EDITORS' NOTE

DAS UNBEWUSSTE

GERMAN EDITIONS

1915 *Int. Z. ärztl. Psychoan.*, **3** (4), 189–203, and (5), 257–69. [161]
1918 *SKSN*, **4**, 294–338. (1922, 2nd ed.)
1924 *GS*, **5**, 480–519.
1924 *Technik und Metapsychol.*, 202–41.
1931 *Theoretische Schriften*, 98–140.
1946 *GW*, **10**, 264–303.
1975 *SA*, **3**, 125–62. (Revised reprint of the *GW* edition).

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

'The Unconscious'
1925 *CP*, **4**, 98–136. (Tr. C. M. Baines.)
1957 *SE*, **14**, 166–204. (Tr. J. Strachey, loosely based on the 1925 translation.)
1984 *PFL*, **11**, 167–210. (Reprint of the *SE* version.)
2005 *PMC*, *The Unconscious*, 47–85. (Tr. Graham Frankland.)

The present translation is a revised and corrected reprint of the *SE* version.

This paper seems to have taken less than three weeks to write – from April 4 to April 23, 1915. It was published in the *Internationale Zeitschrift* later in the same year in two instalments, the first containing Sections I–IV, and the second Sections V–VII. In the editions before 1924 the paper was not divided into sections, but what are now the section headings were printed as side-headings in the margin. The only exception to this is that the words 'The Topographical Point of View', which are now part of the heading to Section II, were originally in the margin at the beginning of the second paragraph of the section at the words 'Proceeding now . . .' (p. 153 below). A few minor changes were also made in the text in the 1924 edition.

If the series of 'Papers on Metapsychology' may perhaps be regarded as the most important of all Freud's theoretical writings, there can be no doubt that the present essay on 'The Unconscious' is the culmination of that series.

The concept of there being unconscious mental processes is of course one that [162] is fundamental to psychoanalytic theory. Freud never tired of insisting upon the

arguments in support of it and combating the objections to it. Indeed, the very last unfinished scrap of his theoretical writing, the fragment written by him in 1938 to which he gave the English title 'Some Elementary Lessons in Psycho-Analysis' (1940*b*), is a fresh vindication of that concept.

It should be made clear at once, however, that Freud's interest in the assumption was never a philosophical one – though, no doubt, philosophical problems inevitably lay just round the corner. His interest was a *practical* one. He found that without making that assumption he was unable to explain or even to describe a large variety of phenomena which he came across. By making it, on the other hand, he found the way open to an immensely fertile region of fresh knowledge.

In his early days and in his nearest environment there can have been no great resistance to the idea. His immediate teachers – Meynert, for instance[1] – insofar as they were interested in psychology, were governed chiefly by the views of J. F. Herbart (1776–1841), and it seems that a textbook embodying the Herbartian principles was in use at Freud's secondary school (Jones, 1953, 409 f.). A recognition of the existence of unconscious mental processes played an essential part in Herbart's system. In spite of this, however, Freud did not immediately adopt the hypothesis in the earliest stages of his psychopathological researches. He seems from the first, it is true, to have felt the force of the argument on which stress is laid in the opening pages of the present paper – the argument, that is, that to restrict mental events to those that are conscious and to intersperse them with purely physical, neural events 'disrupts psychical continuities' and introduces unintelligible gaps into the chain of observed phenomena. But there were two ways in which this difficulty could be met. We might disregard the physical events and adopt the hypothesis that the gaps are filled with unconscious mental ones; but, on the other hand, we might disregard the conscious mental events and construct a purely physical chain, without any breaks in it, which would cover all the facts of observation. To Freud, whose
[163] early scientific career had been entirely concerned with physical science, this second possibility was at first irresistibly attractive. The attraction was no doubt strengthened by the views of Hughlings Jackson, of whose work he showed his admiration in his monograph on aphasia (1891*b*), *NSW*, **4**, a relevant passage from which can be found below in Appendix B (p. 183 ff.). The neurological method of describing psychopathological phenomena was accordingly the one which Freud began by adopting, and all his writings of the Breuer period are professedly based on that method. He became intellectually fascinated by the possibility of constructing a 'psychology' out of purely neurological ingredients, and devoted many months in the year 1895 to accomplishing the feat. Thus on April 27 of that year (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 23) he wrote to Fliess: 'I am so deep in the "Psychology for Neurologists" that it quite consumes me, till I have to break off really overworked. I have never been so intensely preoccupied by anything. And will anything come of it? I hope so, but the going is hard and slow.' Something *did* come of it many months later – the torso which we know as the 'Project for a Scientific Psychology', despatched to Fliess in September and October, 1895. This astonishing production purports to describe and explain the whole range of human behaviour, normal and pathological, by means of a complicated manipulation of two material entities – the neuron and 'quantity in a

1 The possible influence on Freud in this respect of the physiologist Hering is discussed below in Appendix A (p. 181 f.).

state of flow', an unspecified physical or chemical energy. The need for postulating any unconscious mental processes was in this way entirely avoided: the chain of physical events was unbroken and complete.

There were no doubt many reasons why the 'Project' was never finished and why the whole line of thought behind it was before long abandoned. But the principal reason was that Freud the neurologist was being overtaken and displaced by Freud the psychologist: it became more and more obvious that the elaborate hypothetical workings of the machinery of the neuronal systems were far too speculative and coarse to deal with the observable phenomena which were being brought to light by 'psychological analysis' and which could only be accounted for in the language of mental processes. Ironically, this language now proved to be the more scientifically serviceable – and closer to the available empirical facts. A displacement of Freud's interest had, in fact, been very gradually taking place. Already at the time of the publication of the *Aphasia* his treatment of the case of Frau Emmy von N. lay two or three years behind him, and her case history was written more than a year before the 'Project'. It is in a footnote to that case history (*RSE*, **2**, 67 *n.* 2) that his first published use of the term 'the unconscious' is to be found; and though the *ostensible* theory underlying his share in the *Studies on Hysteria* (1895*d*) might be a neurological one, psychology, and with it the necessity for unconscious mental processes, was steadily creeping in. Indeed, the whole basis of the repression theory of hysteria, and of the cathartic method of treatment, cried out for a psychological explanation, and it was only by the most contorted efforts that they had been accounted for neurologically in Part II of the 'Project'.[1] A few years later, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), a strange transformation had occurred: not only had the neurological account of psychology completely disappeared, but much of what Freud had written in the 'Project' in terms of the nervous system now turned out to be equally valid and intelligible when translated into mental terms. The unconscious was established once and for all. [164]

But, it must be repeated, what Freud established was no mere metaphysical entity. What he did in Chapter VII of *The Interpretation of Dreams* was, as it were, to clothe the metaphysical entity in flesh and blood. He showed for the first time what the unconscious was like, how it worked, how it differed from other parts of the mind, and what were its reciprocal relations with them. It was to these discoveries that he returned, amplifying and deepening them, in the paper which follows.

At an earlier stage, however, it had become evident that the term 'unconscious' was an ambiguous one. Three years previously, in the paper which he wrote in English for the Society for Psychical Research (1912*g*), *RSE*, **12**, and which is in many ways a preliminary to the present paper, he had carefully investigated these ambiguities, and had differentiated between the 'descriptive', 'dynamic' and 'systematic' uses of the word. He repeats the distinctions in Section II of this paper (p. 152 ff. below), though in a slightly different form; and he came back to them again in Chapter I of *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*), *RSE*, **19**, and, at even greater length, in Lecture XXXI of the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*), ibid., **22**. The untidy way in which the contrast between 'conscious' and 'unconscious' fits the differences between the various systems of the mind is already stated clearly below (p. 169 f.); but the whole

1 Oddly enough it was Breuer, in his theoretical contribution to the *Studies*, who was the first to make a reasoned defence of unconscious ideas (*RSE*, **2**, 198 f.).

[165] position was only brought into perspective when in *The Ego and the Id* Freud introduced a new structural picture of the mind. In spite, however, of the unsatisfactory operation of the criterion 'conscious or unconscious?', Freud always insisted (as he does in two places here, pp. 152 f. and 169 below, and again both in *The Ego and the Id* and in the *New Introductory Lectures*) that that criterion 'is in the last resort our one beacon-light in the darkness of depth psychology'.[1]

1 The closing words of Chapter I of *The Ego and the Id*. – For English readers, it must be observed, there is a further ambiguity in the word 'unconscious' which is scarcely present in the German. The German words '*bewusst*' and '*unbewusst*' have the grammatical form of passive participles, and their usual sense is something like 'consciously known' and 'not consciously known'. The English 'conscious', though it *can* be used in the same way, is also used, and perhaps more commonly, in an *active* sense: 'he was conscious of the sound' and 'he lay there unconscious'. The German terms do not often have this active meaning, and it is important to bear in mind that 'conscious' is in general to be understood in a passive sense in what follows. The German word '*Bewusstsein*', on the other hand (which is here translated 'consciousness'), *does* have an active sense. Thus, for instance, on p. 153 below Freud speaks of a psychical act becoming 'an object of consciousness'; again, in the last paragraph of the first section of the paper (p. 151) he speaks of 'the perception [of mental processes] by means of consciousness'; and in general, when he uses such phrases as 'our consciousness' he is referring to our consciousness *of* something. When he wishes to speak of a mental state's consciousness in the *passive* sense, he uses the word '*Bewusstheit*', which is translated here 'the attribute of being conscious', 'the fact of being conscious' or simply 'being conscious' – where the English 'conscious' is, as almost always in these papers, to be taken in the passive sense.

THE UNCONSCIOUS

We have learnt from psychoanalysis that the essence of the process of repression [*Verdrängung*][T] lies, not in putting an end to, in annihilating, the idea [*Vorstellung*][T] which represents a drive [*Trieb*][T], but in preventing it from becoming conscious. When this happens we say of the idea that it is in a state of being 'unconscious [*Unbewussten*]',[1] and we can produce good evidence to show that even when it is unconscious it can produce effects, even including some which finally reach consciousness. Everything that is repressed must remain unconscious; but let us state at the very outset that the repressed does not cover everything that is unconscious. The unconscious has the wider compass: the repressed is a part of the unconscious. [166]

How are we to arrive at a knowledge of the unconscious? It is of course only as something conscious that we know it, after it has undergone transformation or translation [*Übersetzung*][T] into something conscious. Psychoanalytic work shows us every day that translation of this kind is possible. In order that this should come about, the person under analysis must overcome certain resistances – the same resistances as those which, earlier, made the material concerned into something repressed by rejecting it from the conscious.

I. JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CONCEPT OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

Our right to assume the existence of something mental [*Seelisches*][T] that is unconscious and to employ that assumption for the purposes of scientific work is disputed in many quarters. To this we can reply that our assumption of the unconscious is *necessary* and *legitimate*, and that we possess numerous proofs of its existence. *Seele*

It is *necessary* because the data of consciousness have a very large number of gaps in them; both in healthy and in sick people psychical acts

1 [See Editors' Note above, p. 146 *n.*]

often occur which can be explained only by presupposing other acts, of which, nevertheless, consciousness affords no evidence. These not only include parapraxes [*Fehlhandlungen*][T] and dreams in healthy people, and everything described as a psychical symptom or an obsession
Zwang [*Zwangserscheinungen*][T] in the sick; our most personal daily experience
[167] acquaints us with ideas [*mit Einfällen*][T] that come into our head we do not know from where, and with intellectual conclusions arrived at we do not know how. All these conscious acts remain disconnected and unintelligible if we insist upon claiming that every mental act that occurs in us must also necessarily be experienced by us through consciousness; on the other hand, they fall into a demonstrable connection if we interpolate between them the unconscious acts which we have inferred. A gain in meaning [*Sinn*] and connection[1] is a perfectly justifiable ground for going beyond the limits of direct experience. When, in addition, it turns out that the assumption of there being an unconscious enables us to construct a successful procedure by which we can exert an effective influence upon the course of conscious processes, this success will have given us an incontrovertible proof of the existence of what we have assumed. This being so, we must adopt the position that to require that whatever goes on in the mind must also be known to consciousness is to make an untenable claim.

We can go further and argue, in support of there being an unconscious psychical state, that at any given moment consciousness includes only a small content, so that the greater part of what we call conscious knowledge must in any case be for very considerable periods of time in a state of latency, that is to say, of being psychically unconscious. When all our latent memories are taken into consideration it becomes totally incomprehensible how the existence of the unconscious can be denied. But here we encounter the objection that these latent recollections can no longer be described as psychical, but that they correspond to residues of somatic processes from which what is psychical can once more arise. The obvious answer to this is that a latent memory is, on the contrary, an unquestionable residuum of a *psychical* process. But it is more important to realize clearly that this objection is based on the equation – not, it is true, explicitly stated but taken as axiomatic – of what is conscious with what is mental. This equation is either a *petitio principii* which begs the question whether everything that is psychical is also necessarily conscious; or else it is a matter of convention, of nomenclature. In this latter case it is, of course, like any other convention, not open to refutation.

1 [The last two words were accidentally omitted in the *SE* translation.]

The question remains, however, whether the convention is so expedient that we are bound to adopt it. To this we may reply that the conventional equation of the psychical with the conscious is totally inexpedient. It [168] disrupts psychical continuities, plunges us into the insoluble difficulties of psychophysical parallelism,[1] is open to the reproach that for no obvious reason it overestimates the part played by consciousness, and that it forces us prematurely to abandon the field of psychological research without being able to offer us any compensation from other fields.

It is clear in any case that this question – whether the latent states of mental life, whose existence is undeniable, are to be conceived of as unconscious[2] mental states or as physical ones – threatens to resolve itself into a verbal dispute. We shall therefore be better advised to focus our attention on what we know with certainty of the nature of these debatable states. As far as their physical characteristics are concerned, they are totally inaccessible to us: no physiological concept or chemical process can give us any notion of their nature. On the other hand, we know for certain that they have abundant points of contact with conscious mental processes; with the help of a certain amount of work they can be transformed into, or replaced with, conscious mental processes, and all the categories which we employ to describe conscious mental acts, such as ideas, purposes, resolutions and so on, can be applied to them. Indeed, we are obliged to say of some of these latent states that the only respect in which they differ from conscious ones is precisely in the absence of consciousness. Thus we shall not hesitate to treat them as objects of psychological research, and to deal with them in the most intimate connection with conscious mental acts.

