a new psychological-philosophical system for the understanding and practical advancement of human life, it will

be necessary to go somewhat into detail regarding its development and present status. For in this new direction lies its greatest value and its greatest danger.

The beginnings of this work were first published in 1895 in a book entitled "Studien über Hysterie," and contained the joint investigations into hysteria of Dr. Breuer of Vienna and his pupil Dr. Sigmund Freud. The results of their investigations seemed to show that the various symptoms grouped under the title of hysteria were the result of emotionally colored reminiscences which, all unknown to the conscious waking self, were really actively expressing themselves through the surrogate form of symptoms and that these experiences, although forgotten by the patient, could be reproduced and the emotional content discharged.

Hypnosis was the means used to enable the physician to penetrate deeply into the forgotten memories, for it

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was found through hypnosis that these lost incidents and circumstances were not really lost at all but only dropped from consciousness, and were capable of being revived when given the proper stimuli. The astonishing part about it was that with the revival of these memories and their accompanying painful and disturbing emotions, the symptoms disappeared. This led naturally to the conclusion that these symptoms were dependent upon some emotional disturbance or psychic trauma which had been inadequately expressed, and that in order to cure the patient one merely had to establish the connection between the memory and the emotions which properly belonged to it, letting the emotion work itself out through a reproduction of the forgotten scene.

With further investigation Freud found that hypnosis was unnecessary for the revival of the forgotten experiences, and that it was possible to obtain the lost emotional

material in the conscious and normal state. For this purpose the patient was encouraged to assume a passive, non-critical attitude and simply let his thoughts flow, speaking of whatever came into his mind, holding nothing back. During this free and easy discussion of his life and conditions, directed by the law of association of ideas, reference was invariably made to the experiences or thoughts which were the most affective and disturbing elements. It was seen to be quite impossible to avoid this indirect revelation because of the strength of the emotions surrounding these ideas and the effect of the conscious wish to repress unpleasant feelings. This important group of ideas or impressions, with the feelings

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and emotions clustered around them which are betrayed through this process, was called by Jung a complex.

However, with the touching of the complex which always contains feelings and emotions so painful or unpleasant as to be unacceptable to consciousness, and which are therefore repressed and hidden, great difficulties appeared, for very often the patient came to a sudden stop and could apparently recall nothing more. Memory gaps were frequent, relations twisted, etc. Evidently some force banished these memories so that the person was quite honest in saying that he could remember nothing or that there was nothing to tell. This kind of forgetfulness was called repression, and is the normal mechanism by which nature protects the individual from such painful feelings as are caused by unpleasant and unacceptable experiences and thoughts, the recognition of his egoistic nature, and the often quite unbearable conflict of his weaknesses with his feelings of idealism.

At this early time great attention was given towards developing a technique which would render more easy

the reproduction of these forgotten memories, for with the abandonment of hypnosis it was seen that some unknown active force was at work which not only banished painful memories and feelings, but also prevented their return; this was called resistance. This resistance was found to be the important mechanism which interfered with a free flow of thought and produced the greatest difficulty in the further conduct of the analysis.

It appeared under various guises and frequently manifested itself in intellectual objections based on reasoning

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ground, in criticism directed towards the analyst, or in criticism of the method itself, and finally, often in a complete blocking of expression, so that until the resistance was broken nothing more could be produced.

It was necessary then to find some aid by which these resistances could be overcome and the repressed memories and feelings revived and set free. For it was proven again and again that even though the person was not at all aware of concealing within himself some emotionally disturbing feeling or experience with which his symptoms were associated, yet such was the fact, and that under proper conditions this material could be brought into consciousness. This realm where these unknown but disturbing emotions were hidden was called the " Unconscious " the " Unconscious " also being a name used arbitrarily to indicate all that material of which the person is not aware at the given time the not-conscious.

This term is used very loosely in Freudian psychology and is not intended to provoke any academic discussion but to conform strictly to the dictionary classification of a " negative concept which can neither be described nor defined." To say that an idea or feeling is unconscious merely means to indicate that the individual is unaware

at that time of its existence, or that all the material of which he is unaware at a given time is unconscious.

With the discovery of the significance in relation to hysteria of these varied experiences and forgotten memories which always led into the erotic realm and usually were carried far back into early childhood, the theory of an infantile sexual trauma as a cause of this neurosis de-

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veloped. Contrary to the usual belief that children have no sexuality and that only at puberty does it suddenly arise, it was definitely shown that there was a very marked kind of sexuality among children of the most tender years, entirely instinctive and capable of producing a grave effect on the entire later life.

However, further investigations carried into the lives of normal people disclosed quite as many psychic and sexual traumas in their early childhood as in the lives of the patients; therefore, the conception of the " infantile sexual trauma " as the etiological factor was abandoned in favor of " the infantilism of sexuality " itself. In other words, it was soon realized that many of the sexual traumas which were placed in their early childhood by these patients, did not really exist except in their own phantasies and probably were produced as a defence against the memories of their own childish sexual activities. These experiences led to a deep investigation into the nature of the child's sexuality and developed the ideas which Freud incorporated in a work called " Three Contributions to the Sexual Theory." He found so

many variations and manifestations of sexual activity even among young children that he realized that this activity was the normal, although entirely unconscious, expression of the child's developing life, and while not comparable to the adult sexuality, nevertheless produced a very definite influence and effect on the child's life.

These childish expressions of this instinct he called " polymorphous perverse," because in many ways they

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resembled the various abnormalities called perversions when found among adults under certain conditions.