The stubborn denial of a psychical character to latent mental acts is accounted for by the circumstance that most of the phenomena concerned have not been the subject of study outside psychoanalysis. Anyone who is ignorant of pathological facts, who regards the parapraxes of normal people as accidental, and who is content with the old saw that dreams are froth ['*Träume seien Schäume*'][3] has only to ignore a few more problems of the psychology of consciousness in order to spare himself any need to assume an unconscious mental activity. Incidentally, even before the time of psychoanalysis, hypnotic experiments, and

1 [Freud seems himself at one time to have been inclined to accept this conception, as is suggested by a passage in his book on aphasia (1891*b*, 56 ff.; *NSW*, **4**, Chapter V). This can be found translated below in Appendix B (p. 183 ff.).]

2 [*unbewusste* – translated 'conscious' in the *SE*, no doubt accidentally.]

3 [Cf. *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **4**, 118.]

[169] especially post-hypnotic suggestion, had tangibly demonstrated the existence and mode of operation of the mental unconscious.[1]

The assumption of an unconscious is, moreover, a perfectly *legitimate* one, inasmuch as in postulating it we are not departing a single step from our customary and generally accepted mode of thinking. Consciousness makes each of us aware only of his own states of mind; that other people, too, possess a consciousness is an inference which we draw by analogy from their observable utterances and actions, in order to make this behaviour of theirs intelligible to us. (It would no doubt be psychologically more correct to put it in this way: that without any special reflection we attribute to everyone else our own constitution and therefore our consciousness as well, and that this identification is a *sine qua non* of our understanding.) This inference (or this identification) was formerly extended by the ego [*Ich*][T] to other human beings, to animals, plants, inanimate objects and to the world at large, and proved serviceable so long as their similarity to the individual ego was overwhelmingly great; but it became more untrustworthy in proportion as the difference between the ego and these 'others' widened. Today, our critical judgement is already in doubt on the question of consciousness in animals; we refuse to admit it in plants and we regard the assumption of its existence in inanimate matter as mysticism. But even where the original inclination to identification has withstood criticism – that is, when the 'others' are our fellow men – the assumption of a consciousness in them rests upon an inference and cannot share the immediate certainty which we have of our own consciousness.

Psychoanalysis demands nothing more than that we should apply this process of inference to ourselves also – a proceeding to which, it is true, we are not constitutionally inclined. If we do this, we must say: all the acts and manifestations which I notice in myself and do not know how to link up with the rest of my mental life must be judged as if they belonged to someone else: they are to be explained by a mental life ascribed to this other person. Furthermore, experience shows that we understand very well how to interpret in other people (that is, how to fit into their chain
[170] of mental events) the same acts which we refuse to acknowledge as being mental in ourselves. Here some special hindrance evidently deflects our investigations from our own self and prevents our obtaining a true knowledge of it.

1 [In his very last discussion of the subject, in the unfinished fragment 'Some Elementary Lessons in Psycho-Analysis' (1940*b*), *RSE*, **23**, Freud entered at some length into the evidence afforded by post-hypnotic suggestion.]

This process of inference, when applied to oneself in spite of internal opposition, does not, however, lead to the disclosure of an unconscious; it leads logically to the assumption of another, second consciousness which is united in one's self with the consciousness one knows. But at this point, certain criticisms may fairly be made. In the first place, a consciousness of which its own possessor knows nothing is something very different from a consciousness belonging to another person, and it is questionable whether such a consciousness, lacking, as it does, its most important characteristic, deserves any discussion at all. Those who have resisted the assumption of an unconscious *psychical* are not likely to be ready to exchange it for an unconscious *consciousness*. In the second place, analysis shows that the different latent mental processes inferred by us enjoy a high degree of mutual independence, as though they had no connection with one another, and knew nothing of one another. We must be prepared, if so, to assume the existence in us not only of a second consciousness, but of a third, fourth, perhaps of an unlimited number of states of consciousness, all unknown to us and to one another. In the third place – and this is the most weighty argument of all – we have to take into account the fact that analytic investigation reveals some of these latent processes as having characteristics and peculiarities which seem alien to us, or even incredible, and which run directly counter to the attributes of consciousness with which we are familiar. Thus we have grounds for modifying our inference about ourselves and saying that what is proved is not the existence of a second consciousness in us, but the existence of psychical acts which lack consciousness. We shall also be right in rejecting the term 'subconsciousness' as incorrect and misleading.[1] The well-known cases of '*double conscience*'[2] (splitting of consciousness) prove nothing against our view. We may most aptly [171]
describe them as cases of a splitting of the mental activities into two groups, and say that the same consciousness turns to one or the other of these groups alternately.

In psychoanalysis there is no choice for us but to assert that mental processes are in themselves [*an sich*] unconscious, and to liken the perception of them by means of consciousness to the perception of the

1 [In some of his very early writings, Freud himself used the term 'subconscious', e.g. in his French paper on hysterical paralyses (1893*c*), *NSW*, **4**; *RSE*, **1**, 198, and in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895*d*), ibid., **2**, 62 *n*. But he disrecommends the term as early as in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), ibid., **5**, 549. He alludes to the point again in Lecture XIX of the *Introductory Lectures* (1916–17*a*), ibid., **16**, 262, and argues it a little more fully near the end of Chapter II of *The Question of Lay Analysis* (1926*e*), ibid., **20**, 176.]

2 [The French term for 'dual consciousness'.]

external world by means of the sense organs.[1] We can even hope to gain fresh knowledge from the comparison. The psychoanalytic assumption of unconscious mental activity appears to us, on the one hand, as a further expansion of the primitive animism which caused us to see copies of our own consciousness all around us, and, on the other hand, as an extension of the corrections undertaken by Kant of our views on external perception. Just as Kant warned us not to overlook the fact that our perceptions are subjectively conditioned and must not be regarded as identical to what is perceived though unknowable, so psychoanalysis warns us not to equate perceptions by means of consciousness with the unconscious mental processes which are their object. Like the physical, the psychical is not necessarily in reality what it appears to us to be. We shall be glad to learn, however, that the correction of internal perception will turn out not to offer such great difficulties as the correction of external perception – that internal objects are less unknowable than the external world.

II. VARIOUS MEANINGS OF 'THE UNCONSCIOUS' – THE TOPOGRAPHICAL POINT OF VIEW

[172] Before going any further, let us state the important, though inconvenient, fact that the attribute of being unconscious is only one feature that is found in the psychical and is by no means sufficient fully to characterize it. There are psychical acts of very varying value which yet agree in possessing the characteristic of being unconscious. The unconscious comprises, on the one hand, acts which are merely latent, temporarily unconscious, but which differ in no other respect from conscious ones and, on the other hand, processes such as repressed ones, which if they were to become conscious would be bound to stand out in the crudest contrast to the rest of the conscious processes. It would put an end to all misunderstandings if, from now on, in describing the various kinds of psychical acts we were to disregard the question of whether they were conscious or unconscious, and were to classify and correlate them only according to their relation to drives and aims, according to their composition and according to which of the hierarchy of psychical systems they belong to. This, however, is for various reasons impracticable, so that we cannot escape the ambiguity of using the words 'conscious' and 'unconscious' sometimes in a

1 [This idea had already been dealt with at some length in Chapter VII (F) of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **5**, 550–2.]

descriptive and sometimes in a systematic sense, in which latter they signify inclusion in particular systems and possession of certain characteristics. We might attempt to avoid confusion by giving the psychical systems which we have distinguished certain arbitrarily chosen names which have no reference to the attribute of being conscious. Only we should first have to specify what the grounds are on which we distinguish the systems, and in doing this we should not be able to evade the attribute of being conscious, seeing that it forms the point of departure for all our investigations.[1] Perhaps we may look for some assistance from the proposal to employ, at any rate in writing, the abbreviation *Cs.* for consciousness and *Ucs.* for what is unconscious, when we are using the two words in the systematic sense.[2]

Proceeding now to an account of the positive findings of psychoanalysis, [173]
we may say that in general a psychical act goes through two phases as regards its state, between which is interposed a kind of testing (*censorship*). In the first phase the psychical act is unconscious and belongs to the system *Ucs.*; if, on testing, it is rejected by the censorship, it is not allowed to pass into the second phase; it is then said to be 'repressed' and must remain unconscious. If, however, it passes this testing, it enters the second phase and thenceforth belongs to the second system, which we will call the system *Cs.* But the fact that it belongs to that system does not yet unequivocally determine its relation to consciousness. It is not yet conscious, but it is certainly *capable of becoming conscious* (to use Breuer's expression)[3] – that is, it can now, given certain conditions, become an object of consciousness without any special resistance. In consideration of this capacity for becoming conscious we also call the system *Cs.* the 'preconscious'. If it should turn out that a certain censorship also plays a part in determining whether the preconscious becomes conscious, we shall discriminate more sharply between the systems *Pcs.* and *Cs.* [Cf. p. 169 below.] For the present let it suffice us to bear in mind that the system *Pcs.* shares the characteristics of the system *Cs.* and that the rigorous censorship exercises its office at the point of transition from the *Ucs.* to the *Pcs.* (or *Cs.*).

By accepting the existence of these two (or three) psychical systems, psychoanalysis has departed a step further from the descriptive

1 [Freud returns to this below on p. 169.]

2 [Freud had already introduced these abbreviations in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **5**, 483 ff.]

3 [See *Studies on Hysteria*, Breuer & Freud (1895*d*), ibid., **2**, 200.]

'psychology of consciousness' and has raised new problems and acquired a new content. Up till now, it has differed from that psychology mainly by reason of its *dynamic* view of mental processes; now in addition it seems to take account of psychical *topography* as well, and to indicate in respect of any given mental act within what system or between what systems it takes place. On account of this attempt, too, it has been given the name of 'depth psychology'.[1] We shall hear that it can be further enriched by taking yet another point of view into account. [Cf. p. 160 below.]

[174] If we are to take the topography of mental acts seriously we must direct our interest to a doubt which arises at this point. When a psychical act (let us confine ourselves here to one which is in the nature of an idea[2]) is transposed from the system *Ucs.* into the system *Cs.* (or *Pcs.*), are we to suppose that this transposition involves a fresh record – as it were, a second registration – of the idea in question, which may thus be situated as well in a fresh psychical locality, and alongside of which the original unconscious registration continues to exist?[3] Or are we rather to believe that the transposition consists in a change in the state of the idea, a change involving the same material and occurring in the same locality? This question may appear abstruse, but it must be raised if we wish to form a more definite conception of psychical topography, of the dimension of depth in the mind. It is a difficult one because it goes beyond pure psychology and touches on the relations of the mental apparatus to anatomy. We know that in the very roughest sense such relations exist. Research has given irrefutable proof that mental activity is bound up with the function of the brain as it is with no other organ. We are taken a step further – we do not know how much – by the discovery of the unequal importance of the different parts of the brain and their special relations to particular parts of the body and to particular mental activities. But every attempt to go on from there to discover a localization of mental processes, every endeavour to think of ideas as stored up in nerve cells and of excitations [*Erregungen*][T] as travelling along nerve fibres, has

1 [By Bleuler (1914). See the 'History of the Psychoanalytic Movement' (1914*d*), above, p. 36.]

2 [The German word here is '*Vorstellung*', which covers the English terms 'idea', 'image' and 'presentation'. See *RSE*, **24**, 94–8.]

3 [The conception of an idea being present in the mind in more than one 'registration' was first put forward by Freud in a letter to Fliess of December 6, 1896 (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 52). It is used in connection with the theory of memory in Chapter VII (Section B) of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **5**, 481 f.; and it is alluded to again in Section F of the same chapter (ibid., 545 ff.) in an argument which foreshadows the present one.]

miscarried completely.[1] The same fate would await any theory which attempted to recognize, let us say, the anatomical position of the system *Cs*. – conscious mental activity – as being in the cortex, and to localize the unconscious processes in the subcortical parts of the brain.[2] There is a hiatus here which at present cannot be filled, nor is it one of the tasks of psychology to fill it. Our psychical topography has *for the present* nothing to do with anatomy; it has reference not to anatomical localities, but to regions in the mental apparatus, wherever they may be situated in the body. [175]

In this respect, then, our work is untrammelled and may proceed according to its own requirements. It will, however, be useful to remind ourselves that as things stand our hypotheses set out to be no more than graphic illustrations. The first of the two possibilities which we considered – namely, that the *Cs*. phase of an idea implies a fresh registration of it, which is situated in another place – is doubtless the cruder but also the more convenient. The second hypothesis – that of a merely *functional* change of state – is *a priori* more probable, but it is less plastic, less easy to manipulate. With the first, or topographical, hypothesis is bound up that of a topographical separation of the systems *Ucs*. and *Cs*. and also the possibility that an idea may exist simultaneously in two places in the mental apparatus – indeed, that if it is not inhibited [*ungehemmt*][T] by the censorship, it regularly advances from the one position to the other, possibly without losing its first location or registration. *Hemmung*

This view may seem odd, but it can be supported by observations from psychoanalytic practice. If we communicate to a patient some idea which he has at one time repressed but which we have discovered in him, our telling him makes at first no change in his mental condition. Above all, it does not remove the repression nor undo its effects, as might perhaps be expected from the fact that the previously unconscious idea has now become conscious. On the contrary, all that we shall achieve at first will be a fresh rejection of the repressed idea. But now the patient has in actual fact the same idea in two forms in different places in his mental apparatus: first, he has the conscious memory of the auditory trace of the idea, conveyed in what we told him; and secondly, he also has – as we

1 [Freud himself had endeavoured to think of ideas as stored up in nerve cells and of excitations as migrating along nerve fibres, in his 'Project' (1950*a* [1895]), which, in his own estimation, miscarried completely. He had also been much concerned with the question of the localization of mental processes in his work on aphasia (1891*b*), *NSW*, **4**.]

2 [Freud had insisted on this as early as in his Preface to his translation of Bernheim's *De la suggestion* (Freud, 1888–89*a*). However, he later recognized the anatomical position of the system *Pcpt.-Cs.* as being in the cortex. Cf. Freud (1920*g*), *RSE*, **18**, 24, (1923*b*), ibid., **19**, 16 and 22, and (1939*a*), ibid., **23**, 89.]

know for certain – the unconscious memory of his experience as it was in its earlier form.[1] Actually there is no lifting of the repression until the
[176] conscious idea, after the resistances have been overcome, has entered into connection with the unconscious memory trace. It is only through the making conscious of the latter itself that success is achieved. On superficial consideration this would seem to show that conscious and unconscious ideas are distinct registrations, topographically separated, of the same content. But a moment's reflection shows that the identity of the information given to the patient with his repressed memory is only apparent. To have heard something and to have experienced something are in their psychological nature two quite different things, even though the content of both is the same.

So for the moment we are not in a position to decide between the two possibilities that we have discussed. Perhaps later on we shall come upon factors which may turn the balance in favour of one or the other. Perhaps we shall make the discovery that our question was inadequately framed and that the difference between an unconscious and a conscious idea has to be defined in quite another way.[2]

III. UNCONSCIOUS FEELINGS

[177] We have limited the foregoing discussion to ideas; we may now raise a new question, the answer to which is bound to contribute to the elucidation of our theoretical views. We have said that there are conscious and unconscious ideas; but are there also unconscious drive impulses
Regung [*Triebregungen*][T], emotions and feelings, or is it in this instance meaningless to form combinations of the kind?

I am in fact of the opinion that the antithesis of conscious and unconscious is not applicable to drives. A drive can never become an object of consciousness – only the idea that represents the drive can. Even in the unconscious, moreover, a drive cannot be represented otherwise than by an idea. If the drive did not attach itself to an idea or manifest itself as an affective state, we could know nothing about it. When we nevertheless speak of an unconscious drive impulse or of a repressed drive impulse, the looseness of phraseology is a harmless one. We can only mean a drive

1 [The topographical picture of the distinction between conscious and unconscious ideas is presented in Freud's discussion of the case of 'Little Hans' (1909*b*), *RSE*, **10**, 92 f., and at greater length in the closing paragraphs of his technical paper 'On Beginning the Treatment' (1913*c*), ibid., **12**, 137–8.]

2 [This argument is taken up again on p. 177 below.]

impulse the ideational representative of which is unconscious, for nothing else comes into consideration.[1]

We should expect the answer to the question about unconscious feelings, emotions and affects to be just as easily given. It is surely of the essence of an emotion that we should be aware of it, i.e. that it should become known to consciousness. Thus the possibility of the attribute of unconsciousness would be completely excluded as far as emotions, feelings and affects are concerned. But in psychoanalytic practice we are accustomed to speak of unconscious love, hate, anger, etc., and find it impossible to avoid even the strange conjunction, 'unconscious consciousness of guilt',[2] or a paradoxical 'unconscious anxiety'. Is there more meaning in the use of these terms than there is in speaking of 'unconscious drives'?

The two cases are, in fact, not on all fours. In the first place, it may happen that an affective or emotional impulse is perceived but misconstrued. Owing to the repression of its proper representative it has been forced to become connected with another idea, and is now regarded by [178]
consciousness as the manifestation of that idea. If we restore the true connection, we call the original affective impulse an 'unconscious' one. Yet its affect was never unconscious; all that had happened was that its *idea* had undergone repression. In general, the use of the terms 'unconscious affect' and 'unconscious emotion' has reference to the vicissitudes [*Schicksale*][T] undergone, in consequence of repression, by the quantitative factor in the drive impulse. We know that three such vicissitudes are possible:[3] either the affect remains, wholly or in part, as it is; or it is transformed into a qualitatively different quota of affect, above all into anxiety; or it is suppressed, i.e. it is prevented from developing at all. (These possibilities may perhaps be studied even more easily in the dream-work than in neuroses.[4]) We know, too, that to suppress the development of affect is the true aim of repression and that its work is incomplete if this aim is not achieved. In every instance where repression has succeeded in inhibiting the development of affects, we term those affects (which we restore when we undo the work of repression) 'unconscious'. Thus it cannot be denied that the use of the terms in question is consistent; but in comparison with unconscious ideas there is the

1 [Cf. the Editors' Note to 'Drives and their Vicissitudes', p. 99 ff. above.]

2 [German '*Schuldbewusstsein*', a common equivalent for '*Schuldgefühl*', 'sense of guilt'.]

3 Cf. the preceding paper on 'Repression' [p. 135 above].

4 [The main discussion of affects in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*) can be found in Section H of Chapter VI; *RSE*, **5**, 411–36.]

important difference that unconscious ideas continue to exist after repression as actual structures [*reale Bildung*][T] in the system *Ucs.*, whereas all that corresponds in that system to unconscious affects is a potential beginning which is prevented from developing. Strictly speaking, then, and although no fault can be found with the linguistic usage, there are no unconscious affects as there are unconscious ideas. But there may very well be in the system *Ucs.* affective structures which, like others, become conscious. The whole difference arises from the fact that ideas are cathexes [*Besetzungen*][T] – basically of memory traces – while affects and feelings correspond to processes of discharge [*Abfuhrvorgängen*][T], the final manifestations of which are perceived as sensations. In the present state of our knowledge of affects and feelings we cannot express this difference more clearly.[1]

abführen

It is of special interest to us to have established the fact that [179] repression can succeed in inhibiting a drive impulse from being turned into a manifestation of affect. This shows us that the system *Cs.* normally controls affectivity as well as access to motility; and it enhances the importance of repression, since it shows that repression results not only in withholding things from consciousness, but also in preventing the development of affect and the setting off of muscular activity. Conversely, too, we may say that as long as the system *Cs.* controls affectivity and motility, the mental condition of the person in question is spoken of as normal. Nevertheless, there is an unmistakable difference in the relation of the controlling system to the two contiguous processes of discharge.[2] Whereas the control by the *Cs.* over voluntary motility is firmly rooted, regularly withstands the onslaught of neurosis and only breaks down in psychosis, control by the *Cs.* over the development of affects is less secure. Even within the limits of normal life we can recognize that a constant struggle for primacy over affectivity goes on between the two systems *Cs.* and *Ucs.*, that certain spheres of influence are marked off from one another and that intermixtures between the operative forces [*Kräfte*][T] occur.

1 [This question is discussed again in Chapter II of *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*), *RSE*, **19**, 18–19. The nature of affects is more clearly discussed in Lecture XXV of the *Introductory Lectures* (1916–17*a*), ibid., **16**, 349–50, and also in Chapter VII of *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926*d*), ibid., **20**, 117–18. This entire section harks back to Freud's fundamental hypothesis to the effect that mental activity involves two basic components: a 'quota of affect' and 'memory traces of ideas' (1894*a*; see Editors' Appendix, ibid., **3**, 57 ff.).]

2 Affectivity manifests itself essentially in motor (secretory and vasomotor) discharge resulting in an (internal) alteration of the subject's own body without reference to the external world; motility, in actions designed to effect changes in the external world.

The importance of the system *Cs.* (*Pcs.*)[1] as regards access to the release of affect and to action enables us also to understand the part played by substitutive ideas in determining the form taken by illness. It is possible for the development of affect to proceed directly from the system *Ucs.*; in that case the affect always has the character of anxiety, for which all 'repressed' affects are exchanged. Often, however, the drive impulse has to wait until it has found a substitutive idea in the system *Cs.* The development of affect can then proceed from this conscious substitute, and the nature of that substitute determines the qualitative character of the affect. We have asserted [p. 135 above] that in repression a severance takes place between the affect and the idea to which it belongs, and that each then undergoes its separate vicissitudes. Descriptively, this is incontrovertible; in actuality, however, the affect does not as a rule arise till the breakthrough to a new representation in the system *Cs.* has been successfully achieved.

IV. TOPOGRAPHY AND DYNAMICS OF REPRESSION

We have arrived at the conclusion that repression is essentially a process affecting ideas on the border between the systems *Ucs.* and *Pcs.* (*Cs.*), and we can now make a fresh attempt to describe the process in greater detail. [180]

It must be a matter of a *withdrawal* of cathexis; but the question is, in which system does the withdrawal take place and to which system does the cathexis that is withdrawn belong? The repressed idea remains capable of action in the *Ucs.*, and it must therefore have retained its cathexis. What has been withdrawn must be something else. [Cf. p. 177 f. below.] Let us take the case of repression proper ('after-pressure') [p. 131 above], as it affects an idea which is preconscious or even actually conscious. Here repression can only consist in withdrawing from the idea the (pre)conscious cathexis which belongs to the system *Pcs.* The idea then either remains uncathected, or receives cathexis from the *Ucs.*, or retains the *Ucs.* cathexis which it already had. Thus there is a withdrawal of the preconscious cathexis, retention of the unconscious cathexis, or replacement of the preconscious cathexis with an unconscious one. We notice, moreover, that we have based these reflections (as it were, without meaning to) on the assumption that the transition from the system *Ucs.* to the system next to it is not effected through the making of a new registration but through a change in its state, an alteration in its cathexis. The

1 [In the 1915 edition only, '(*Pcs.*)' does not occur.]

functional hypothesis has here easily defeated the topographical one. [See above, pp. 154–5.]

But this process of withdrawal of libido[1] is not adequate to make another characteristic of repression comprehensible to us. It is not clear why the idea which has remained cathected or has received cathexis from the *Ucs*. should not, by virtue of its cathexis, renew the attempt to penetrate into the system *Pcs*. If it could do so, the withdrawal of libido from it would have to be repeated, and the same performance would go on endlessly; but the outcome would not be repression. So, too, when it comes to describing *primal* repression, the mechanism just discussed of
[181] withdrawal of preconscious cathexis would fail to meet the case; for here we are dealing with an unconscious idea which has as yet received *no* cathexis from the *Pcs*. and therefore cannot have that cathexis withdrawn from it.

What we require, therefore, is another process which maintains the repression in the first case [i.e. the case of after-pressure] and, in the second [i.e. that of primal repression], ensures its being established as well as continued. This other process can only be found in the assumption of an *anticathexis*, by means of which the system *Pcs*. protects itself from the pressure upon it of the unconscious idea. We shall see from clinical examples how such an anticathexis, operating in the system *Pcs.*, manifests itself. It is this which represents the permanent expenditure [of energy] of a primal repression, and which also guarantees the permanence of that repression. Anticathexis is the sole mechanism of primal repression; in the case of repression proper ('after-pressure') there is in addition withdrawal of the *Pcs.* cathexis. It is very possible that it is precisely the cathexis which is withdrawn from the idea that is used for anticathexis.

We see how we have gradually been led into adopting a third point of view in our account of psychical phenomena. Besides the dynamic and the topographical points of view [p. 154 above], we have adopted the *economic* one. This endeavours to follow the vicissitudes of amounts of excitation [*Erregungsgrössen*] and to arrive at least at some *relative* estimate of their magnitude.

It will not be unreasonable to give a special name to this whole way of regarding our subject matter, for it is the consummation of psychoanalytic research. I propose that when we have succeeded in describing a psychical process in its dynamic, topographical and economic aspects,

1 [For the use of 'libido' here see four paragraphs lower down.]

we should speak of it as a *metapsychological*[I] presentation. We must say at once that in the present state of our knowledge there are only a few points at which we shall succeed in this.

Let us make a tentative effort to give a metapsychological description of the process of repression in the three transference neuroses [*Übertragungsneurosen*] which are familiar to us. Here we may replace 'cathexis' [182] with 'libido',[2] because, as we know, it is the vicissitudes of *sexual* impulses with which we shall be dealing.

In anxiety hysteria a first phase of the process is frequently overlooked, and may perhaps be in fact missed out; on careful observation, however, it can be clearly discerned. It consists in anxiety appearing without the subject knowing what he is afraid of. We must suppose that there was present in the *Ucs.* some love impulse demanding to be transposed into the system *Pcs.*; but the cathexis directed to it from the latter system has drawn back from the impulse (as though in an attempt at flight) and the unconscious libidinal cathexis of the rejected idea has been discharged in the form of anxiety.

On the occasion of a repetition (if there should be one) of this process, a first step is taken in the direction of mastering the unwelcome development of anxiety.[3] The [*Pcs.*] cathexis that has taken flight attaches itself to a substitutive idea which, on the one hand, is connected by association with the rejected idea, and, on the other, has escaped repression by reason of its remoteness from that idea. This substitutive idea – a 'substitute by displacement' [*Verschiebungsersatz*][T] [p. 137 above] – permits the still *Verschiebung* uninhibitable development of anxiety to be rationalized. It now plays the part of an anticathexis for the system *Cs.* (*Pcs.*),[4] by securing it against an emergence in the *Cs.* of the repressed idea. On the other hand, it is, or acts as if it were, the point of departure for the release of the anxiety affect, which has now really become quite uninhibitable. Clinical observation shows, for instance, that a child suffering from an animal phobia experiences anxiety under two kinds of conditions: in the first place, when his repressed love impulse becomes intensified, and, in the second, when he perceives the animal he is afraid of. The substitutive idea acts in the one instance as a point at which there is a passage across from the

1 [Freud had first used this term some twenty years earlier in a letter to Fliess of February 13, 1896. (Freud, 1950*a*, Letter 41.) He had only used it once before in his *published* works: in the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*), Chapter XII (C); *RSE*, **6**, 222.]

2 [Freud had already done this four paragraphs earlier.]

3 [This is the 'second phase' of the process.]

4 [In the 1915 edition only '(*Pcs.*)' does not occur.]

system *Ucs.* to the system *Cs.*, and, in the other instance, as a self-sufficing source for the release of anxiety. The extending dominance of the system *Cs.* usually manifests itself in the fact that the first of these two modes of excitation of the substitutive idea gives place more and more to the second. The child may perhaps end by behaving as though he had no
[183] predilection whatever towards his father but had become quite free from him, and as though his fear of the animal was a real fear – except that this fear of the animal, fed as such a fear is from an unconscious drive source, proves obdurate and exaggerated in the face of all influences brought to bear from the system *Cs.*, and thereby betrays its derivation from the system *Ucs.* – In the second phase of anxiety hysteria, therefore, the anticathexis from the system *Cs.* has led to substitute formation.

Soon the same mechanism finds a fresh application. The process of repression, as we know, is not yet completed, and it finds a further aim in the task of inhibiting the development of the anxiety which arises from the substitute.[1] This is achieved by the whole of the associated environment of the substitutive idea being cathected with special intensity, so that it can display a high degree of sensibility to excitation. Excitation of any point in this outer structure [*Vorbaues*] must inevitably, on account of its connection with the substitutive idea, give rise to a slight development of anxiety; and this is now used as a signal to inhibit, by means of a fresh flight on the part of the [*Pcs.*] cathexis, the further progress of the development of anxiety.[2] The further away the sensitive and vigilant anticathexes are situated from the feared substitute, the more precisely can the mechanism function which is designed to isolate the substitutive idea and to protect it from fresh excitations. These precautions naturally only guard against excitations which approach the substitutive idea from outside, through perception; they never guard against drive excitation, which reaches the substitutive idea from the direction of its link with the repressed idea. Thus the precautions do not begin to operate till the substitute has satisfactorily taken over representation of the repressed, and they can never operate with complete reliability. With each increase of drive excitation the protecting rampart round the substitutive idea must be shifted a little further outwards. The whole construction, which is set up in an analogous way in the other neuroses, is termed a *phobia*. The flight from a conscious
[184] cathexis of the substitutive idea is manifested in the avoidances,

1 [The 'third phase'.]