In the light of these additional investigations Freud was led to change his formulation, for instead of the symptoms of the neurotic patient being due to definite sexual experiences, they seemed to be determined by his reactions towards his own sexual constitution and the kind of repression to which these instincts were subjected.

Perhaps one of the greatest sources of misunderstanding and difficulty in this whole subject lies in the term sexuality, for Freud's conception of this is entirely different from that of the popular sense. He conceives sexuality to be practically synonymous with the word love and to include under this term all those tender feelings and emotions which have had their origin in a primitive erotic source, even if now their primary aim is entirely lost and another substituted for it. It must also be borne in mind that Freud strictly emphasizes the psychic side of sexuality and its importance, as well as the somatic expression.

Therefore, to understand Freud's theories, his very broad conception of the term sexual must never be forgotten.

Through this careful investigation of the psychic life of the individual, the tremendous influence and importance of phantasy-making for the fate was definitely shown. It was discovered that the indulgence in day-dreams and phantasies was practically universal not only among children but among adults, that even whole lives

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were being lived out in a phantastic world created by the dreamer, a world wherein he could fulfil all those wishes and desires which were found to be too difficult or impossible to satisfy in the world of reality.

Much of this phantasy thinking was seen to be scarcely conscious, but arose from unrealized wishes, desires and strivings which could only express themselves through veiled symbols in the form of phantastic structures not understood, nor fully recognized. Indeed, it is perhaps one of the most common human experiences to find " queer thoughts/' undesired ideas and images, forcing themselves upon one's attention to such an extent that the will has to be employed to push them out of mind. It is not unusual to discover long-forgotten impressions of childhood assuming a phantastic shape in memory, and dwelt upon as though they were still of importance.

This material afforded a rich field for the searchers into the soul, for through the operation of the law of association of ideas these phantastic products, traced back to their origin, revealed the fact that instead of being meaningless or foolish, they were produced by a definite process, and arose from distinct wishes and desires which unconsciously veiled themselves in these mysterious forms and pictures.

It is conceded that the most completely unconscious product of an individual is his dream, and therefore Professor Freud turned his attention from phantasies and day-dreams to the investigation of the nightly dreams of his patients to discover whether they would throw light upon the painful feelings and ideas repressed out of

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consciousness, and therefore inaccessible to direct revelation.

This brilliant idea soon led to a rich fruiting, for it became evident that contrary to the usual conception that the dream is a phantastic and absurd jumble of heterogeneous fragments, having no real relation to the life of the individual, it is full of meaning. In fact, it is usually concerned with the problem of life most pressing at the time, which expresses itself not directly, but in symbolic form so as to be unrecognized. In this way the individual gains an expression and fulfilment of his unrealized wish or desire.

This discovery of the symbolic nature of the dream and the phantasy was brought about entirely through the associative method and developed empirically through investigations of the dreams of many people. In this manner it became evident that certain ideas and objects which recurred again and again in the dreams and phantasies of different people were definitely associated with certain unconscious or unrecognized wishes and desires, and were repeatedly used by the mind to express these meanings where a direct form was repressed and unallowed. Thus certain dream expressions and figures were in a general way considered to be rather definite symbols of these repressed ideas and feelings found in

the unconscious. Through a comparative and parallel study it soon appeared that there was a similiar mechanism at work in myths and fairy tales and that the relationship between the dreams and phantasies of an individual and the myths and folk tales of a people was so close

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that Abraham could say that the myth is a fragment of the infantile soul life of the race and the dream is the myth of the individual.

Thus through relating his dreams the patient himself furnished the most important means of gaining access to the unconscious and disturbing complexes with which his symptoms were connected.

Besides the dream analysis the patient furnished other means of revelation of his complexes his mannerisms and unconscious acts, his opening remarks to his physician, his emotional reactions to certain ideas ; in short the whole behavior and verbal expressions of the individual reveal his inner nature and problems.

Through all this work it became clear that in the emotional nature lay the origin not only of the various nervous illnesses themselves, but also of the isolated symptoms and individual idiosyncrasies and peculiarities which are the part of all humanity and that the pathogenic cause of the disturbances lies not in the ignorance of individuals, but in those inner resistances which are the underlying basis of this ignorance.

Therefore the aim of the therapy became not merely the relief of the ignorance but the searching out and combating of these resistances.

It becomes evident from even this brief description of the analytic procedure that we are dealing with a very complex and delicate material, and with a technique which needs to make definite use of all influences available for the help of the patient. It has long been recognized that the relation established between physician and pa-

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tient has a great effect upon the medical assistance which he is able to render in other words, if a confidence and personal regard developed in the patient towards the physician, the latter's advice was just so much more efficacious. This personal feeling has been frankly recognized and made of distinct service in psychoanalytic treatment under the name of transference. It is through the aid of this definite relationship which must be established in the one being analyzed towards the analyst that it is possible to deal with the unconscious and organized resistances which so easily blind the individual and render the acceptance of the new valuations very difficult to the raw and sensitive soul.

Freud's emphasis upon the role of the sexual instinct in the production of the neurosis and also in its determining power upon the personality of the normal individual does not imply that he does not also recognize other determinants at the root of human conduct, as for instance, the instinct for preservation of life and the ego principle itself. But these motives are not so violently forbidden and repressed as the sexual impulse, and therefore, because of that repressive force and the strength of the impulse he considers this primary in its influence

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