2 [The notion of a small release of unpleasure acting as a 'signal' to prevent a much larger release is already to be found in Freud's 1895 'Project' (1950*a*, Part II, Section 6), *RSE*, **1**, and in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), ibid., **5**, 539. The idea is, of course, developed much further in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926*d*), e.g. in Chapter XI, Section A (*b*); ibid., **20**, 142 ff.]

renunciations and prohibitions by which we recognize anxiety hysteria.

Surveying the whole process, we may say that the third phase repeats the work of the second on an ampler scale. The system *Cs.* now protects itself against the activation of the substitutive idea by an anticathexis of its environment, just as previously it had secured itself against the emergence of the repressed idea by a cathexis of the substitutive idea. In this way the formation of substitutes by displacement has been further continued. We must also add that the system *Cs.* had earlier only one small area at which the repressed drive impulse could break through, namely, the substitutive idea; but that ultimately this enclave of unconscious influence extends to the whole phobic outer structure. Further, we may lay stress on the interesting consideration that by means of the whole defensive mechanism [*Abwehrmechanismus*][T] thus set in action a projection outwards of the drive danger has been achieved. The ego behaves as if the danger of a development of anxiety threatened it not from the direction of a drive impulse but from the direction of a perception, and it is thus enabled to react against this external danger with the attempts at flight represented by phobic avoidances. In this process repression is successful in one particular: the release of anxiety can to some extent be dammed up, but only at a heavy sacrifice of personal freedom. Attempts at flight from the demands of drive are, however, in general useless, and, in spite of everything, the result of phobic flight remains unsatisfactory. *Abwehr*

A great deal of what we have found in anxiety hysteria also holds good for the other two neuroses, so that we can confine our discussion to their points of difference and to the part played by anticathexis. In conversion hysteria the drive cathexis of the repressed idea is changed into the innervation of the symptom. How far and in what circumstances the unconscious idea is drained empty by this discharge into innervation, so that it can relinquish its pressure upon the system *Cs.* – these and similar questions had better be reserved for a special investigation of hysteria.[1] In conversion hysteria the part played by the anticathexis proceeding from the system *Cs.* (*Pcs.*)[2] is clear and becomes manifest in the formation of the symptom. It is the anticathexis that decides upon what portion of the drive representative [*Triebrepräsentanz*] the whole cathexis of the latter is able to be concentrated. The portion thus selected to be a symptom fulfils the condition of expressing the wishful aim of the drive [185]

1 [Probably a reference to the missing metapsychological paper on conversion hysteria. (See Editors' Introduction, p. 93 ff. above.) – Freud had already touched on the question in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895*d*), *RSE*, **2**, 147–8.]

2 [In the 1915 edition only, '(*Pcs.*)' does not occur.]

impulse no less than the defensive or punitive efforts of the system *Cs.*; thus it becomes hypercathected, and it is maintained from both directions like the substitutive idea in anxiety hysteria. From this circumstance we may conclude without hesitation that the amount of energy expended by the system *Cs.* on repression need not be so great as the cathectic energy of the symptom; for the strength of the repression is measured by the amount of anticathexis expended, whereas the symptom is supported not only by this anticathexis but also by the drive cathexis from the system *Ucs.* which is condensed [*verdichtete*][T] in the symptom.

Verdichtung

As regards obsessional neurosis, we need only add to the observations brought forward in the preceding paper [p. 138 f. above] that it is here that the anticathexis from the system *Cs.* comes most noticeably into the foreground. It is this which, organized as a reaction-formation, brings about the first repression, and which is later the point at which the repressed idea breaks through. We may venture the supposition that it is because of the predominance of the anticathexis and the absence of discharge that the work of repression seems far less successful in anxiety hysteria and in obsessional neurosis than in conversion hysteria.[1]

V. THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SYSTEM *UCS.*

[186] The distinction we have made between the two psychical systems receives fresh significance when we observe that processes in the one system, the *Ucs.*, show characteristics which are not met with again in the system immediately above it.

The nucleus of the *Ucs.* consists of drive representatives which seek to discharge their cathexis; that is to say, it consists of wishful impulses. These drive impulses are coordinate with one another, exist side by side without being influenced by one another, and are exempt from mutual contradiction. When two wishful impulses whose aims must appear to us incompatible become simultaneously active, the two impulses do not diminish each other or cancel each other out, but combine to form an intermediate aim, a compromise.

There are in this system no negation, no doubt, no degrees of certainty: all this is only introduced by the work of the censorship between the *Ucs.* and the *Pcs.* Negation is a substitute, at a higher level, for repression.[2] In the *Ucs.* there are only contents, cathected with greater or lesser strength.

1 [The topics in the present section were reconsidered by Freud in *Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety* (1926*d*). See especially *RSE*, **20**, 112 ff., 126 *n.* 1 and 129–30.]

2 [This had already been asserted by Freud in Chapter VI of his book on *Jokes* (1905*c*), ibid., **8**. Cf., however, Freud's later discussion of negation (1925*h*), ibid., **19**, 237 ff.]

The cathectic intensities [in the *Ucs.*] are much more mobile. By the process of *displacement* one idea may surrender to another its whole quota of cathexis; by the process of *condensation* it may appropriate the whole cathexis of several other ideas. I have proposed to regard these two processes as distinguishing marks of the so-called *primary psychical process*. In the system *Pcs.* the *secondary process*[I] is dominant. When a primary process is allowed to take its course in connection with elements belonging to the system *Pcs.*, it appears 'comic' and excites laughter.[2]

The processes of the system *Ucs.* are *timeless*[I]; i.e. they are not ordered temporally, are not altered by the passage of time; they have no reference to time at all. Reference to time is bound up, once again, with the work of the system *Cs.*[3] [187]

The *Ucs.* processes pay just as little regard to *reality*. They are subject to the pleasure principle; their fate depends only on how strong they are and on whether they fulfil the demands of the pleasure–unpleasure regulation [*Lust–Unlustregulierung*][T].[4] *Lust*

To sum up: *exemption from mutual contradiction*, *primary process* (mobility of cathexes), *timelessness*, and *replacement of external with psychical reality* – these are the characteristics which we may expect to find in processes belonging to the system *Ucs.*[5]

1 Cf. the discussion in Chapter VII of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*) [Section E; *RSE*, **5**, 526 ff.], based on ideas developed by Breuer in *Studies on Hysteria* (Breuer & Freud, 1895*d*). [A comment on Freud's attribution of these hypotheses to Breuer can be found in the Editors' Introduction to the latter work (ibid., **2**, xxv f.) and in a footnote to the same volume (ibid., 173 *n.* 1).]

2 [Freud had expressed this idea in very similar words in Chapter VII (E) of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), ibid., **5**, 542. The point is dealt with more fully in his book on *Jokes* (1905*c*), especially in the second and third sections of Chapter VII; ibid., **8**.]

3 [In the 1915 edition only, this read '*Pcs.*'. – Mentions of the 'timelessness' of the unconscious can be found scattered throughout Freud's writings. The earliest is perhaps a sentence dating from 1897 (Freud, 1950*a*, Draft M) in which he declares that 'neglect of the characteristic of time [is] no doubt essential for the distinction between activity in the preconscious and unconscious' (ibid., **1**, 280). See also a hint in 'The Aetiology of Hysteria' (1896*c*), ibid., **3**, 223. The point is indirectly alluded to in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), ibid., **5**, 517, but the first explicit published mention of it seems to have been in a footnote added in 1907 to *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (1901*b*), near the end of the last chapter (ibid., **6**, 235 f. *n.* 3). Another passing allusion occurs in a footnote to the paper on narcissism (above, p. 84 *n.* 1). Freud returned to the question more than once in his later writings: particularly in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920*g*), *RSE*, **18**, 28, and in Lecture XXXI of the *New Introductory Lectures* (1933*a*), ibid., **22**, 66. A discussion on the subject took place at a meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society on November 8, 1911, and the published minutes (*Zbl. Psychoan.*, **2**, 476–7) give a very short summary of some remarks made by Freud on the occasion.]

4 [Cf. Section 8 of 'The Two Principles of Mental Functioning' (1911*b*), *RSE*, **12**. 'Reality-testing' is dealt with at some length in the next paper (p. 205 ff. below).]

5 We are reserving for a different context the mention of another notable privilege of the *Ucs.* [In a letter to Groddeck of June 5, 1917, Freud writes: 'In my essay on the *Ucs.* which you mention you will find an inconspicuous note: "We are reserving for a different context the mention of another notable privilege of the *Ucs.*" I will divulge to you what this note refers to: the assertion that the *Ucs.* exerts on somatic processes an influence of far greater plastic power than the conscious act ever can.' (Freud, 1960*a*.)]

Unconscious processes only become cognizable by us under the conditions of dreaming and of neurosis – that is to say, when processes of the higher, *Pcs*., system are set back to an earlier stage by being lowered (by regression). In themselves they cannot be cognized, indeed are even incapable of carrying on their existence; for the system *Ucs*. is at a very early moment overlaid by the *Pcs*. which has taken over access to consciousness and to motility. Discharge from the system *Ucs*. passes into
[188] somatic innervation that leads to development of affect; but even this path of discharge is, as we have seen [p. 158 above], contested by the *Pcs*. By itself, the system *Ucs*. would not in normal conditions be able to bring about any expedient muscular acts, with the exception of those already organized as reflexes.

The full significance of the characteristics of the system *Ucs*. described above could only be appreciated by us if we were to contrast and compare them with those of the system *Pcs*. But this would take us so far afield that I propose that we should once more call a halt and not undertake the comparison of the two till we can do so in connection with our discussion of the higher system.[1] Only the most pressing points of all will be mentioned at this stage.

The processes of the system *Pcs*. display – no matter whether they are already conscious or only capable of becoming conscious – an inhibition of the tendency of cathected ideas towards discharge. When a process passes from one idea to another, the first idea retains a part of its cathexis and only a small portion undergoes displacement. Displacements and condensations such as happen in the primary process are excluded or very much restricted. This circumstance caused Breuer to assume the existence of two different states of cathectic energy in mental life: one in which the energy is tonically 'bound' and the other in which it is freely mobile and presses towards discharge.[2] In my opinion this distinction represents the deepest insight we have gained up to the present into the nature of nervous energy, and I do not see how we can avoid making it. A metapsychological presentation would most urgently call for further discussion at this point, though perhaps that would be too daring an undertaking as yet.

Further, it devolves upon the system *Pcs*. to make communication possible between the different ideational contents so that they can

1 [A probable reference to the lost paper on consciousness.]

2 [Cf. footnote 1, p. 165 above.]

influence one another, to give them an order in time,[1] and to set up a censorship or several censorships; 'reality-testing' too, and the reality principle, are in its province. Conscious memory, moreover, seems to depend wholly on the *Pcs*.[2] This should be clearly distinguished from the [189]
memory traces in which the experiences of the *Ucs*. are fixed, and probably corresponds to a special registration such as we proposed (but later rejected) to account for the relation of conscious to unconscious ideas [p. 154 ff. above]. In this connection, also, we shall find means for putting an end to our oscillations in regard to the naming of the higher system – which we have hitherto spoken of indifferently, sometimes as the *Pcs*. and sometimes as the *Cs*.

Nor will it be out of place here to utter a warning against any overhasty generalization of what we have brought to light concerning the distribution of the various mental functions between the two systems. We are describing the state of affairs as it appears in the adult human being, in whom the system *Ucs*. operates, strictly speaking, only as a preliminary stage of the higher organization. The question of what the content and connections of that system are during the development of the individual, and of what significance it possesses in animals – these are points on which no conclusion can be deduced from our description: they must be investigated independently.[3] Moreover, in human beings we must be prepared to find possible pathological conditions under which the two systems alter, or even exchange, both their content and their characteristics.

VI. COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS

It would nevertheless be wrong to imagine that the *Ucs*. remains at rest [190]
while the whole work of the mind is performed by the *Pcs*. – that the *Ucs*. is something finished with, a vestigial organ, a residuum from the process of development. It is wrong also to suppose that communication between the two systems is confined to the act of repression, with the *Pcs*. casting everything that seems disturbing to it into the abyss of the *Ucs*. On the contrary, the *Ucs*. is alive and capable of development and maintains a number of other relations with the *Pcs*., among them that of cooperation. In brief, it must be said that the *Ucs*. is continued into what

1 [There is a hint at the mechanism by which the *Pcs*. effects this in the penultimate paragraph of Freud's paper on the 'Mystic Writing-Pad' (1925*a*), *RSE*, **19**, 231.]

2 [Cf. above, p. 84 *n*. 1. – In the 1915 edition only, this read '*Cs*.'.]

3 [One of the very few remarks made by Freud on the metapsychology of animals can be found in Chapter I of his *Outline of Psychoanalysis* (1940*a*), *RSE*, **23**, 133.]

are known as derivatives,[1] that it is accessible to the impressions of life, that it constantly influences the *Pcs*., and is even, for its part, subjected to influences from the *Pcs*.

Study of the derivatives of the *Ucs*. will completely disappoint our expectations of a schematically clear-cut distinction between the two psychical systems. This will no doubt give rise to dissatisfaction with our results and will probably be used to cast doubts on the value of the way in which we have divided up the psychical processes. Our answer is, however, that we have no other aim but that of translating into theory the results of observation, and we deny that there is any obligation on us to achieve at our first attempt a well-rounded theory which will commend itself by its simplicity. We shall defend the complications of our theory so long as we find that they meet the results of observation, and we shall not abandon our expectations of being led in the end by those very complications to the discovery of a state of affairs which, while simple in itself, can account for all the complications of reality.

Among the derivatives of the *Ucs*. drive impulses, of the sort we have described, there are some which unite in themselves characters of an opposite kind. On the one hand, they are highly organized, free from self-contradiction, have made use of every acquisition of the system *Cs*. and would hardly be distinguished in our judgement from the formations of that system. On the other hand, they are unconscious and are
[191] incapable of becoming conscious. Thus *qualitatively* they belong to the system *Pcs*., but *factually* to the *Ucs*. Their origin is what decides their fate. We may compare them with individuals of mixed race who, taken all round, resemble white men, but who betray their coloured descent by some striking feature or other, and on that account are excluded from society and enjoy none of the privileges of white people. Of such a nature
Phantasie, Bildung are those phantasies [*Phantasiebildungen*][T] of normal people as well as of neurotics which we have recognized as preliminary stages in the formation both of dreams and of symptoms and which, in spite of their high degree of organization, remain repressed and therefore cannot become conscious.[2] They draw near to consciousness and remain undisturbed so long as they do not have an intense cathexis, but as soon as they exceed a certain height of cathexis they are thrust back. Substitutive formations, too, are highly organized derivatives of the *Ucs*. of this kind; but these succeed in breaking through into consciousness, when circumstances

1 [See 'Repression', p. 131 f. above.]

2 [This question is elaborated in a footnote added in 1920 to Section 5 of the third of Freud's *Three Essays* (1905*d*), *RSE*, 7, 199 f. *n*. 3.]

are favourable – for example, if they happen to join forces with an anticathexis from the *Pcs*.

When, elsewhere,[1] we come to examine more closely the preconditions for becoming conscious, we shall be able to find a solution to some of the difficulties that arise at this juncture. Here it seems a good plan to look at things from the angle of consciousness, in contrast to our previous approach, which was upwards from the *Ucs*. To consciousness the whole sum of psychical processes presents itself as the realm of the preconscious. A very great part of this preconscious originates in the unconscious, has the character of its derivatives and is subjected to a censorship before it can become conscious. Another part of the *Pcs*. is capable of becoming conscious without any censorship. Here we come upon a contradiction of an earlier assumption. In discussing the subject of repression we were obliged to place the censorship which is decisive for becoming conscious between the systems *Ucs*. and *Pcs*. [p. 153 above]. Now it becomes probable that there is a censorship between the *Pcs*. and the *Cs*.[2] Nevertheless, we shall do well not to regard this complication as [192]
a difficulty, but to assume that to every transition from one system to that immediately above it (that is, every advance to a higher stage of psychical organization) there corresponds a new censorship. This, it may be remarked, does away with the assumption of a continuous laying down of new registrations [p. 154].

The reason for all these difficulties is to be found in the circumstance that the attribute of being conscious, which is the only characteristic of psychical processes that is directly presented to us, is in no way suited to serve as a criterion for the differentiation of systems. [Cf. p. 153.] Apart from the fact that the conscious is not always conscious but also at times latent, observation has shown that much that shares the characteristics of the system *Pcs*. does not become conscious; and we learn in addition that the act of becoming conscious is dependent on the attention of the *Pcs*. being turned in certain directions.[3] Hence consciousness stands in no

1 [Another probable reference to the lost paper on consciousness.]

2 [See p. 153 above. The point had already been raised by Freud in Chapter VII (F) of *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **5**, 549 and 552. It is discussed at greater length below, p. 170 f.]

3 [Literally 'we learn in addition that becoming conscious is restricted by certain directions of its attention.' The 'its' almost certainly refers to the *Pcs*. This rather obscure sentence would probably be clearer if we possessed the lost paper on consciousness. The gap here is particularly tantalizing, as it seems likely that the reference is to a discussion of the function of 'attention' – a subject on which Freud's later writings throw very little light. There are two or three passages in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*) which seem relevant in this connection: 'The excitatory processes occurring in [the preconscious] can enter consciousness without further impediment provided that certain other conditions are fulfilled: for instance . . . that the function which can

simple relation either to the different systems or to repression. The truth is that it is not only the psychically repressed that remains alien to consciousness, but also some of the impulses which dominate our ego [193] – something, therefore, that forms the strongest functional antithesis to the repressed. The more we seek to win our way to a metapsychological view of mental life, the more we must learn to emancipate ourselves from the importance of the symptom of 'being conscious'.[1]

So long as we still cling to this belief we see our generalizations regularly broken through by exceptions. On the one hand we find that derivatives of the *Ucs.*[2] become conscious as substitutive formations and symptoms – generally, it is true, after having undergone great distortion as compared with the unconscious, though often retaining many characteristics which call for repression. On the other hand, we find that many preconscious formations remain unconscious, though we should have expected that, from their nature, they might very well have become conscious. Probably in the latter case the stronger attraction of the *Ucs.* is asserting itself. We are led to look for the more important distinction as lying, not between the conscious and the preconscious, but between the preconscious and the unconscious. The *Ucs.* is turned back on the frontier of the *Pcs.* by the censorship, but derivatives of the *Ucs.* can circumvent this censorship, achieve a high degree of organization and reach a certain intensity of cathexis in the *Pcs.* When, however, this intensity is exceeded and they try to force themselves into consciousness, they are recognized as derivatives of the *Ucs.* and are repressed afresh at the new frontier of censorship, between the *Pcs.* and the *Cs.* Thus the first of these censorships is exercised against the *Ucs.* itself, and the second against its

only be described as "attention" is distributed in a particular way' (*RSE*, **5**, 483). 'Becoming conscious is connected with the application of a particular psychical function, that of attention' (ibid., 530). 'The system *Pcs.* not merely bars access to consciousness, it also . . . has at its disposal for distribution a mobile cathectic energy, a part of which is familiar to us in the form of attention' (ibid., 549). In contrast to the paucity of allusions to the subject in Freud's later writings, the 'Project' of 1895 treats of attention at great length and regards it as one of the principal forces at work in the mental apparatus (Freud, 1950*a*, especially Section 1 of Part III). He there (as well as in his paper on 'The Two Principles of Mental Functioning', 1911*b*) relates it in particular to the function of 'reality-testing', which is linked in turn with the concept of 'hypercathexis'. Cf. Freud's formulation in the 'Project': '*the biological rule of attention* runs: *If an indication of reality appears, then the perceptual cathexis which is simultaneously present is to be hypercathected.*' (*RSE*, **1**, 395.) The concept of hypercathexis reappears on pp. 171 and 173 below. See also the Editors' Note to 'A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams' (below, p. 196), where the relation of attention to the system *Pcpt.* is considered.]

1 [The complication discussed in this paragraph was reinforced by Freud in Chapter I of *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*), *RSE*, **19**, 15, and in the following chapter he propounded his new structural picture of the mind, which so greatly simplified his whole description of its workings.]

2 [All the German editions prior to 1975 read '*Vbw*' (*Pcs.*). It seems probable that this is a misprint for '*Ubw*' (*Ucs.*). This is confirmed by an inspection of the manuscript.]

Pcs. derivatives. One might suppose that in the course of individual development the censorship had taken a step forward.

In psychoanalytic treatment the existence of the second censorship, located between the systems *Pcs.* and *Cs.*, is proved beyond question. We require the patient to form numerous derivatives of the *Ucs.*, we make him pledge himself to overcome the objections of the censorship to these preconscious formations becoming conscious, and by overthrowing *this* censorship, we open up the way to abrogating the [194]
repression accomplished by the *earlier* one. To this let us add that the existence of the censorship between the *Pcs.* and the *Cs.* teaches us that becoming conscious is no mere act of perception, but is probably also a *hypercathexis*,[1] a further advance in the psychical organization.

Let us turn to the communications between the *Ucs.* and the other systems, less in order to establish anything new than in order to avoid omitting what is most prominent. At the roots of drive activity the systems communicate with one another most extensively. One portion of the processes which are there excited passes through the *Ucs.*, as through a preparatory stage, and reaches the highest psychical development in the *Cs.*; another portion is retained as *Ucs.* But the *Ucs.* is also affected by experiences originating from external perception. Normally all the paths from perception to the *Ucs.* remain open, and only those leading on from the *Ucs.* are subject to blocking by repression.

It is a very remarkable thing that the *Ucs.* of one human being can react upon that of another, without passing through the *Cs.* This deserves closer investigation, especially with a view to finding out whether preconscious activity can be excluded as playing a part in it; but, descriptively speaking, the fact is incontestable. [Cf. an example of this in Freud, 1913*i*; *RSE*, **12**.]

The content of the system *Pcs.* (or *Cs.*) is derived partly from the drives (through the medium of the *Ucs.*), and partly from perception. It is doubtful how far the processes of this system can exert a direct influence on the *Ucs.*; examination of pathological cases often reveals an almost incredible independence and lack of susceptibility to influence on the part of the *Ucs.* A complete divergence of their trends, a total severance of the two systems, is what above all characterizes a condition of illness. Nevertheless, psychoanalytic treatment is based upon an influencing of the *Ucs.* from the direction of the *Cs.*, and at any rate shows that this, though a laborious task, is not impossible. The derivatives of the *Ucs.* which act as intermediaries between the two systems open the way, as we

1 [Cf. above, p. 169 *n.* 3 and below, p. 177 f.]

have already said [p. 171 above], towards accomplishing this. But we may safely assume that a spontaneously effected alteration in the *Ucs.* from the direction of the *Cs.* is a difficult and slow process.

[195] Cooperation between a preconscious and an unconscious impulse, even when the latter is intensely repressed, may come about if there is a situation in which the unconscious impulse can act in the same sense as one of the dominant trends. The repression is removed in this instance, and the repressed activity is admitted as a reinforcement of the one intended by the ego. The unconscious becomes ego-syntonic [*ichgerecht*][T] in respect of this single conjunction without any change taking place in its repression apart from this. In this cooperation the influence of the *Ucs.* is unmistakable: the reinforced tendencies reveal themselves as being nevertheless different from the normal; they make specially perfect functioning possible, and they manifest a resistance in the face of opposition which is similar to that offered, for instance, by obsessional symptoms.

The content of the *Ucs.* may be compared with an aboriginal population in the mind. If inherited mental formations [*Bildungen*] exist in the human being – something analogous to instinct [*Instinkt*][1] in animals – these constitute the nucleus of the *Ucs.* Later there is added to them what is discarded during childhood development as unserviceable; and this need not differ in its nature from what is inherited. A sharp and final division between the content of the two systems does not, as a rule, take place till puberty.

VII. ASSESSMENT OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

[196] What we have put together in the preceding discussions is probably as much as we can say about the *Ucs.* so long as we only draw upon our knowledge of dream life and the transference neuroses. It is certainly not much, and at some points it gives an impression of obscurity and confusion; and above all it offers us no possibility of coordinating or subsuming the *Ucs.* into any context with which we are already familiar. It is only the analysis of one of the affections which we call narcissistic psychoneuroses that promises to furnish us with conceptions [*Auffassungen*][T] through which the enigmatic *Ucs.* will be brought more within our reach and, as it were, made tangible.

1 [See *RSE*, **24**, 85–8, and Editors' Note to 'Drives and their Vicissitudes', p. 99 above. – The question of the inheritance of mental formations was to be discussed by Freud soon afterwards in Lecture XXIII of his *Introductory Lectures* (1916–17*a*), *RSE*, **16**, 316 ff., and in his 'Wolf Man' case history (1918*b*), ibid., **17**, 87.]

Since the publication of a work by Abraham (1908) – which that conscientious author has attributed to my instigation – we have tried to base our characterization of Kraepelin's 'dementia praecox' (Bleuler's 'schizophrenia') on its position with reference to the antithesis between ego and object. In the transference neuroses (anxiety hysteria, conversion hysteria and obsessional neurosis) there was nothing to give special prominence to this antithesis. We knew, indeed, that frustration in regard to the object brings on the outbreak of the neurosis and that the neurosis involves a renunciation of the real object; we knew too that the libido that is withdrawn from the real object reverts first to a phantasied object and then to one that had been repressed (introversion).[1] But in these disorders object cathexis in general is retained with great energy, and more detailed examination of the process of repression has obliged us to assume that object cathexis persists in the system *Ucs*. in spite of – or rather in consequence of – repression. [Cf. p. 131 f. above.] Indeed, the capacity for transference, of which we make use for therapeutic purposes in these affections, presupposes an unimpaired object cathexis.

In the case of schizophrenia, on the other hand, we have been driven to the assumption that after the process of repression the libido that has been withdrawn does not seek a new object, but retreats into the ego; that is to say, that here the object cathexes are given up and a primitive [197]
objectless condition of narcissism is re-established. The incapacity of these patients for transference (so far as the pathological process extends), their consequent inaccessibility to therapeutic efforts, their characteristic repudiation of the external world, the appearance of signs of a hypercathexis of their own ego, the final outcome in complete apathy – all these clinical features seem to agree excellently with the assumption that their object cathexes have been given up. As regards the relation of the two psychical systems to each other, all observers have been struck by the fact that in schizophrenia a great deal is expressed as being conscious which in the transference neuroses can only be shown to be present in the *Ucs*. by psychoanalysis. But to begin with we were not able to establish any intelligible connection between the ego–object relation and the relationships of consciousness.

What we are seeking seems to present itself in the following unexpected way. In schizophrenics we observe – especially in the initial stages, which are so instructive – a number of changes in *speech*, some of which deserve to be regarded from a particular point of view. The patient often

1 [The process is described in detail in Section (*a*) of Freud's paper on 'Types of Onset of Neurosis' (1912*c*), *RSE*, **12**, 227 ff.]

devotes peculiar care to his way of expressing himself, which becomes 'stilted' and 'precious'. The construction of his sentences undergoes a peculiar disorganization, making them so incomprehensible to us that his remarks seem nonsensical. Some reference to bodily organs or innervations is often given prominence in the content of these remarks. To this may be added the fact that in such symptoms of schizophrenia as are comparable with the substitutive formations of hysteria or obsessional neurosis, the relation between the substitute and the repressed material nevertheless displays peculiarities which would surprise us in these two forms of neurosis.

Dr Victor Tausk of Vienna has placed at my disposal some observations that he has made in the initial stages of schizophrenia in a female patient, which are particularly valuable in that the patient was ready to explain her utterances herself.[1] I will take two of his examples to illustrate the view I wish to put forward, and I have no doubt that every observer could easily produce plenty of such material.

[198] A patient of Tausk's, a girl who was brought to the clinic after a quarrel with her lover, complained that *her eyes were not right, they were twisted*. This she herself explained by bringing forward a series of reproaches against her lover in coherent language. 'She could not understand him at all, he looked different every time; he was a hypocrite, an eye-twister,[2] he had twisted her eyes; now she had twisted eyes; they were not her eyes any more; now she saw the world with different eyes.'

The patient's comments on her unintelligible remark have the value of an analysis, for they contain the equivalent of the remark expressed in a generally comprehensible form. They throw light at the same time on the meaning and the genesis of schizophrenic word formation. I agree with Tausk in stressing in this example the point that the patient's relation to a bodily organ (the eye) has arrogated to itself the representation of the whole content [of her thoughts]. Here the schizophrenic utterance exhibits a hypochondriac trait: it has become '*organ speech*'.[3]

A second communication by the same patient was as follows: 'She was standing in church. Suddenly she felt a jerk; she had to *change her position, as though somebody was putting her into a position, as though she was being put in a certain position*.'

Now came the analysis of this through a fresh series of reproaches against her lover. 'He was common, he had made her common, too, though she was naturally refined. He had made her like himself by

1 [A paper referring to the same patient was later published by Tausk (1919).]

2 [The German '*Augenverdreher*' has the figurative meaning of 'deceiver'.]

3 [Cf. Freud's discussion of hypochondria in his paper on narcissism (1914*c*), above, p. 72 ff.]

making her think that he was superior to her; now she had become like him, because she thought she would be better if she were like him. He had *given a false impression of his position*; now she was just like him' (by identification), 'he had *put her in a false position*.'

The physical movement of 'changing her position', Tausk remarks, depicted the words 'putting her in a false position' and her identification with her lover. I would call attention once more to the fact that the whole train of thought is dominated by the element which has for its content a bodily innervation (or, rather, the sensation of it). Furthermore, a hysterical woman would, in the first example, have *in fact* convulsively twisted her eyes, and, in the second, have given actual jerks, instead of [199] having the *impulse* to do so or the *sensation* of doing so: and in neither example would she have any accompanying conscious thoughts, nor would she have been able to express any such thoughts afterwards.

These two observations, then, argue in favour of what we have called hypochondriacal speech or 'organ speech'. But, what seems to us more important, they also point to something else, of which we have innumerable instances (for example, in the cases collected in Bleuler's monograph [1911]) and which may be reduced to a definite formula. In schizophrenia *words* are subjected to the same process as that which makes the dream images out of latent dream thoughts – to what we have called the primary psychical process. They undergo condensation, and by means of displacement transfer their cathexes to one another in their entirety. The process may go so far that a single word, if it is specially suitable on account of its numerous connections, takes over the representation of a whole train of thought.[1] The works of Bleuler, Jung and their pupils offer a quantity of material which particularly supports this assertion.[2]

Before we draw any conclusion from impressions such as these, let us consider further the distinctions between the formation of substitutes in schizophrenia on the one hand, and in hysteria and obsessional neurosis on the other – subtle distinctions which nevertheless make a strange impression. A patient whom I have at present under observation[3] has

1 [*The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **5**, 532.]

2 The dream-work, too, occasionally treats words like things, and so creates very similar 'schizophrenic' utterances or neologisms. [See *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), ibid., **4**, 263 ff. A distinction between what happens in dreams and in schizophrenia is drawn, however, in 'A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams', p. 203 below.]

3 [It is uncertain that this refers to the 'Wolf Man', despite the striking similarity, as his treatment ended in July, 1914, and Freud did not see him again until the spring of 1919. The obsession with the skin of his nose which came to prominence in February, 1924, had, however, already made an appearance during his first analysis with Freud and prompted him to consult a leading dermatologist in Vienna (Brunswick, 1928*a*).]

allowed himself to be withdrawn from all the interests of life on account of a bad condition of the skin of his face. He declares that he has blackheads and deep holes in his face which everyone notices. Analysis shows that he is playing out his castration complex upon his skin. At first he worked at these blackheads remorselessly; and it gave him great satisfaction to squeeze them out, because, as he said, something spurted out when he did so. Then he began to think that a deep cavity appeared wherever he had got rid of a blackhead, and he reproached himself most
[200] vehemently with having ruined his skin for ever by 'constantly fiddling about with his hand'. Pressing out the content of the blackheads is clearly to him a substitute for masturbation. The cavity which then appears owing to his fault is the female genital, i.e. the fulfilment of the threat of castration (or the phantasy representing that threat) provoked by his masturbating. This substitutive formation has, in spite of its hypochondriacal character, considerable resemblance to a hysterical conversion; and yet we have a feeling that something different must be going on here, that a substitutive formation such as this cannot be attributed to hysteria, even before we can say in what the difference consists. A tiny little cavity such as a pore of the skin would hardly be used by a hysteric as a symbol for the vagina, which he is otherwise ready to compare with every imaginable object that encloses a hollow space. Besides, we should expect the multiplicity of these little cavities to prevent him from using them as a substitute for the female genital. The same applies to the case of a young patient reported by Tausk some years ago to the Vienna Psychoanalytical Society. This patient behaved in other respects exactly as though he were suffering from an obsessional neurosis; he took hours to wash and dress, and so on. It was noticeable, however, that he was able to give the meaning of his inhibitions without any resistance. In putting on his stockings, for instance, he was disturbed by the idea that he must pull apart the stitches in the knitting, i.e. the holes, and to him every hole was a symbol of the female genital aperture. This again is a thing which we cannot attribute to an obsessional neurotic. Reitler observed a patient of the latter sort, who also suffered from having to take a long time over putting on his stockings; this man, after overcoming his resistances, found as the explanation that his foot symbolized a penis, that putting on the stocking stood for a masturbatory act, and that he had to keep on pulling the stocking on and off, partly in order to complete the picture of masturbation, and partly in order to undo that act.

If we ask ourselves what it is that gives the character of strangeness to the substitutive formation and the symptom in schizophrenia, we

eventually come to realize that it is the predominance of what has to do with words over what has to do with things. As far as the thing goes, there is only a very slight similarity between squeezing out a blackhead and an emission from the penis, and still less similarity between the innumerable shallow pores of the skin and the vagina; but in the former case [201]
there is, in both instances, a 'spurting out', while in the latter the cynical saying, 'a hole is a hole', is true verbally. What has dictated the substitution is not the resemblance between the things denoted but the sameness of the words used to express them. Where the two – word and thing – do not coincide, the formation of substitutes in schizophrenia deviates from that in the transference neuroses.

If now we put this finding alongside the hypothesis that in schizophrenia object cathexes are given up, we shall be obliged to modify the hypothesis by adding that the cathexis of the *word* presentations [*Wortvorstellungen*][T] of objects is retained. What we have permissibly called the conscious presentation[I] of the object can now be split up into the presentation of the *word* and the presentation of the *thing* [*Sachvorstellung*]; the latter consists in the cathexis, if not of the direct memory images of the thing, at least of remoter memory traces derived from these. We now seem to know all at once what the difference is between a conscious and an unconscious presentation [see p. 156 above]. The two are not, as we supposed, different registrations of the same content in different psychical localities, nor yet different functional states of cathexis in the same locality; but the conscious presentation comprises the presentation of the thing plus the presentation of the word belonging to it, while the unconscious presentation is the presentation of the thing alone. The system *Ucs*. contains the thing cathexes of the objects, the first and true object cathexes; the system *Pcs*. comes about by this [202]
thing presentation being hypercathected through being linked with the word presentations corresponding to it. It is these hypercathexes, we may suppose, that bring about a higher psychical organization and make

1 ['*Vorstellung*.' This word has as a rule been translated above by 'idea'. (See footnote 2, p. 154.) From this point till the end of the paper, '*Vorstellung*' is uniformly translated by 'presentation' – '*Wortvorstellung*' 'presentation of the word' or 'word presentation'; '*Sachvorstellung*' 'presentation of the thing' or 'thing presentation'. These words were formerly translated by the somewhat misleading 'verbal idea' and 'concrete idea'. In 'Mourning and Melancholia' (below, p. 228) Freud replaced '*Sachvorstellung*' with the synonymous '*Dingvorstellung*'; and he had used this second version earlier, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **4**, 263, and near the beginning of Chapter IV of his book on *Jokes* (1905*c*), ibid., **8**, 105. – The distinction between 'word presentations' and 'thing presentations' was already in his mind when he wrote these earlier works, and it no doubt derives from his studies on the aphasias. The matter was discussed at some length in his monograph on the subject (1891*b*), *NSW*, **4**, though in somewhat different terminology. The relevant passage in that work has been translated below in Appendix C (p. 186 ff.). For a discussion of the translation of '*Vorstellung*', see *RSE*, **24**, 94–8.]

it possible for the primary process to be succeeded by the secondary process which is dominant in the *Pcs*. Now, too, we are in a position to state precisely what it is that repression denies to the rejected presentation in the transference neuroses [p. 159 f. above]: what it denies to the presentation is translation [*Übersetzung*][T] into words which shall remain attached to the object. A presentation which is not put into words, or a psychical act which is not hypercathected, remains thereafter in the *Ucs*. in a state of repression.

I should like to point out at what an early date we already possessed the insight which today enables us to understand one of the most striking characteristics of schizophrenia. In the last few pages of *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which was published in 1900, the view was developed that thought processes, i.e. those acts of cathexis which are comparatively remote from perception, are in themselves without quality and unconscious, and that they attain their capacity to become conscious only through being linked with the residues of perceptions of *words*.[1] But word presentations, for their part too, are derived from sense perceptions, in the same way as thing presentations are; the question might therefore be raised why presentations of objects cannot become conscious through the medium of their *own* perceptual residues. Probably, however, thought proceeds in systems so far remote from the original perceptual residues that they have no longer retained anything of the qualities of those residues, and, in order to become conscious, need to be reinforced by new qualities. Moreover, by being linked with words, cathexes can be provided with quality even when they represent only *relations* between presentations of objects and are thus unable to derive any quality from perceptions. Such relations, which become comprehensible only through words, form a major part of our thought
[203] processes. As we can see, being linked with word presentations is not yet the same thing as becoming conscious, but only makes it possible to become so; it is therefore characteristic of the system *Pcs*. and of that system alone.[2] With these discussions, however, we have evidently departed from our subject proper and find ourselves plunged into

1 [*The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*), *RSE*, **5**, 551 f. See also ibid., **5**, 514. This hypothesis had, in fact, been put forward (though not published) by Freud even earlier, in his 'Project' of 1895 (1950*a*, towards the beginning of Section 1 of Part III). It had also been mentioned by him more recently, in his paper on 'The Two Principles of Mental Functioning' (1911*b*), ibid., **12**, 218.]

2 [Freud took up this subject again at the beginning of Chapter II of *The Ego and the Id* (1923*b*), ibid., **19**, 16 f.]

problems concerning the preconscious and the conscious, which for good reasons we are reserving for separate treatment.[1]

As regards schizophrenia, which we only touch on here so far as seems indispensable for a general understanding of the *Ucs.*, a doubt must occur to us whether the process here termed repression has anything at all in common with the repression which takes place in the transference neuroses. The formula that repression is a process which occurs between the systems *Ucs.* and *Pcs.* (or *Cs.*), and results in keeping something at a distance from consciousness [p. 130 above], must in any event be modified, in order that it may also be able to include the case of dementia praecox and other narcissistic affections. But the ego's attempt at flight, which expresses itself in the withdrawal of the conscious cathexis, nevertheless remains a factor common [to the two classes of neurosis]. The most superficial reflection shows us how much more radically and profoundly this attempt at flight, this flight of the ego, is put into operation in the narcissistic neuroses.

If, in schizophrenia, this flight consists in withdrawal of drive cathexis from the points which represent the *unconscious* presentation of the object, it may seem strange that the part of the presentation of this object which belongs to the system *Pcs.* – namely, the word presentations corresponding to it – should, on the contrary, receive a more intense cathexis. We might rather expect that the word presentation, being the preconscious part, would have to sustain the first impact of repression and that it would be totally uncathectable after repression had proceeded as far as the unconscious thing presentations. This, it is true, is difficult to understand. It turns out that the cathexis of the word presentation is not part of the act of repression, but represents the first of the attempts at recovery or cure which so conspicuously dominate the clinical picture of schizophrenia.[2] These endeavours are directed [204]
towards regaining the lost object, and it may well be that to achieve this purpose they set off on a path that leads to the object via the verbal part of it, but then find themselves obliged to be content with words instead of things. It is a general truth that our mental activity moves in two opposite directions: either it starts from the drives and passes through the system *Ucs.* to conscious thought activity; or, beginning with an instigation from outside, it passes through the system *Cs.* and *Pcs.* till it reaches the *Ucs.* cathexes of the ego and objects. This second path must,

1 [This seems likely to be another reference to the unpublished paper on consciousness. See, however, below, p. 206.]

2 [See Part III of Freud's Schreber analysis (1911*c*), *RSE*, **12**, 51 ff. – A further schizophrenic attempt at recovery is mentioned below, p. 204.]

in spite of the repression which has taken place, remain traversable, and it lies open to some extent to the endeavours made by the neurosis to regain its objects. When we think in abstractions there is a danger that we may neglect the relations of words to unconscious thing presentations, and it must be confessed that the expression and content of our philosophizing then begins to acquire an unwelcome resemblance to the mode of operation of schizophrenics.[1] We may, on the other hand, attempt a characterization of the schizophrenic's mode of thought by saying that he treats concrete things as though they were abstract.

If we have made a true assessment of the nature of the *Ucs.* and have correctly defined the difference between an unconscious and a preconscious presentation, then our researches will inevitably bring us back from many other points to this same piece of insight.

1 [Freud had already made this point at the end of the second essay in *Totem and Taboo* (1912–13*a*), *RSE*, **13**, 73 f.]

APPENDIX A

FREUD AND EWALD HERING

Among Freud's seniors in Vienna was the physiologist Ewald Hering (1834–1918), who, as we learn from Ernest Jones (1953, 244), offered the young man a post as his assistant at Prague; this was probably while Freud was still working at Brücke's Physiological Institute, most likely in 1882. Hering went to Prague as Professor Ordinarius in 1870. An episode some forty years later seems to suggest, as Ernst Kris (1956) pointed out, that Hering's influence may have contributed to Freud's views on the unconscious. (Cf. above, p. 144.)[1] In 1880 Samuel Butler published his *Unconscious Memory*. This included a translation of a lecture delivered by Hering in 1870, 'Über das Gedächtnis als eine allgemeine Funktion der organisierten Materie' ('On Memory as a Universal Function of Organized Matter'), with which Butler found himself in general agreement. A book with the title *The Unconscious*, by Israel Levine, was published in England in 1923; and a German translation of it by Anna Freud appeared in 1926. One section of it, however (Part I, Section 13), which deals with Samuel Butler, was translated by Freud himself. The author, Levine, though he mentioned Hering's lecture, was more concerned with Butler than with Hering, and in that connection (on page 34 of the German translation) Freud added a footnote as follows: [205]

'German readers, familiar with this lecture of Hering's and regarding it as a masterpiece, would not, of course, be inclined to bring into the foreground the considerations based on it by Butler. Moreover, some pertinent remarks are to be found in Hering which allow psychology the right to assume the existence of unconscious mental activity: "Who could hope to disentangle the fabric of our inner life with its thousandfold complexities, if we were willing to pursue its threads only so far as they traverse consciousness? . . . Chains such as these of unconscious material nerve processes, which end in a link accompanied by a conscious perception, have been described as 'unconscious trains of ideas' and 'unconscious inferences'; and from the standpoint of psychology this can be justified. For the mind would often slip through the fingers

1 [In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920g), *RSE*, **18**, another reference to Ewald Hering suggests that his ideas may also have contributed to Freud's theory of the dualistic classification of the drives.]

of psychology, if psychology refused to keep a hold on the mind's unconscious states." [Hering, 1870, 11 and 13.]'[1]

1 [Curiously in Butler's translation of the last sentences in this passage from Hering's lecture, he substituted the word 'psychology' with 'physiology'.]

APPENDIX B

PSYCHOPHYSICAL PARALLELISM

It has been pointed out above (p. 144) that Freud's earlier views on the relation between the mind and the nervous system were greatly influenced by Hughlings Jackson. This is particularly shown by the following passage extracted from his monograph on aphasia (1891*b*, 56–8; *NSW*, 4, Chapter V). It is especially instructive to compare the last sentences on the subject of latent memories with Freud's later position (p. 148 above). In order to preserve a uniform terminology with the present edition, and consistency with the standard edition of Freud's *Complete Neuroscientific Works*, a new translation has been made by Mark Solms. [206]

After this digression we return to the conceptualization of aphasia. We remember that the assumption has evolved on the basis of Meynert's teachings that the language apparatus consists of distinct cortical centres, the cells of which contain the word presentations, and that these centres are separated by functionless cortical regions, linked by white fibres (association bundles). The question may at once be raised whether an assumption of this kind – which captures ideas in cells – is at all correct and permissible. I believe not.

In comparison with the tendency of earlier periods in medicine to localize whole mental faculties, as they are defined by psychological nomenclature, in specific territories of the brain, it must have appeared as a great advance when Wernicke declared that only the simplest psychical elements – the different sensory presentations – could legitimately be localized in the cortex, at the central terminations of the nerves from the periphery where the [sensory] impressions were received. Fundamentally, however, does one not make the same mistake in principle if one attempts to localize now a complicated concept and whole mental faculty, and now a psychical element? Is it justifiable to take a nerve fibre, which over the whole length of its course has been only a physiological structure and subject to physiological modifications, and to immerse its end in the psychical and to furnish this end with a presentation or a mnemic image? If 'will' and 'intelligence', and so on, are recognized as being psychological technical terms to [207]

which very complicated states of affairs correspond in the physiological world, can we be any more sure that a 'simple sensory presentation' is anything other than a technical term of that kind?

It is probable that the chain of physiological events in the nervous system does not stand in a causal relation to the psychical events. The physiological processes do not cease as soon as the psychical ones begin; rather the physiological chain continues, but each of its links (or some links) correspond to a psychical phenomenon from a certain moment. The psychical is, accordingly, a process parallel to the physiological ('a dependent concomitant'[1]).

I am well aware that I cannot accuse the people whose views I am here disputing of having executed this leap and this change in their scientific vantage point [i.e. from the physiological to the psychological] without consideration. They obviously mean nothing else than that the (physiological) modification of the nerve fibres which accompanies sensory stimulation produces another modification in the central nerve cell, which then becomes the physiological correlate of the 'idea'. Since they can say a great deal more about ideas than about the modifications, the physiology of which is still uncharacterized and unknown, they rely upon the elliptical statement: an idea is localized in the nerve cell. Yet this substitution at once leads to a confusion between the two things which need have no resemblance to each other. In psychology the simple idea is something elementary for us, which we can sharply distinguish from its connections with other ideas. This leads us to suppose that its physiological correlate – i.e. the modification of the nerve cells which originates from the stimulation of the nerve fibres – is something simple too, which can be localized at a particular point. Such an equation [*Übertragung*] is, of course, entirely unjustifiable; the properties of this modification must be established on their own account and independently of their psychological counterpart.[2]

1 [In English in the original. The phrase evidently refers to Hughlings Jackson's 'doctrine of concomitance', but the words 'a *dependent* concomitant' appear nowhere in his writings. Indeed, he specifically disavowed such a relation; Jackson spoke only of *correlations* between psychical and physiological events. See footnote 2 below.]

2 Hughlings Jackson has given the most emphatic warning against confusions of this kind between the physical and the psychical in the process of language: 'In all our studies of diseases of the nervous system we must be on our guard against the fallacy that what are physical states in lower centres fine away *into* psychical states in higher centres; that, for example, vibrations of sensory nerves *become* sensations, or that somehow or another an idea produces a movement.' (1878–9, 306.)

What then is the physiological correlate of the simple idea or its recurrence? Obviously nothing static, but something in the nature of a process. This process admits of localization. It proceeds from a particular point in the cortex and spreads from there over the whole cortex or along certain pathways. When this process is completed, it leaves a modification behind in the cortex that has been affected by it – the possibility of a memory. It is also highly doubtful whether anything psychical corresponds to this modification. Our consciousness contains nothing of the sort that would justify the term 'latent mnemic image' from the psychical point of view. But whenever the same state of the cortex is activated again, the psychical state comes into being once more as a memory. . . . [208]

APPENDIX C

WORDS AND THINGS

[209] The final section of Freud's paper on 'The Unconscious' seems to have roots in his early monograph on aphasia (1891*b*), *NSW*, 4, Chapter VI. It may be of interest, therefore, to reproduce here a passage from that work which, though not particularly easy to follow in itself, nevertheless throws light on the assumptions that underlay some of Freud's later views. The passage has the further incidental interest of presenting Freud in the very unusual position of talking in the technical language of the 'academic' psychology of the later nineteenth century. The passage here quoted follows after a train of destructive and constructive anatomical and physiological argument which has led Freud to a hypothetical scheme of neurological functioning which he describes as the 'language apparatus' [*Sprachapparat*]. It must be noted, however, that there is an important and perhaps confusing difference between the terminology Freud uses here and in 'The Unconscious'. What he here calls the 'object presentation' [*Objektvorstellung*] is what in 'The Unconscious' he calls the 'thing presentation' [*Sachvorstellung*]; while what in 'The Unconscious' he calls the 'object presentation' denotes a complex made up of the combined 'thing presentation' and 'word presentation' [*Wortvorstellung*] – a complex which has no name given to it in the *Aphasia* passage. The translation is a new one (by Mark Solms) in order to make it consistent with the standard edition of Freud's *Complete Neuroscientific Works*, which is also consistent with the *RSE*. As in the last section of 'The Unconscious', we have here always used the word 'presentation' to render the German '*Vorstellung*', while 'image' stands for the German '*Bild*'. The passage runs from p. 74 to p. 81 of the original German edition.

We now propose to consider what assumptions are required to explain disorders of language on the basis of a language apparatus organized in this manner – in other words, what the study of disorders of language teaches us about the function of this apparatus. In doing so we shall keep the psychological and anatomical sides of the question as separate as possible.

[210] In psychology the unit of the function of language is the 'word', a complex presentation, which proves to be a combination put together from auditory, visual and kinaesthetic elements. We owe our knowledge of this combination to pathology, which shows us that in organic lesions of the language apparatus a disintegration of language takes place along

the lines on which the combination is put together. We shall thus expect to find that the loss of one of these elements of the word presentation will prove to be the most important indication for enabling us to arrive at a localization of the disease. Four components of the word presentation are usually distinguished: the 'sound image', the 'visual letter image', the 'motor speech image' and the 'motor writing image'. This combination, however, turns out to be more complicated when one enters into the probable process of association that takes place in each of the various activities of language:

(1) We learn to *speak* by associating a '*word sound image*' with a '*word innervation feeling* [*Wortinnervationsgefühl*]'.[1] After we have spoken, we are also in possession of a 'speech movement presentation' (centripetal sensations from the organs of speech); so that, in a motor respect, the 'word' is doubly determined for us. Of the two determining elements, the first – the innervatory word presentation – seems to have the least value from a psychological point of view; indeed its appearance at all as a psychical factor may be disputed. In addition to this, after speaking, we receive a 'sound image' of the spoken word. So long as we have not developed our power of speech very far, this second sound image need not be the same as the first one [the one imitated], but only associated with it.[2] At this stage (of language development in childhood) we make use of a language constructed by ourselves; we thereby behave like motor aphasiacs, for we associate a variety of alien word sounds with a single one produced by ourselves.

(2) We learn the language of others by endeavouring to make the sound [211]
image produced by ourselves as like as possible to the one which prompted our speech innervation. We learn in this way to '*repeat*'. When we concatenate words in '*connected speech*', we hold back the innervation of the next word till the sound image or the speech movement presentation (or both) of the preceding word has reached us. The security of our language is thus overdetermined,[3] and can easily stand the loss of one or the other of the determining factors. Nevertheless, a loss of the

1 ['It was once supposed that actively initiated movements involved a peculiar sort of sensation connected directly with the discharge of nervous impulses from the motor areas of the brain to the muscles. . . . The existence of this "innervation sense", or sense of energy put forth, is now generally denied.' (Stout, 1938, 258.) This last remark is confirmed by Freud a few lines lower down.]

2 [The second sound image is the sound image of the word spoken by ourselves, and the first one is that of the word we are imitating (the sound image mentioned at the beginning of the paragraph).]

3 [In German '*überbestimmt*'. The synonymous term '*überdeterminiert*' is the one used so frequently in Freud's later writings to express the notion of multiple causation. Cf. *RSE*, **2**, 189 *n.* 1.]

correction exercised by the second sound image and by the speech movement image explains some of the peculiarities of paraphasia, both physiological and pathological.

(3) We learn to *spell* by linking the visual images of the letters with new sound images, which, for their part, must remind us of word sounds which we already know. We at once 'repeat' the sound image that denotes the letter; so that letters, too, are seen to be determined by two sound images which coincide, and two motor presentations which correspond to each other.

(4) We learn to *read* by linking up in accordance with certain rules the succession of word innervation and word movement presentations which we receive when we enunciate individual letters, so that new motor word presentations arise. As soon as we have spoken these aloud, we discover from the sound images of these new word presentations that the two word movement and word sound images that we have received in this way have long been familiar to us and are identical to those used in speaking. Next we associate the meaning that was attached to the primary word sounds with the speech images which have been acquired by spelling. We now read with comprehension. If what we spoke primarily was a dialect and not a literary language, the word movement images and sound images of the words acquired through spelling have to be super-associated with the old images, and thus we have to learn a new language – a task which is facilitated by the similarity between the dialect and the literary language.

[212] It will be seen from this account of learning to read that it is a very complicated process, in which the direction of the associations must repeatedly shift to and fro. We shall also be prepared to find that disorders of reading in aphasia are bound to occur in a great variety of ways. The only thing that decisively indicates a lesion in the visual element of reading is a disturbance in the *reading of individual letters*. The *combination* of letters into a word takes place during the transference [*Übertragung*] to the speech pathway and will thus be abolished in motor aphasia. The comprehension of what is read is arrived at only through the medium of the sound images generated by the words that have been spoken, or through the medium of the word movement images that arose in speaking. It is therefore seen to be a function that is extinguished not only where there are motor lesions, but also where there are auditory ones. Furthermore, comprehension of what is read is thus seen to be a function independent of the act of reading. Anyone can discover from self-observation that there are several kinds of reading, some of which

proceed without comprehension of what is read. When I am proof reading with a view to paying special attention to the visual images of the letters and other typographical signs, the sense of what I read escapes me so completely that I have to read the proofs again specially if I want to correct the style. When, on the other hand, I am reading a book that interests me, a novel for instance, I overlook all the misprints; and it may happen that I retain nothing more than some confused feature of the names of the characters in it – a recollection, perhaps, that they are long or short, or contain some unusual letter, such as an 'x' or a 'z'. When I have to read aloud, and have to pay particular attention to the sound images of my words and the intervals between them, I am once more in danger of concerning myself too little with the meaning of the words; and as soon as I get tired I read in such a way that, though other people can still comprehend what I am reading, I myself no longer know what I have read. These are phenomena of divided attention, which arise here precisely because comprehension of what is read only comes about in such a very circuitous way. If the process of reading itself offers difficulties, there is no longer any question of comprehension, as is made clear by analogy with our behaviour when we are learning to read; and we must be careful not to regard the absence of comprehension as evidence of the interruption of a [fibre] pathway. Reading aloud is not to be regarded as a process in any way different from reading to oneself, apart from the fact that it helps to divert attention from the sensory part of the process of reading. [213]

(5) We learn to *write* by reproducing the visual images of the letters by means of innervatory images of the hand, till the same or similar visual images appear. As a rule, the writing images are only similar to, and super-associated with, the reading images, since what we learn to read is *print* and what we learn to write is *script*. Writing proves to be a comparatively simple process and one that is not so easily disturbed as reading.

(6) It is to be assumed that later on, too, we carry out these various functions of language along the same associative paths as those along which we learnt them. At this later stage, abbreviations and substitutions may occur, but it is not always easy to say what their nature is. Their importance is diminished by the consideration that in cases of organic lesion the language apparatus as a whole will probably be damaged to some extent and be compelled to return to the modes of association which are primary, more secure and more ponderous. As regards reading, the '*visual word image*' undoubtedly makes its influence felt with

proficient readers, so that individual words (particularly proper names) can be read even without spelling them.

A word is thus a complex presentation consisting of the images enumerated above; or, to put it another way, there corresponds to the word an advanced associative process into which the elements of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic origin enumerated above enter together.

A word, however, acquires its *meaning* by being linked to an 'object presentation',[1] at all events if we restrict ourselves to a consideration of nouns. The object presentation itself is once again a complex of associations made up of the greatest variety of visual, auditory, tactile, kinaesthetic and other presentations. Philosophy tells us that an object presentation consists in nothing more than this – that the appearance of there being a 'thing' [*Dinges*] to whose various 'attributes' these sense impressions bear witness is merely due to the fact that, in enumerating the sense impressions which we have received from an object, we also assume the possibility of there being a large number of further
[214] impressions in the same chain of associations (J. S. Mill).[2] The object presentation is thus seen to be one which is not closed and barely capable of being closed, while the word presentation is seen to be something closed, even though capable of extension.

The pathology of disorders of language leads us to assert that *the word presentation is linked at its sensory end (by its sound images) with the object presentation*. We thus arrive at the existence of two classes of language disorder: (1) an aphasia of the first order, *verbal aphasia*, in which only the associations between the separate elements of the word presentation are disturbed; and (2) an aphasia of the second order, *asymbolic aphasia*, in which the association between the word and the object presentation is disturbed.

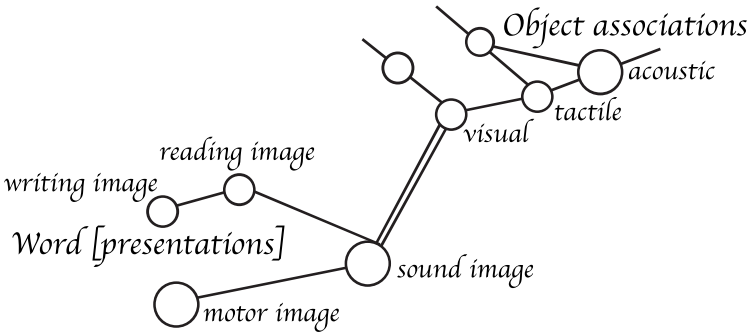
I use the term 'asymbolia' in a sense other than that in which it has ordinarily been used since Finkelnburg,[3] because the relation between the word [presentation] and object presentation, rather than that between the object and object presentation, seems to me to deserve
[215] to be described as a 'symbolic' one. For disturbances in the recognition of concrete objects [*Gegenständen*], which Finkelnburg classes as

1 ['*Objektvorstellung*.' – The 'thing presentation' (*Sachvorstellung*) of the paper on 'The Unconscious' (p. 177 ff. above).]

2 Cf. J. S. Mill, *A System of Logic* (1843), **1**, Book I, Chapter III, also *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy* (1865).

3 Quoted by Spamer (1876). [The term was introduced by Finkelnburg (1870).]

asymbolia, I should like to propose the term '*agnosia*'.[1] It is possible that 'agnostic' disturbances (which can only occur in cases of bilateral and extensive cortical lesions) may also entail a disorder of language, since all impetus [*Anregungen*] to spontaneous speech arises from the field of object associations. I should call such language disorders *aphasias of the third order* or *agnostic aphasias*. Clinical experience has in fact brought to our knowledge a few cases which call for this conception. . . .



PSYCHOLOGICAL DIAGRAM OF THE WORD PRESENTATION

The word presentation is shown as a closed complex of presentations, whereas the object presentation is shown as an open one. The word presentation is not linked to the object presentation by *all* its constituent elements, but only by its sound image. Among the object associations, it is the visual ones which stand for the object, in the same way as the sound image stands for the word. The connections linking the word sound image with object associations other than the visual ones are not indicated.

1 [This proposal was generally accepted in neurology, and the term 'agnosia' remains in current usage.]

Vorstellung, Wortvorstellung, Sachvorstellung, Dingvorstellung, Objektvorstellung. Strachey usually translated *Vorstellung* by **idea**, but he also used **presentation** and **image** in some contexts. *Wort--*, *Sach--/Ding--* and *Objektvorstellung*, on the other hand, were consistently translated by word, thing and object **presentation** respectively.

The variety of terms used by Strachey illustrates the difficulties inherent in the translation of *Vorstellung* (see Villarreal, 1992, 122-3). Nowhere are the difficulties more apparent than in 'The Unconscious' (Freud, 1915*e*). In the first six sections of that paper, Strachey translated *Vorstellung* as 'idea'. On p. 174 *n.* 1, he annotated the word with the comment that the original German covers the English 'idea', 'image' and 'presentation'. Then, in the seventh section, he was forced to switch from 'idea' to 'presentation' for the remainder of the paper, and to provide a brief commentary on the translation of the term in a footnote (p. 201 *n.* 1). Finally, in an appendix to the paper, he continued to translate *Vorstellung* by 'presentation', but now remarked that 'image' was equivalent to *Bild*.

In recent times, the term '**re**presentation' has been added to the existing array (Rycroft, 1968, 101, 141, 178; Sandler, 1985, 13, Herrera, 2010, 793). Steiner (0000) notes that Strachey, in a working copy of the fourth volume of Freud's *Collected Papers*, referred to J.S. Mills' rendition of Kant's *Vorstellungen* as 'representations'. However the distinction between *Vorstellung* and *Darstellung* (depiction, portrayal) must also be taken into account here. In the *Standard Edition* the latter term was typically translated by 'representation' (cf. Alix Strachey, 1943, 15). This translation of *Vorstellung* is also complicated by the fact that Freud sometimes used the terms *Vorstellungsrepräsentanz* (or *Vorstellungsrepräsentant*), which Strachey translated as 'ideational representative'. Herrera (2010) applauds this rendition (but see below). Similar, but less problematic, considerations apply to *psychische Repräsentanz* and *Triebrepräsentanz* (see also Ricoeur, 1970, 116 *n.* 2). Further difficulties are introduced by the fact that Freud, especially in his earlier neurological writings, sometimes used the German term *Repräsentation* (e.g. 1891*b*, 51). Moreover, he used that term to refer to a complex, indirect mode of psychical registration of external reality, which he distinguished from a more primitive, direct mode, designated by the term *Projektion* (or *vertreten*). The distinction between these two terms (and the two modes of representing reality that correspond to them) is analogous to the distinction between the terms 'perception' (or appereception) on the one hand and 'sensation' on the other. The distinction between *Vorstellung* and *Repräsentation* in Freud's writing thus appears to coincide with the distinction between cognitive and perceptual presentations of reality. Accordingly, Laplanche & Pontalis (1973, 200) argue that Freud's usage of the term *Vorstellung* refers not so much to the 'subjective presenting of an object' as to 'that which is inscribed of the object in the mnemic systems'. See also Villarreal (1992, 122).

Herrera (2010, 793) comes to the same conclusion, and provides a lucid discussion of the origin of the term 'idea' in the writings of Hume. When he renders *Vorstellung* as 'idea', Strachey is merely resorting to the original English term which that expression translates in German, namely 'the internal image of an object which we can evoke in our mind when the object is absent' (ibid., 791). However, Herrera points out that 'idea' with the philosophical and psychological meaning of 'mental image' vanished from academic discourse in the twentieth century and was replaced by '**mental representation**'. Herrera favours this latter translation, together with a warning to the reader that this term is being used with the meaning of 'mental image'. (He agrees that 'image' alone is best reserved for the German *Bild*.) Herrera also points out that 'presentation' does not correspond to Hume's notion of an 'idea' but

rather to Locke's notion – as the content of any conscious mental activity. Since this clearly differs from Freud's usage of *Vorstellung*, Herrera argues that 'presentation' is the wrong translation for this term. For Freud (according to Herrera) a *Vorstellung* always arises from a memory trace, never directly from external sensory stimuli. What this overlooks, however, is the problem of reality testing: the determining factor as to whether an image arises from external or internal sources is not intrinsic to the image. Thus for example, Freud (1925*h*, 237) writes:

> 'We must recollect that all presentations [*Vorstellungen*] originate from perceptions and are repetitions of them. Thus originally the mere existence of a presentation [*Vorstellung*] was a guarantee of the reality of what was presented [*Vorgestellten*].'

It is unclear how Herrera would translate such a passage.

Rizzuto (1990, 243) draws attention also to the usage of *Vorstellung* in the writings of Leibniz and Kant. She insists that for Freud, a *Vorstellung*, unlike an *Idee*, always had sensorial qualities -- a *Vorstellung* is a mental event prompted initially by the sensorial perception of a thing. A *Vorstellung*, she argues, only makes sense in opposition to a *Ding an sich* ('thing in itself'). On these grounds, however, she too suggests that the best translation of the term is '**re**presentation'.

Steiner (1987*a*, 67, 73) traces the history of the psychoanalytic translation of *Vorstellung* in some detail. It was translated by Michell-Clarke, in 1896, as both 'idea' and 'representation'. Chase, working under Freud's supervision, used 'idea'. Brill (1909) used 'idea' (and occasionally 'presentation') when translating Jung, but he used only 'presentation' when translating Freud. In the latter case, he reserved 'idea' for the German *Idee*. Steiner (1991, 357) points out that, in so doing, despite the ambiguity and awkwardness of his translation, Brill was attempting to draw attention to a distinction which certainly exists in the original German, namely, that between *Vorstellung* and *Idee*. This distinction was not consistently reflected in Strachey's translation (see Steiner, 1987a, 73 *n.* 59). Jones (1910*e*, 1913*a*), like Strachey, used 'idea' for both *Vorstellung* and *Idee*. However Jones and Strachey continued to be preoccupied by the problem of the proper translation of this word, as is reflected in a letter from Strachey to Jones dated May 23, 1954, cited by Steiner (1987*a*, 67 *n*. 46; see also Steiner, 0000). In this context, it is of interest to note that Anna Freud complained to Strachey that she found his translation of Freud's essay on 'Negation' difficult to read, adding, 'Is it perhaps the use of the term 'presentation' for *Vorstellung*?' (undated corrections to page proofs).

Interestingly, Freud himself, when writing in French, translated *Vorstellung* as *idée*. When writing in English, he seems to have considered **conception** to be the equivalent term for *Vorstellung*, and 'idea' as equivalent not only to *Idee* but also to *Gedanke* (usually translated by 'thought' in the *Standard Edition*), and even to *Vorstellung* in one place (see Freud, 1912*g*, Editor's Note, *SE*, **12**, 257-8/ *RSE*, **0**, 000). Ornston (1985*a*) is of the opinion that Freud was here drawing a distinction between active mental elements ('conceptions') and passive ones ('ideas'). He does not present evidence in support of this opinion. Reddick (2003, 254 *n.* 4) on the other hand suggests that a *Vorstellung* is a **notion**. It must also be remembered that Freud's 1912*g* text was 'lightly corrected' by another hand. Strachey, too, translated *Vorstellung* by 'conception' in some instances (see Villarreal, 1992, 123). However, Ricoeur (1982) argues that *Vorstellung* is to be understood as the opposite of *Begriff* ('concept') and suggests that it should be translated as **figurative thinking**. On this

view, ‘conception’ would clearly be an inadequate translation. Steiner (1991, 357), too, emphasizes the fact that Freud used *Vorstellung* when he was referring to the subjective ‘presence’ of images or thoughts.

Steiner (1991, 357) reminds us that Freud derived the concept of *Vorstellung* - with its profound philosophical implications in German culture - from the tradition of Herbart, Strümpell, Wundt and Lipps (as well as Schopenhauer). He questions whether Freud’s translators all understood the same thing by *Vorstellung*, and refers the interested reader to Wundt’s (1902) history of the term (Steiner, 1987*a*, 67 *n*. 47). See also Ward’s celebrated article on ‘Psychology’ in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Steiner, 1991, 357 *n*. 15).

Still more problems are introduced by Freud’s compounds: *Wortvorstellung*, *Sachvorstellung*, *Dingvorstellung*, *Objektvorstellung*. Firstly, the very existence of the term *Wortvorstellung* would appear superficially to contradict the view that *Vorstellung* refers only to a sensorial, figurative presentation, or to a representation derived from external sensory impressions (Ricoeur, 1982; Rizzuto, 1990; see above). Accordingly, Reddick (2003) uses ‘thing-notion’, ‘word-notion’, etc., and complains that Strachey’s ‘word-presentation’ is ‘a particularly bizarre and misleading concoction’ (ibid., 256 *n.* 17). However, Freud’s earliest writings on the subject (e.g. 1891*b*, 1950*a* [1895]) suggest that *Wortvorstellungen* are in the first instance but a special type of concrete presentation, derived from sensory impressions of a particular kind, and that they only acquire higher order meanings when brought into associative connection with *Objektvorstellungen*. Thus the abstract, non-figurative psychological process arises secondarily out of a combination of the two primary orders of *Vorstellung* (cf. the two principles of mental functioning and the fate of word presentations in schizophrenia and dreams). See the exchange of views on this subject between Jones and Strachey, cited by Steiner (0000).

This leads to a second set of difficulties; namely the fact that the terms *Sachvorstellung*, *Dingvorstellung* and *Objektvorstellung* were used in a variety of different senses in the course of Freud’s writings. Strachey draws attention to these developments in *SE*, **14**, 201 *n*. 1 and 209/ *RSE*, **0**, 000. Freud (1891*b*) in his early neurological writings, used the terms *Wortvorstellung* and *Objektvorstellung* to refer to verbal and concrete representations of the external world respectively. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900*a*) the latter term was changed to *Dingvorstellung*. In his (1915*e*) essay on ‘The Unconscious’ it was changed again, to *Sachvorstellung*, and the term *Objektvorstellung* now denoted a complex made up of the combined *Wortvorstellung* and *Sachvorstellung*. Then, in ‘Mourning and Melancholia’ (1917*e*), the term denoting the latter concept reverted to *Dingvorstellung*.

Strachey (ibid, p. 201 *n*. 1) described *Sachvorstellung* and *Dingvorstellung* as synonyms; accordingly, he rendered them both by a single English equivalent, **‘thing**-presentation’. There is, however, a slight shift in meaning in the original German; *Sache* has somewhat less concrete and material connotations than *Ding*. Unlike *Sache*, *Ding* (in this context) also evokes Kant’s philosophy, and thus refers to something which can never be consciously presented. This subtle distinction is obscured by Strachey’s rendition of both *Sache* and *Ding* by the English ‘thing’. *Objekt*, on the other hand, which is derived from the Latin *objectus* - a casting before - is inherently mental. For Kant an *Objekt* is a human construction made out of sensations corresponding to a *Ding* in external reality (Rizzuto, 1990, 243). Cf. Green, 1986, 146, who asserts that ‘there is no difference at all between thing- and object-presentation’.

Notwithstanding Freud’s interest in Kant’s philosophy (Solms, 1997), it is not at all certain that he had such distinctions in mind, for there is a large degree of overlap in the everyday usage of these words. If he did, the implication is that

whereas *Wort--*, *Objekt--* and perhaps even *Sachvorstellungen* can achieve consciousness, *Dingvorstellungen* cannot do so, except by way of the other varieties of *Vorstellung*. Frankland (2005, xxiv) goes so far as to argue for uniformly translating *Vorstellung* as 'idea' – the term with the widest common currency – on the grounds that Freud was deeply suspicious of academic philosophy.